

Learning to be Authentic  
*and* Authentic Learning

Gerard Antonie Zweers

Institute of Education, University of  
London

# Abstract

Some of the main challenges facing education at the beginning of the twenty-first century concern our relationship with life and living beings. More precisely, the main theories of learning which inform educational practice in the west - such as behaviourism, constructivism, information processing, and situated learning - do not allow for a learning that results in the learner having a true understanding of the being of living beings and of life itself.

Against this kind of learning, which will be called *learning as modification and growth*, a second process is proposed, called *learning to be authentic*, which is based on Heidegger's notion of authenticity as a state in which a true understanding of the being of living beings and life itself is present. This *learning to be authentic* allows for the entities involved to be approached in a way that is appropriate to *life and living beings*. It is experienced, on the one hand, as a process of letting go and quieting down, and, on the other hand, as a process of opening up and being in touch with the entities that are encountered. It involves a growing non-reflective self-awareness and the awakening of another way of being, and it demands a kind of educational practice that is in many ways different from what is current in most educational settings.

*Learning as modification and growth* and *learning to be authentic* can merge into one process, which allows for the process *learning as modification and growth* to take place in such a way that it is guided by the openness that characterizes authentic existence. This integrated process, which constitutes a form of learning that results in the learner having a true understanding of the being of living beings and of life itself, will be called *authentic learning*.

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 General argument of the thesis

This thesis aims to show that the accounts of learning that inform most educational practice in the western world today - such as behaviourism, constructivism, and situated learning - need to be supplemented by an account of a process which is just as important as the learning processes described by these accounts of learning.

According to the accounts of learning that inform most educational practice in the western world, learning is, first of all, seen as essentially a process of *modification and growth*. There will, in Chapter Two, be a discussion of certain aspects of some influential accounts of learning: Hebbian Learning (Manukata and Pfaffly, 2004), Behaviourism (Bouton, 2007), and Constructivism in both its Piagetian and Vygotskyan versions, where the aim is to show that a certain family resemblance emerges in these accounts of learning.

Learning, in these theories, is usually conceived of as a process of *modification and growth*. This can be illustrated briefly now by quoting from Piaget. For Piaget the process of learning is essentially one of adaptation (what I call *modification*). Adaptation itself consists of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is “the action of the organism on surrounding objects, in so far as this action depends on previous behaviour involving the same or similar objects” (Piaget, 2001, p. 8). Accommodation describes the process by which the learner accommodates him or herself to the surrounding objects (Piaget, 2001, p. 9). But for Piaget this process of adaptation also involves *growth*. “All

knowledge is continually in a course of development and of passing from a state of lesser knowledge to one which is more complete and effective” (Cited in Murray Thomas, 2005, p. 192). During the discussion of this kind of learning in Chapter 2, it will also be argued that in this conception of learning, learning always involves an object of learning and is characterized by increased integration and differentiation, ultimately leading to increased rigidity.

Against this *learning as modification and growth*, it will be argued, a second process exists that dissolves the integration, differentiation and rigidity that have emerged as a result of the processes of *learning as modification and growth*, where this second process is not one that occurs in relation to a specific object of learning or as a modification of an existing way of being of the learner.

This second process, which will be called *learning to be authentic*, is one that results in a radical self-renewal of the individual. *Learning to be authentic* is experienced, on the one hand, as a process of letting go and quietening down of ways of being (of feeling, acting, perceiving, and relating to things and living being), and, on the other hand, as a process of opening up and being in touch with the things and living beings that are encountered. It allows for the entities involved to not be approached as objects of theoretical or practical concern (what exactly such entities are will become clear in Chapter 3) but in a way that is appropriate to *life and living beings*.

It will be suggested in the final chapter of this thesis that *learning as modification and growth* and *learning to be authentic* can merge into one process, which begins with letting go and opening up, and then allows for the process of growth (of integration and differentiation in relation to an object of learning) to take place in such a way that it is guided by the openness (letting go and being in touch with) that characterizes authentic existence. This integrated process will be called *authentic learning*.

## **1.2 The importance of the question of learning to be authentic**

I will begin by considering an argument in favour of the attempt to uncover the process of *learning to be authentic*. The focus of this brief argument will be

the difference between learning in relation to a practical or theoretical entity and learning in relation to what I will call *life and living beings*. This restricted focus is chosen to keep the argument as simple as possible, even if it means that the emotional or interpersonal dimensions of learning remain under-represented – something that will be rectified later in the thesis. The justification for trying to bring to light a process of *learning to be authentic* presented here is by no means the only one possible and it will be set out in only very broad brush strokes. But it is hoped that, as the thesis unfolds, it will become clear that the indications made here are warranted and that further grounds emerge for uncovering this process of *learning to be authentic*.

It is, I believe, safe to say that many of the difficulties for education<sup>1</sup> as it is currently practised in the western world (and, increasingly, everywhere else) do not lie in the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills. Another way of putting this is to say that education often gets those entities right that are properly conceived practically, in terms of their use (e.g. how to use a tool or how to solve a practical problem) or theoretically, in terms of properties and relations (e.g. how to categorise entities into species and genera). That is to say, education is often able to teach knowledge and skills that are valid in relation to those entities that are theoretical or practical in nature. In contrast to this, human beings, the natural world and life as a whole, are not practical or theoretical entities.

In other words, we know, at least to a certain extent, how to teach theoretical and practical knowledge and skills and we have ways of ensuring that this learning happens in a way that is by and large commensurate with the nature of the entities involved, so long as it concerns practical or theoretical entities. One clear example of this is learning to drive, which is mainly practical but also involves some theoretical knowledge (as tested in the separate theory part

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<sup>1</sup> I will use the word education in this thesis mostly to refer to *the practice of educating* (as opposed to the institutions or policies of education), in so far as it is concerned to help bring about *learning* in the pupil, the student, the child, or the adult being educated (what I mean by learning will be set out in Chapter Two and the remainder of the thesis). That is, education, in this thesis, denotes *the event* where an individual (or group of individuals) acts to facilitate *learning* in another, where the main question is what *the nature of the learning process* is that the educator ought to aim to facilitate.

of the exam), and which most people manage at some point, provided they have received appropriate instruction. However, and this will be argued in detail in Chapter Three, such theoretical and practical knowledge and skills are not capable of grasping what is *essential* about human beings in their relationship with themselves, each other, nature, and life as a whole: they are not adequate in relation to *life and living beings*<sup>2</sup>. That is, if we approach life or a living being as a practical or theoretical entity, we miss what is essential to that being.

Of course the ability to teach knowledge and skills in relation to practical and theoretical entities is limited, unacceptably so, some might say. But, to the extent that the call for academic standards to be raised is a call for better teaching skills (say, a richer learning experience, individually tailored tasks, and more knowledgeable teachers), it is usually not so much a call for more research into how such teaching can be improved (though more can always be done in this area too) but one for a better training of teachers and a better organization of the learning experience. To see this, we only need to imagine a school which has everything going in its favour: good facilities, sufficient funding, well-qualified teachers, well-behaved and motivated pupils, and so on. Most people would probably believe that in such a school the circumstances are in place for knowledge and skills to be taught in a way that is adequate, even if improvements are always welcome. Indeed, the response to a school which such favourable conditions failing to do so would come as a surprise to most people. In other words, if something is a theoretical or practical entity and we want to learn the skills and knowledge that can deal with or conceptualize it, we would expect to know more or less how to do that, and we can teach this to others.

Contrary to this, there are many problems facing education that lie in what we are calling *life and living beings*, those areas that do not deal with practical or theoretical entities, where there is much less clarity as to how tackle them. In concrete terms this means issues surrounding pupil behaviour (lack of

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<sup>2</sup> Note that sometimes living beings are appropriately taken as practical entities (e.g. when the emergency services liberate an unconscious person from a car wreck) or theoretical entities (e.g. when a statistician calculates the likelihood of something occurring in a certain population).

motivation, bullying, disrespect for teachers, disregard for the environment, substance abuse, destructive sexual relationships, and so on), but also in its failure to consistently teach values that hold society together in a way that is sustainable and fair for all (broadly the domain of citizenship education), or to show pupils the way to a life that is meaningful and fulfilling for them. Importantly, though many educational approaches get some of the above right, getting them all right (even more or less so) poses an added difficulty, for example, where a very strict regime makes for pupils who are “well-behaved” but not inwardly fulfilled.

We can easily see how this is the case, if we consider that, if, as we saw, we wanted to improve academic standards (such as numeracy and literacy) we would have a fairly good idea as to what circumstances we would need to create (however difficult that may turn in practice) and what knowledge and skills the teachers would need, whereas, with respect to questions of genuinely good behaviour (as opposed to mere outward conformity to norms), society, the environment and human flourishing we do not have anything like as firm a grasp on the difficulties involved. Indeed, the problems of western society as a whole seem to reflect this: even though there undoubtedly are still theoretical and practical challenges that would bring great benefits if they were solved (such as fighting certain diseases or solving the challenges to do with global warming), it is issues to do with inequality, social cohesion, the environment, violence and conflict, and the meaning of a flourishing life that pose the really intractable problems.

The need for pupils to learn environmental awareness, social and interpersonal skills, happiness and personal flourishing, and so on, is widely recognised. Thus, in the context of English education, the three overall aims for all schools are found in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority’s “Big Picture” of the school curriculum which states that the school curriculum should enable all young people to become not only “successful learners, who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve” but also “confident individuals, who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; responsible citizens, who make a positive contribution to society.” (Cited in White, 2008). That is, it is clear that the need is there for pupils to learn to relate to *life and living beings* (persons –

including oneself -, animals, nature, and life as a whole). What is not clear, it will be argued in this thesis, is how to conceive of the learning that is appropriate in relation to these issues, in relation to *life and living beings*.

That is, when it is decided that pupils should learn about these things, the way this learning is almost invariably approached in terms of the same learning of knowledge and skills that has been developed in relation to practical and theoretical entities, in terms of *learning as modification and growth*. It is my personal experience, as someone who worked for almost two decades at schools that made a point of teaching about *life and living beings* (including schools based on the philosophies of Paulo Freire and Rudolf Steiner), that what is being taught tends to be done so in terms of ways of conceiving (i.e. theoretically), ways of acting (i.e. practically) either habitually, critically or potentially, in the form of an attitude.

Pupils are, as a result, taught mostly knowledge about the environment and habits (such as recycling), as a way of raising environmental awareness; they are taught attitudes and manners (ways of acting in a practical way towards others) and knowledge about people other than themselves or about the impact of their own behaviour on these people, as a way of improving their social skills; they are (if they are lucky) given opportunities to try different things, explore dimensions of life that may open up perspectives which can enrich their lives, as a way of giving them a chance to pick up ways of conceptualizing or doing things, as a way of flourishing as individuals and finding what is meaningful about life.

Though such initiatives of raising awareness (which may include critical thinking) and of instilling ways of doing things are well-intentioned and often very valuable, it is my experience that they often fail to reach their intended target. Practicalities (such as time, access, and resources) apart, the hit-and-miss nature of such initiatives is because they need to be done in “the right spirit”. To put it differently, the above can either become meaningless, where

teachers<sup>3</sup> “go through the motions”, “ticking boxes” as they go along, or it can be done in a meaningful way, where the pupils learn in relation to the actual things they are learning about and where the teacher him or herself has and conveys a genuine feel for, a passion for, understanding of the entities involved. And in this case “the right spirit” means that the entities involved are not approached as theoretical or practical entities but in a way that is appropriate to *life and living beings*. In other words, even if the will and ability is there to teach in relation to *life and living beings*, this teaching remains a hit-and-miss affair.

When we teach about *life and living beings* in the same way that we teach about theoretical and practical entities, we miss what is essential about these entities. What is required is real-life engagement with the entities (for example, going out into nature itself rather than just reading about it in the classroom) and, as we saw, a teacher who approaches these entities in the right spirit. I will call the ability to approach life and living beings in the “right spirit” that of having a *sense for*<sup>4</sup> *life and living beings* analogous to the expression having a *feel for* such entities. That is, a teacher with, for example, a real passion for the environment has a *sense for*, an understanding of living creatures in a way that is, to use a phenomenological term, commensurate to their being. The being of *life and living beings* is neither practical nor theoretical but, for example, sensate, self-arising, and an end in itself. Because he or she has this “*sense for* the being of these entities”, this teacher may be able to convey it to the pupil, provided, of course, the circumstances are favourable.

One of the difficulties this need for the teacher to have such a *sense for* the being of *life and living beings* is that the authentic *sense for* the entities the

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<sup>3</sup> For convenience we will keep mentioning the teacher, though this should really include everybody involved in the education of a child, like school managers and support staff, and, of course, the parents.

<sup>4</sup> The expression having a “sense for” the being of an entity is chosen, because “sense” has a receptive quality, has connotations of “meaning”, and may refer to emotional, intellectual as well as bodily responses to the entity involved. It is as such a very general term denoting an understanding or *feel for* the being of an entity. As will become clear in Chapter 4, the word “understanding” itself will be reserved for a certain kind of relationship with an entity, and is, as a result, less general than sense.

teacher has may well pertain to certain kinds of entities only and, perhaps, not to others. Thus a teacher may have a great understanding of nature and be able to convey this to the pupil, but have little sense for interpersonal relationships or what it is to lead a flourishing life (someone who, for example, “comes alive” when out in nature, but who is unfulfilled as a person the rest of the time). The difficulty with this is that, by conceiving of the challenge of teaching about *life and living beings* in terms of having a sense for certain kinds of entities, there is the possibility of individuals being deeply unbalanced (like the nature lover who loves animals but does not know how to get on with human beings), where the imbalance itself may well be conveyed to the pupil (as when the teacher conveys a fanatical hatred of technology along with their love of nature) or where many of the pupils are simply not reached by the teacher (for example, the ones who are already committed to a life in front of the games console), because he or she does not have a genuine sense for these pupils.

The second issue this raises is that, from a more practical educational perspective, there is the problem of deciding for which aspects of *life* and for which *living beings* the pupils should get a sense. Just to take the social domain as an example, should pupils have an authentic sense for their class mates, their teachers, ethnic minorities, disabled people, old people; should they learn about fairness and equality; should their focus be local, national or global; should they learn about conflicts, wars, gangs etc.? The list of things can easily grow, potentially leading to a fragmented and oversubscribed curriculum. What is more, there is the risk that the interconnections between the different domains are missed if the areas are approached separately.

In sum, if we accept that *life and living beings* demand a different kind of understanding than the practical and the theoretical ones, what is needed is that pupils are taught by teachers who have a sense for *life and living beings* while they are in contact with some of the entities in that domain. But, as we have seen, this raises the issue of fragmentation, where any individual teacher may have a sense for only some of the elements in the domain and where the curriculum can easily become fragmented and oversubscribed. Though the same problem of fragmentation exists in relation to practical and theoretical

entities, the problem is much more serious in relation to *life and living beings*, because, as will hopefully become clear as the thesis progresses, learning in the latter domain is a unitary affair and cannot be split up without losing what is essential to it.

It should be clear now that the response to this second issue of generalizing theoretically, for example, by teaching models of what it is like to be a member of a minority group or models of how conflict arises, thus taking away the necessity to teach about a myriad of different cases, is inadequate. The obvious shortcoming of such a theoretical approach being that we are back to the initial objection, where we said that it is the genuine sense for *life and living beings* and not the theoretical one that counts. Another response is to stay practical and pick certain exemplary situations and trust that what is learned there will transfer to other situations. There is probably a lot that speaks for this approach: having been guided by a person with genuine compassion for other people in a situation involving, say, a disabled person will probably be of help in a similar situation involving, say, an old person. But there will be important limitations to this kind of transfer, for example, across cultural divides. What is more, this too brings us back to the issue that such a genuine sense for other people is not practical in essence and that this approach, therefore, still leaves open the question as to the learning that is called for even in these practical situations.

Given that neither practical nor theoretical generalization will solve the problem of fragmentation (both in the individual and in the curriculum), the solution may need to be found at a level that is altogether different from either the practical or the theoretical. One possibility is that what needs to be taught is a *sense for* entities in general, as they manifests in the different domains of life. That is, there may be ways to simplify the plethora of situations where such a genuine sense for *life and living beings* is called for and teach the sense for entities itself - where this sense would have to be different from (i.e. more general than) either a practical or theoretical understanding, or else we would be back at where we started. This would constitute a kind of sense for the entity itself, before it was taken as either theoretical, practical or, indeed, before it was taken as belonging to *life and living beings*, because this sense

would have to include a sense for what the nature of the entity was in the first place.

This line of argument has been adopted by some philosophers of education, such as Donald Vandenberg, who in *Being and Education* writes that “Each province of meaning has its own mode of awakensness, i.e. its own temporal structure, cognitive style, and sense of reality, and each has to be ‘entered’ through a specific bracketing or ‘leap’ from another mode of awakensness and province of meaning” (Vandenberg, 1971, pp. 5-6). That is, the thing the pupil ought to learn is not so much a sense for certain entities or even specific domains but a sense for entities in themselves. Following Heidegger, Vandenberg calls this an *understanding of being itself*: the ability to disclose the *being* of the entities which they encounter. Such a sense for entities in themselves, such an awakening to the being of entities, would then not be limited to one or two domains (for example, nature but not other people). As a result, the individual involved would not be internally fragmented and this sense for the being of entities would, in effect, only need to be learned once and not separately for every domain that was thought important.

This could potentially solve the difficulties of fragmentation I highlighted above. First there would be a sense for entities, an understanding of the being of entities themselves that is so fundamental that it would be able to “decide” whether an entity belonged to the category of *life and living beings* or whether it should be approached as a practical or theoretical entity. Second, it would be so open to the being of entities that it would simply get them right, be open to their being as it presented itself, resulting in the individual having a sense for the entity itself, regardless whether the entity was a tree or a bee, a single individual or a group of people, oneself or the infinity of the universe.

Appealing though it may sound, this way of putting it brings with it its own potential difficulties. First, it may well become very abstract (indeed, theoretical) in such a way that a connection with practice cannot be made. This could manifest in the philosopher of education remaining silent about what the implications are for the practice of education, (leaving it - perhaps conveniently - to the practitioner to work out the practical implications), or

coming up with practical recommendations that fail to distinguish themselves from other educational approaches, because they are the fruit of logical extrapolation rather than experience (such as the importance for the teacher to listen to the pupil, to practice what they preach and to be a learner him or herself). Second, it puts an unrealistic demand on the educator<sup>5</sup>, as they are required to have a sense for the being of entities themselves. In practice this would mean that all but the most enlightened educators will either put the demand aside altogether or settle for the kind of understanding of being that comes natural to them and forget about the rest.

What is more, even that most rare of teachers who did have an actual sense for the being of entities, so that she could “decide” whether an entity she and the pupils were engaging with was best approached theoretically, practically or as belonging to *life and living beings* (or, indeed, in a combination of these), where her sense for the being of the entities was so genuine she could convey it to the pupils and where she was in herself not fragmented (not limited to having a genuine sense for the being of some entities but not others), even then she would still be faced with the difficulty that all the teaching methods and pedagogical tools at her disposal were based on a notion of learning that is appropriate in relation to theoretical and practical entities (*learning as modification and growth*) but not to those belonging to *life and living beings*, let alone to entities in themselves as existing prior to belonging to any of these worlds.

In response to this last point some would, no doubt, aver that we need not worry about teaching methods and pedagogical tools, because this sense for the being of entities “conveys itself”. This may contain some truth, when considered in a one-on-one teaching situation where the teacher or, as we said earlier, the parent or anyone else involved in the education of the child has a

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<sup>5</sup> The term “educator” will be used in its most general sense possible to denote a person in any kind of educational role, such as a parent, or grandparent who looks after a grandchild, a teacher, teaching assistant, or anyone else who has some sort of educational responsibility for a child – and this would include the stranger who tries to explain to noisy youngsters in a public library what the conventions of being in a library entail (provided such individuals still exist). To put it differently, the educator in this thesis will denote that person who is concerned to help bring about learning in another person.

fair amount of discretion as to how to educate. But in the context of large-scale education, compulsory curriculums and large classroom sizes, the sense for the being of entities an individual teacher may bring with them into the classroom will simply be drowned out by the surrounding noise. This is not to be defeatist about the possibilities of individuals to have their own voice in education, but to acknowledge that, compared to, say, charisma or exceptional academic competence, the sense for the being of entities themselves is not necessarily commanding or persuasive. Indeed, as we will see later in the thesis, its “voice” is one of silence.

In other words, positing something like *a sense for the being of entities in themselves* creates a gap between the reality we find ourselves in and the situation where we could have an education that might begin to address the problems we are facing in relation to *life and living beings*. That is, we do not usually have the sense for entities in themselves in the way that is required and even if we did, we would not have the pedagogical wherewithal to convey this sense for entities in themselves. What we need is something that can bridge the gap between our current understandings and practices and an education that can teach the sense for the being of entities in themselves. The thing that in education bridges the gap between *current* and *possible* ways of doing and understanding is, of course, learning. But, as has been suggested (and this will be argued in detail in Chapter Two and Three), the problem is that we have accounts of learning that are appropriate in relation to practical and theoretical entities, but much less so in relation to *life and living beings* and *a sense for the being of entities in themselves* includes the latter category.

What this thesis will argue is that what is needed first of all is a different notion of learning, one that is appropriate to learning to get a sense for the being of entities in themselves. Rather than saying that the teacher needs to have such a sense for the being of entities in themselves, it will be argued that they need to have a sense of the importance of getting this sense for the being of entities in themselves and some understanding of what it means to learn to get that sense. This learning will be called *learning to be authentic*. In other words, not only does the question of *learning to be authentic* seek to bridge the gap between our present educational practices and an understanding of *life and*

*living beings*, it also changes the demand on those involved in education from that of *knowing* what such an understanding of being actually is and being able to practice it (i.e. having a lived, first-person experience of it) to that of *having a sense*, however tentative, of there being something important there that needs to be learned. Thus the parent and the teacher, the school director and the support staff, the policy maker and the inspector become the first and most important learners.

This *learning to be authentic* would be very different from the notion of *learning as modification and growth* we have inherited from the dominant theories of learning as they are currently used in education - such as behaviourism, constructivism, and situated learning. The kind of learning we are after would give access to entities *before* their being as practical, theoretical or otherwise is even decided, and it would, therefore need to involve a kind of radically new approach to entities in general. The notion of coming to relate to an entity in a way that is ruled by mechanisms of modification and growth and how we have learned how to act may need to be put aside. In this we will need to be open to the possibility that the very way we conceive of experience may be revised, even to the extent that some of what needs to be learned about may not manifest in quite the same structural or temporal ways as practical or theoretical entities. Our entire sense of who we are and what kind of place the world is we live in may be challenged. The way we conceive of our relationship with ourselves, other people, the natural world and life as a whole may need to change. All in all, we would need to be open to a concept of learning that differed radically from the notion of *learning as modification and growth*.

### **1.3 The approach taken in this thesis**

It should be clear from the above that the form of learning this thesis aims to bring to light is one that cannot readily be discerned, if we start off with our current conception of learning as it can be found in the dominant theories of learning. That is, our current conception of *learning as modification and growth* is likely to get in the way of our noticing when and where *learning to be authentic* takes place. The approach that will be taken to resolve this difficulty can be called hermeneutic (For a discussion of philosophical hermeneutics, see

Grondin, 1994), where there is a reciprocal illumination of, on the one hand, a possible example of the thing<sup>6</sup> one aims to become clear about and, on the other hand, a tentative first description of what the thing is.

What is needed is a “first orientation”, a first indication as to where to look for such a *learning to be authentic*. I will do this in chapter 2, by taking an example of a teacher who discovers a new way of relating to one of his pupils, which is presented as a change experience that cannot be readily explained with the help of accounts that take learning as a process of *modification and growth*. I will, in discussing this example, highlight a number of assumptions that these accounts of learning make, and show how these assumptions prohibit a coherent account of the change experience we have given as an example. The questions this raises about our concept of learning concern the philosophical assumptions the conventional accounts of learning make about the process of learning. These assumptions about learning will be called *the metaphysical assumptions of learning*.

The issue here is that before learning can be something the teacher aims to bring about in their class, before it can be studied empirically by a researcher, there needs to be some understanding of what learning is in the first place, how, for example, it is different from knowing or acting. A teacher promoting or an educationalist studying learning needs to have some sense of what in the, for all practical purposes, infinite number of details they could focus on in the behaviour or experience of an individual they are going to actually focus on, in their study of the phenomenon. This selection of salient aspects of an individual’s behaviour requires a “first orientation” towards that kind of learning, which predates the actual promotion or investigation of learning.

In many cases this is fairly unproblematic. If, for example, the teacher wants to ensure that (or if the researcher wants to study how) the times tables are learned, they have relatively (but only relatively) unproblematic criteria of what the learning is they are focussing on (something like those events,

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<sup>6</sup> In this thesis the word “thing” will be used to indicate something in the most general and non-committal way possible, in the way that anything could be called a thing, including a process or the world as a whole.

between the learner being as yet unable to recite the times table and them being able to do so, that are believed to be relevant to the change between these two states). In the case of the present investigation there is, however, no such prior notion of learning that one can fall back on, as the investigation concerns the very nature of learning itself rather than an investigation into aspects of a process that has already been called learning.

What this means is that we need, for the present investigation, a gradual development of, at the same time, an increasingly clear sense of instances of the learning we are trying to focus on, and an increasingly detailed description of the kind of learning we are beginning to focus on. Because this process is hermeneutic and, therefore, essentially circular (getting the learning in focus depends on a description of the learning, while the description of the learning itself depends on getting the learning into focus), my starting point will be the example of a change event, and I will, provisionally, stipulate that it constitutes *learning to be authentic*. Then, as similar change events are later described in increasingly detailed fashion, I will begin to identify other change events that fall in the same category of events. With a fuller description of the process of learning than the examples which were initially chosen exemplify I hope, eventually, to have a description that is self-evidently a form of learning.

The examples of *learning to be authentic* given in this thesis are phenomenological (for a general introduction to Phenomenology, see Sokolowski, 2000), in that they aim to describe the learning in terms of the experience of this kind of learning, rather than, say, from a third-person perspective, objectively, as in neurological or functional descriptions of learning. These examples mostly concern adults (parents and teachers) going through a process of becoming authentic in a certain respect. The reason that the examples concern adults is that such examples are easier to give than examples of children going from an inauthentic way of being to an authentic one. As will be explained in Chapter 3, *learning to be authentic* involves a “dying towards” existing ways of being, and it is simply much easier to describe in a plausible way what the “falling away” of existing ways of being that make up this “dying towards” involves for adults. In the case of children there would, first of all, be much less to “fall away”, as some or many (depending on the age)

of the ways of acting and perceiving things, of responding emotionally, and articulating experiences in terms of a particular discourse will simply not yet have been developed. This is not to say that we are born as “empty slates”, but it does imply that much of the person we are eventually to become has not yet been shaped fully, making it harder to bring into relief what exactly a “falling away” of such ways of being consists of.

Secondly, as an adult it is much harder to construct plausible phenomenological descriptions of the experience of children. If the processes described in this thesis were found to be relevant to the education of children, it would, therefore, probably be prudent to extend the phenomenological investigation done in the context of this thesis and to undertake additional *empirical* phenomenological research into the experiences of children and young adults in the domain of *learning to be authentic* as it is developed in this thesis. This could help frame the processes described in this thesis in terms that fit the experience of children better and correct any inaccuracies that may have slipped in, where the processes described here are not exactly the same for children.

Though the lack of examples, and indeed the claim to full accuracy, of the processes described in this thesis in terms of the experience of children is undoubtedly a limitation, the importance of this limitation should not be overstated. Just as a treatise expounding the importance of children learning how to write is of little use if the result is that adults who themselves have no sense for what writing is try to teach it to children, so too it is, in many ways, of priority that the adults have at least some acquaintance with the process of becoming authentic, before they set out to educate the children in their care with the aim of awakening their potential for being authentic. As will become clear later (e.g. in Chapter 6), such an understanding need not be total and complete, because the interaction between the educator and the child may develop its own dynamic towards increasing authenticity, and because a tentative understanding on behalf of the educator may provide enough of an impetus to set the child on a path towards authenticity of their own accord.

After I have, in chapter 2, set out how some of the core assumptions about learning made in the dominant theories of learning preclude the possibility of *learning to be authentic*, I will take Heidegger's (incomplete) account of the process of becoming authentic as a paradigm account of the process of *learning to be authentic*. In this I will draw chiefly on Heidegger's *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962), which is probably the canonical text on authenticity as it became an influential concept in twentieth-century philosophy.

One reason for choosing Heidegger's (incomplete) account of the process of becoming authentic as such a paradigm is that his account of the process of becoming authentic comes very close to the kind of *learning to be authentic* I am after. Another important reason is that Heidegger's account of becoming authentic (as an example of the learning I am after) has its counterpart in an account of learning as it is conventionally understood. That is, on the one hand, the accounts of learning, as we find them in the main theories of learning (*learning as modification and growth*), are silent on the new kind of learning we are trying to bring to light in this thesis – as will become clear in Chapter 2. On the other hand, accounts of the processes we are trying to bring to light and characterize as learning in this thesis, such as accounts of meditative and contemplative practices (See, for example, Chapter 3, Radical Self-Transcendence, in De Nys, 2009) tend to be silent on conventional kinds of learning.

That is, most, if not all, accounts of *learning as modification and growth* and accounts of processes we could call *learning to be authentic* have in common that they see the conventional learning and the other kind of learning as essentially separate processes. What is more, those accounts that exist of the processes that are like *learning to be authentic* tend to adhere to a conventional conceptualization of the individual (one that is contested in the kind of phenomenology that will inform this thesis – see Chapter 3), with the result that these processes tend to be formulated in terms of paradoxes (For examples from Zen Buddhism, see Yuan-wu, 1977) or in terms of metaphor, poetically, because it is believed that the experiences involved transcend the possibilities of language (For a discussion of the language used in relation to these kinds of experiences see: De Nys, 2009, Ch. 2). Though I am not claiming

that they are in all respects the same process, I am claiming that the two are related, and that they can be described, with the help of Heidegger's philosophy, within one and the same conceptual framework. Indeed, in Chapter 7, an attempt is made to indicate how the two processes can be combined in one movement of learning.

My starting point for this conceptual apparatus will be Heidegger's philosophical writings of the 1920s, centring around his book *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962), which, it can be argued, constitutes a coherent whole – that is, before he makes certain substantial changes in the language he uses (and perhaps even in his entire philosophical approach, but this is subject to debate) in the early and mid-1930s, in what is called the *Kehre*, the “turning”, in his philosophy. Chapters 3 through 6 will be occupied with this task of, on the one hand, trying to distil an account of *learning to be authentic* from Heidegger's writings and, on the other hand taking what can be distilled from Heidegger's writings and developing it into a fuller description of this process than can be found in his writings.

That is, Heidegger himself did not provide a sufficiently detailed account of the process of becoming authentic for it to become a full-blown account of *learning to be authentic*, which means that a detailed description of such a process needs to be in part inferred from his writings or derived from a different source, either the work of a later philosopher or one's own phenomenological investigations. In this I will attempt to stay true to Heidegger's approach to philosophy: it is phenomenological in that it aims to describe the structure of the experience as it is experienced and they are hermeneutic in the sense, already explained above, of looking for an interpretation of these experiences that is true to them in their own right.

#### **1.4 Contribution to knowledge**

The first contribution to knowledge this thesis aims to make is to further Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological investigations into the nature of *Dasein* (loosely, Heidegger's word for the human being) and authenticity in such a way that it yields an account of *learning to be authentic*. As indicated, Heidegger himself did not explicitly address this issue in his writings, and,

though there are numerous discussions about Heidegger's notion of authenticity as it is found in *Being and Time* (See, for example, Blattner, 2006; Capobianco, 2007; Critchley, 2008; Crowe, 2008; Dahlstrom, 2001; Dreyfus, 1991; Guignon, 2000; Kisiel, 1993; Levine, 2008; Schuermann, 2008; Thomson, 2004; Vandenberg, 1971), there is no account of the actual process that leads to authenticity.

As a result, the bulk of this thesis, Chapters 4 to 6, is concerned with taking what indications can be found in *Being and Time* and Heidegger's lectures and writings of the late 1920s (Heidegger, 1925; Heidegger, 1982; Heidegger, 1985; Heidegger, 1995a; Heidegger, 1995b; Heidegger, 1998a; Heidegger, 1998b) and to continue the phenomenological investigations found in these sources, so as to construct an account of the process of becoming authentic.

The resulting account of the process of becoming authentic is meant to be read as explicating some of the structures of experience that pertain to these kinds of learning. These explications are, as we saw earlier, phenomenological, in that they describe the structure of experience, and hermeneutic, in that they seek to uncover a more originary description of the experience in question than would be accessible by merely understanding the experience in terms of either our common-sense categories of understanding or in terms of the categories of understanding implicit in the main accounts of learning in their description of *learning as modification and growth*. For example, the experience of "really listening" to a pupil is (in Chapter 6) described in terms that reject the common-sense separation between speaker and listener that we tend to take for granted, describing the experience (phenomenologically), but going beyond our common-sense perspective by uncovering (hermeneutically) the *experiential* unity of speaker and listener in the event of "really listening".

It is important to note that the notions used in this investigation are phenomenological ones and that this does not entail that what happens at the experiential (phenomenological) level is an accurate description of what happens at the biological or functional level. For example, the experiential claim (made in Chapter 6) that there is a listening without articulating what is being heard does not entail that the neurological regularities that can normally

be observed (of the same neurons being activated in response to the same kind of aural stimuli) no longer holds. What happens at the phenomenological level can, after all, be different from what happens at the biological level. What is more, the word articulation, to stay with the same example, is itself a phenomenological one, in that persons can articulate but neurons cannot (unless one attributes such actions to neurons in a way that is metaphorical, as when we, for example, say that “the ear listens”). That is, the word articulation refers to the irreducible whole-person event we have access to, if at all, at the phenomenological level.

The fact that many people never report having the experiences discussed in this thesis does not discount their possibility. Indeed, it is in line with the philosophical tradition of hermeneutic phenomenology to aim to awaken the reader of such works of philosophy to such possibilities. The function of what is written in this thesis is that of indicating the structures of experience that can be uncovered by hermeneutic phenomenology, where it is always only the way in which the reader for her or himself appropriates what is being indicated that constitutes the meaning of what is written. Heidegger referred to this as formal indication<sup>7</sup>, which is a way of “making a gesture” in the direction of the structures that are at issue, in the understanding that the reader will have their own, direct access to those structures, as these are thought to be universal, or at least generally valid within the tradition in which the writing takes place.

Because what is written aims to uncover those structures of experience that tend to remain hidden in the culture at the time of writing, it is understood that at different times and in different cultures different things may be hidden

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<sup>7</sup> See Grondin 1994 for a discussion of Heidegger’s notion of formal indication. “All the propositions on the being of *Dasein* [...] have, as uttered sentences, the character of an indication: they only indicate *Dasein* [...]they indicate a possible understanding and the conceptuality of the structures of *Dasein* that lies in such an understanding” (Heidegger, 1925, cited in Grondin 1994).

and, therefore, in need of uncovering. In other words, in some places and at some times what is written here will strike people as either too obvious to merit mentioning, misguided in that it fails to address “the real issue”, or indeed, unintelligible. This highlights the fact that what is written here should be seen as part of an on-going process of uncovering aspects of our experience that tend to remain hidden from us, where what is clear to see at one point in time may be hidden from sight at a later point (think, for example, of the ways in which many educated medieval men and women will have had a rich and varied understanding of different kinds of religious experience, much of which was lost with the secularization of society).

On the basis of the above, we can say that the contribution to knowledge this thesis aims to make is not cumulative. Even if the investigation involves and elaborates on Heidegger’s writings on authenticity, and in that respect contributes to Heidegger scholarship, it is not the case that this thesis builds on existing knowledge, in order to, as it were, add a further step at the top end of the ladder. Rather, it is to uncover, for our times, parts of experience that tend to remain hidden, in order to illuminate certain aspects of educational theory and practice, and to do so in a way that does not deliver facts others can use in their deliberations (though some of what is uncovered in this thesis may feature in such deliberations), or prescriptions for practice (though examples will be given of how what is uncovered in this thesis may pan out in practice), or recommendations for policy (though some implications for policy may certainly be drawn), and so on.

Rather, the aspects of experience that are illuminated are meant to indicate, as was said earlier, to the reader the existence of those aspects, so that the reader may discover their own way to these aspects of experience, and where it is the reader’s own understanding of those experiences (which may well be different in certain respects from what is described in this thesis, just as what is described here is in many respects a modification and elaboration of the descriptions that were found in Heidegger) that constitute the real fruit of this thesis. That this is so is necessary with respect to the subject matter and not the result of a more or less arbitrary choice to work within a certain philosophical tradition.

We could say that the formal indication that is the fruit of this hermeneutic phenomenological investigation directs the reader to the region of experience where, it is claimed, *learning to be authentic* can take place. In this it directs the reader to this region without taking the entities in that region as either practical or theoretical or, indeed, as having any other kind of being. If, however, this thesis aimed to give a theoretical exposition or an account aimed at practical guidance, it would take the subject of the investigation, *learning to be authentic*, as such a theoretical or practical entity, which would alienate the subject of the investigation from the investigative process even before it started. What is at stake is a form of learning that will give access to and be able to guide us in relation to what I earlier called *life and living beings*. But access to this form of learning, which itself belongs to *life and living beings*, is only genuine access to the learning itself, if it is the result of *learning to be authentic*. As a result, it would not really be coherent to speak of knowing what *learning to be authentic* is as a result of a process of that took this learning as either something theoretical or practical.

Therefore, since the aim of this thesis is bring to light the process of *learning to be authentic* and, since an understanding of such learning is meaningful only in so far as the reader understands it in a way that is appropriate for *life and living beings*, it is only the awakening in themselves of such *learning to be authentic* that could count as a true (true to the subject matter at hand) understanding – everything else would be a mere translation into the domain of practical or theoretical entities. To put it in these terms does not rule out a critical approach on the part of the reader (this possibility will be discussed in Chapter 6.4.1) or indeed that what is described in this thesis can from a certain perspective be assessed in terms of it meeting or failing to meet certain academic standards, but merely that, to the extent that what is described in this thesis is valid, an authentic understanding of it consists in the personal appropriation for him or herself on the part of the reader.

In sum, the contribution to knowledge this thesis aims to make is that of indicating a way of access to aspects of certain educational experiences that tend to remain hidden in western culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, so that the reader may come to his or her own understanding of those experiences and do so in

such a way that this understanding informs their theoretical and practical understanding of education. Apart from this, certain aspects of Heidegger's account of becoming authentic will be illuminated and elaborated in a way that has not been done before, making an original contribution to Heidegger scholarship. What is more, the educational significance of the ensuing account of learning will be developed in ways that impinge on both educational practice and theory, most importantly with respect the way learning is conceived, where existing accounts of learning will be complemented so as to include a dimension of human learning that has hitherto remained largely unnoticed, un-theorized and undeveloped in practice.

## 2 The metaphysical assumptions about learning made in conventional theories of learning that rule out the possibility of *learning to be authentic*

### 2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to show how certain metaphysical assumptions about learning made in some of the main conventional theories of learning rule out the possibility of the kind *learning to be authentic* I discussed in the introduction. These metaphysical assumptions are found in a number of mechanisms according to which learning is believed to always involve an object of learning as well as a process of growth, which is rooted in the existing way of being of the learner and which is characterized by increased integration and differentiation ultimately leading to increased rigidity. These assumptions, it will be argued, rule out a learning that results in radical self-renewal and a concomitant change in the structure of experience itself.

Because we have, as yet, no more than provisional characteristics of such a *learning to be authentic*, I will look at what could be considered a concrete illustration of such learning. With the help of this illustration I will show that

the metaphysical assumptions about learning made in some of the main theories of learning rule out the possibility of such *learning to be authentic*. Like the other illustrations in this thesis, it is fictitious and, therefore, does not lay claim to having actually taken place. The situation described in the vignette is a relatively easy one, one that, to the teacher in a busy school, may strike one as unproblematic, even romantic. This is, firstly, because the process of *learning to be authentic*, which these vignettes aim to illustrate, is a subtle one, one that demands a lot of attention on behalf of the learner. It is, therefore, likely that such a learning to be authentic happens more readily in a situation where the stakes are not very high, and where the situation is “under control”. This is not to say that *learning to be authentic* cannot happen in difficult, conflicted, or chaotic situations, just that it is more realistic to describe them occurring, at least initially, in relatively peaceful situations. Secondly, though a vignette describing a difficult situation may gain in seeming applicability to the realities of the life of a teacher, it wouldn’t add to illuminating the actual process itself and, as was said in the introduction, the aim of this thesis is to acquaint the reader with the process of *learning to be authentic*, rather than direct educational practice. Thirdly, in taking a relatively unproblematic situation as a problem, there is the acknowledgement that what is generally considered an unproblematic situation may still be one that is inauthentic in the normative sense of the word, as it will be developed in this thesis.

The plausibility of the illustration hangs on whether it accurately reflects the kinds of experiences discussed in the thesis and is an accurate (phenomenological) description of experiences that individuals are capable of having. The function of the following illustration is both negative and positive. It is negative, in that it is meant to serve in the argument that our metaphysical assumptions about learning preclude the possibility of any kind of learning that would lead to such kinds of experience. It is positive in that it is meant to give a first concrete indication of the kind of learning I will be slowly bringing to light in this thesis.

In the chapters following this one I will then aim to find a form of learning that is free from at least some of these metaphysical assumptions made in the main theories of learning. More precisely, I will take Heidegger’s notion of

authenticity and show how it involves both a change in the structure of experience itself and a kind of radical self-renewal, and that, consequently, an account of the process of becoming authentic can be taken as an instance of *learning to be authentic*. But, given that an account of such learning is, as far as I have been able to establish, as yet unavailable, I will first look at our example, which is an educational one, where education is thought of as including both schooling and parenting and, as indicated in Section 1.2, is itself defined in terms of learning.

Reports of individuals having the kinds of experiences this thesis seeks to investigate are not uncommon (for examples, see Forman, 1998), even if they remain the exception rather than the rule. The psychologist Irvin Yalom, for example, cites Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* as a literary example of the story of a man who goes through a major and, to remove ambiguity, psychological change as he lies dying. Ivan Illych "realizes that all his life he has shielded himself from the notion of death through his preoccupation with prestige, appearance and money. ... Then, following an astounding conversation with the deepest part of himself, he awakens in a moment of great clarity to the fact that he is dying so badly because he has lived so badly. His whole life has been wrong. In shielding himself from death, he has shielded himself from life as well. ... He grows aware that not only he but all living things must die. He discovers compassion – a new feeling in himself ... and ultimately [he] dies not in pain but in the joy of intense compassion" (Yalom, 2008, pp. 35-36). This may well be an example of learning to be authentic, even if it is not detailed enough to tell with certainty.

To have a more detailed account to consider, I will take as our illustration what could be an everyday educational occurrence: a teacher who, at a loss as to how to deal with a difficult student, comes to a sudden insight that this approach has been wrong-footed, with the result that he finds a different way of approaching the student. What makes this occurrence different from that of someone, say, merely changing their perspective on the situation is that this teacher is himself in some ways transformed in the process: not only does he end up perceiving the whole situation concerning the difficult student differently, he also has a radically changed experience of himself, he feels

different about his relationship with the pupil and, what is more, has found a different basis in himself from which to approach the situation<sup>8</sup>. In other words, he undergoes a change in the structure of experience itself and a kind of radical self-renewal.

Our example begins early on a Saturday evening in May, when the teacher is driving back home after having dropped his two young daughters off at their mother's place. On his way home through the country lanes he stops at the foot of a hill, parks his car, and begins to walk up the hill through the woods, to the top from where he will be able to see far across the country side, towards the sea. While he is walking through the woods, he thinks about a pupil who he has been having difficulties with. This pupil, who is in his year nine group, has been coming to the rehearsals of the play he is putting up for the end of year. Though the pupil appears to be keen to be part of the play, he has also been disruptive, struggling to pay attention and failing to learn his lines. He seems to have difficulties at home and often appears poorly rested.

Whereas normally the teacher would be quick to act in such a situation and be decisive about it, he has found that there is something in this boy that is making him feel uncertain about the approach to take. Somehow he feels incapable of reaching the boy while, at the same time, he would really like to be able to reach him, producing that particular combination of affection and frustration that marks some teacher-student relationships. As he is walking up the hill, he initially thinks through the whole situation with the student again: has he used the right kind of approach, said the right things, been strict enough, been understanding enough? Should he set targets or should he rather allow the student to decide? Is he looking at it in the right way? And so on.

Then it strikes him that the way he feels about this situation is very much one of him being the problem solver and the situation with the student representing a problem. He feels himself to have created a world around him in which he appears as someone who is there to solve problems and that, as part

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<sup>8</sup> How this is different from other critical approaches that involve the whole person, such as reflexivity (Moore, 2012, p. 124) will be explained in Section 3.6.1 and again Section 7.1.2.

of that world, the situations he finds himself in are also approached as problems. It is as if he always moves in a certain kind of world, where his relationships to things are that of problem solving. This realization brings him back to how he used to feel as a young man at home and in relation to his parents and siblings, and it seems that it was then that he became a “problem solver”. But now he feels how this way of being is just one of many possible ways and how liberating it is to just let it be, to allow it to subside, even as this brings up certain feelings of sadness and pain from his younger days, because it brings back some of the feelings that first set him on the road to becoming a “problem solver”.

And, as his mind returns to the troublesome pupil, he becomes aware of the way he has structured his relationship with the pupil along certain lines that now begin to appear him as arbitrary. He has, in certain ways identified with the student, for he too had been in many ways a troublesome youth, insecure and withdrawn yet wanting to come out and make contact with people, to express himself. But then he also feels that the student is different from him in certain ways that appear almost unbridgeable: he seems a bit of a “hot-house flower”, lacking in drive and always talking with the girls in a way that seems effeminate. But at this point he realizes that those likes and dislikes have stood in the way of seeing the pupil as he really is. Those details about how he does and does not identify and understand the pupil now strike him as a web of reactions he has allowed himself to get tangled up in, where, really there is a much more direct and dispassionate way of relating to the pupil. And the ways in which he had hitherto structured his relationship with the pupil simply fall away, leaving behind a sense of connection with the student which is not attributable to any particular traits, but which is as deep as it is wordless.

Again he returns to the question of how to approach the situation with the student. His mood is different now, because the heaviness of having to solve a problem has lifted, and he feels much freer in relation to the student now, as there are no longer the likes and dislikes he has to navigate, in order to find a position from which to approach the student. As ideas emerge of how to approach the situation - such as taking the boy aside after the next rehearsal for a chat -, these ideas take on a different quality. They are no longer

envisaged as acts that may cause a change in the situation, as strategies and interventions, but merely as ideas arising in response to a situation that can itself never be captured in terms of ideas, strategies and planned interventions. The situation is clearly there, one where, in the context of a drama project, a troublesome youth is struggling to come to terms with certain things, and yet the teacher finds he cannot define the situation any further without violating the nature of the situation. He has to let the situation be in some way, even as ideas of how to deal with it come and go.

In a strange way the teacher now feels he is more in touch with the situation than ever before, and yet, he has let go almost completely of the way he had been connected to the situation before: he no longer feels bound to the situation as a problem that he is called on to solve; he no longer identifies with the boy in the way he did before; he no longer tries to decide on to how to handle the situation in advance. The situation is there for him in a more immediate way than ever before and it is as if all the ways in which he had previously invested in the situation had been there only to stand between him and the situation itself. Strangely enough, this feeling of direct connection is also one of emptiness, of not having anything to be certain about and feel secure in, of not being able to feel good about and count as an actual or potential future achievement.

As this feeling of emptiness becomes stronger, the woods around the teacher, the evening sun shining through the branches, the birds singing and the sand under his feet all come to his attention in an immediate way. There is a feeling of connection to all the living things around him that is so direct it does not appear to go through any of the senses. What is more, the things he experiences around him, the flowers and the trees, the wind and the bees, all appear as within the space of his awareness. It is as if there is simply the awareness of the woods, the sun and the sky and that there is no separate self that has to come out of its enclosure in order to connect with the woods, the sun and the sky. It is all simply there, just as his body is there walking, and just as the thoughts he has are there, arising in the same space of awareness within which the things around him arise.

Then he reaches the top of the hill and for some time just stands there, overlooking the country side all the way towards the sea. There is, for him, a vast space of awareness within which all the things he sees and hears and feels and thinks arise and subside again. Everything is in motion, because he does not latch on to any particular thing he sees, hears, feels or considers. And he feels connected to every living thing he sees and to the ones he does not see but senses, through the ideas he has of them.

By now he has left behind thoughts about the troublesome pupil. Now thoughts about his two daughters and his ex-wife arise in the form of images and feelings, some pleasant others painful. And they seem to arise out of the same emptiness that remained after he had let go of all the ways in which he had invested in the situation with the pupil in his drama class. The whole experience has made him see things anew, but not “anew” in the sense of having come upon a new perspective from which to approach things, but, rather, in the sense that his whole way of being was in a constant state of renewal, where it was impossible to tell how he would approach future situations, because he realized that he would have to be free of plans and strategies now, in order for him to be able to truly meet these situations as and when they would arise.

## **2.2 The metaphysics of current theories of learning**

I will now turn to different theoretical accounts of learning to see how their formal characteristics, their metaphysics, relate to the example of learning to be authentic I considered above. Some of these accounts, like those of Piaget, and Vygotsky, have been far more influential in education than others, for example, Hebbian learning. Still, they are treated as equal in the following discussion, because what is at stake is the *meaning* of learning in general as we find it in our society.

In a recent survey of theories of learning Judith Ireson writes that “there is no single unifying framework” for learning (Ireson, 2008, p. 28). This sentiment is echoed in the philosophical literature about learning. Thus, in his book *The Philosophy of Human Learning* (1998) Winch discusses philosophical issues to do with learning, but expressly disavows any attempt at what he calls “grand

theory building” (Winch, 1998, p. ix); he does not attempt to arrive at one, overall concept of learning, even if it “might be inferred [from the book] that Winch views ‘learning’ as a family resemblance concept” (Hager, 2005a, p. 660). Paul Hager’s position is more radical, as he writes that learning is merely a label, that “it seems plausible to view learning as a conceptual and linguistic construction, one that is widely used in many societies and cultures, but with very different meanings, which are at least partly contradictory and contested. Put differently, there is no external, reified entity that is ‘learning’” (Hager, 2008, p. 682).

Regardless whether there is a grand theory of learning waiting to be discovered, whether the concept of learning is based on family resemblance or, indeed, whether it is only a label we use for our convenience, it can be argued that there are a number of metaphysical assumptions which the major theories of learning have in common. What I will do is set out what I believe are some of these metaphysical assumptions and show how they are incompatible with a notion of learning to be authentic. As a general indication of the metaphysical assumptions that are held by some of the main theories of learning, we could say that *learning is generally conceptualized as a process of growth, leading to increased integration, differentiation and rigidity, one that involves a dialectic between the existing and a possible state of the learner, and that always has an object.*

### ***2.2.1 Learning is a process of growth, leading to increased integration, differentiation, and rigidity***

The principle of association is that one thing calls up the other thing. In everyday language we speak of associating one thing with another, as when we associate the smell of pipe tobacco with a particular person or when we associate a particular song with a week of clubbing on Ibiza. Thus, when we smell pipe tobacco, the memory of that person may be evoked, we may “see” the person, or “hear” their voice, feel emotions we used to feel in the presence of that person, or think about something else related to the person, like their wife, who doesn’t like him to smoke. This kind of associative memory can be said to be the co-occurrence of two experiences, one of which is actual (the smell of tobacco) and one of which is remembered (something that in the past

co-occurred with smelling the tobacco). But there can also be an association between two experiences that are remembered, as when the smell of tobacco sets one off on a “stream of consciousness” series of associated memories. Likewise, when, back at work in the office, we hear the song we danced to every night for a week on Ibiza, we may “spontaneously” begin to move our body - before checking the urge to get up and dance. This is essentially the same mechanism as we find in the association between two stimuli, except that in this case the association is between a stimulus and a movement, a behaviour, an action, rather than a perceptual memory, such as that of a smell or a sound.

The association can be simple, when a stimulus evokes initially only one association, for example when hearing a particular name on the radio evokes the memory of the person one knows with the same name or when hearing the name of one’s former teacher makes one sit up straight without even thinking about it. The association can also be complex, when the stimulus evokes a whole network of memories that are interlinked, for example when the smell of something one used to smell in one’s youth “takes one back to one’s childhood” or when a doctor who is on emergency call is woken up at night by the phone ringing and is immediately ready to do everything involved in getting up, grabbing the necessary equipment, getting the car out of the garage, and so on.

We find the principle of association in neuro-scientific accounts of learning. “Whenever one cell (A) repeatedly takes part in the firing of another (B), ‘some growth process or metabolic change takes place in one or both cells’ such that the efficiency of the first cell in firing the second is increased” (Fuster, 2003, p. 42). This kind of learning is often called Hebbian learning, after the neuroscientist, Donald Hebb. “The basic tenet of Hebbian learning in neural networks is that ‘units that fire together, wire together’” (Manukata and Pfaffly, 2004, p. 141). Thus once a set of neurons has “fired”, been active, together, they are much more likely to “fire” together again in the future. This “firing together” can spread so that one group of neurons “fires” together with another group in the way that two experiences, each involving the “firing” of many neurons, are likely to occur together. This “firing together” may also involve a small, local, group of neurons setting off many large groups of

neurons, as in a chain reaction, as when a small detail of something is experienced which evokes a world of association – like Proust and his Madeleine in *The Remembrance of Things Past*.

We also find the principle of association in behaviourist accounts of learning. In Behaviourist theories of learning the two main mechanisms, which in the natural world always work together, rely on association to work. On the one hand, there is the behaviour of the organism “as if it learns to associate” a stimulus (S) with a biologically significant event (S\*). The paradigmatic case of this “S-S\* learning” is that of Pavlov’s dog, who behaved as if he associated the sound of the bell (the stimulus, S) with food (the biologically significant event, S\*). On the other hand, there is the behaviour of the organism “as if it has associated” a behaviour or response (R) with a biologically significant event (S\*). Here the case that exemplifies this R-S\* learning is that of Skinner’s box, where the rat behaved as if it associated pressing the lever (the response, R) with the food pellet (the biologically significant event, S\*) (Bouton, 2007, p. 28). In reality the two mechanisms are “almost inseparable”, as every time a biologically significant stimulus (S\*), like food, is associated with behaviour (R) it can also be associated with stimuli (S) that are present as well. And this goes the other way round as well, as the presence of a stimulus (S) can be associated with a biologically significant stimulus (S\*), as well as with a response (R) (Bouton, 2007, p. 29).

Piaget appears to subsume the issue of association under that of assimilation. “The dog that salivates at the sight of food will not salivate in this way at the sound of a bell unless he assimilates it ... to the schema of this action [of salivation]” (Piaget, 2001, p. 107). Yet such a schema is itself a “structure or organization of actions as they are transferred or generalized by repetition in similar or analogous situations” (Cited in Murray Thomas, 2005, p. 192). That is, the schema is what in the neurological account would be an associative structure. For Piaget, something that fits into an existing scheme is assimilated, whereas something that does not fit is responded to by the scheme accommodating the new input.

Closely linked with association is habit. If habit consists in doing the same thing again and again, this doing again and again always occurs in certain situations and certain temporal contexts. “We always have coffee in Geek Street” means that we always have coffee there when we are in town, which, put in terms of association, means that going to town and having coffee are associated with Geek Street. Similarly, “we always go to the computer shop before having coffee in Geek Street” can be seen as a temporal association between arriving in town and before we have coffee. Thus, after having had good a browse through the memory stick section, stepping out of the computer shop, the body may, quite of its own accord, turn into the direction of Geek Street and at the same time all sorts of associations with coffee may be called up: the beginnings of withdrawal symptoms linked with the expectation of the coffee buzz, the image of the grumpy woman behind the till at the coffee shop, the smell of pastries, and so on.

Apart from association and habit, the other most basic element we find in theories of learning is that of valence: “emotional force or significance”, especially “the extent to which an individual is attracted or repelled by an object, an event, or person” (SOED, 2007). In Behaviourism valence is represented by the biologically significant stimulus that motivates the behaviour: if there is no biologically significant stimulus at some point there is, according to Behaviourist theory, no motivation and without motivation there is no behaviour. But, as the quote by Paul Hager at the beginning of the chapter indicated, in our “emerging understanding of learning” all human learning includes “conative and affective capacities” (Hager, 2005b, p. 662). A significant stimulus for a human being may be food, but also appreciation, sympathy, status, the resolution of inner conflict, the relief of discomfort, and so on. Valence is linked with reward and punishment learning: this is what Van Geert calls *the law of contingent effect* which “states that if a behaviour is immediately followed by a positive effect, or reward, that behaviour is likely to occur more frequently in the future” (Van Geert, 2000, p. 68).

The accounts of learning we are looking at can all be said to see learning as a process of growth. If we take Paul Van Geert’s reading of Piaget and Vygotsky, “the theories [of Piaget and Vygotsky] agree on the principle of

developmental order: behaviours, actions, problems, tasks, and experiences (or whatever else constitutes the units of analysis) can be ordered along a developmental scale in terms of less or more developmentally advanced levels” (Van Geert, 1998, p. 5). Throughout development there is a process of growth, not only with respect to the knowledge we have about more and more things, but also with respect to our “conative and affective capacities as well as other abilities and learned capacities such as bodily know-how, skills of all kinds, and so on” (Hager, 2005b, p. 662). That is, as we develop, there is less and less in life that we have not acquired knowledge about, an attitude or feelings towards, a way of acting towards, a way of being towards.

This development is a process towards increased integration and differentiation. Marton and Booth write that “development can be seen as continuous differentiation and integration of the experienced world”, where differentiation is brought about by “separation” and integration is brought about by “simultaneity” (association) (Marton and Booth, 1997, p. 138). Indeed, high levels of integrated and differentiated knowledge in a certain domain is often taken as the definition of expertise.

These two processes can also be seen at work in neurological, Hebbian, accounts of learning. On the one hand, there is increased “simultaneity” or association, where, as a result of certain input “Hebbian learning would increase the connections to [a certain] unit from relevant sending units, so the unit would become increasingly responsive to this correlation”. On the other hand there would be “separation”, where “Hebbian learning would decrease the connections to this [same] unit from irrelevant sending units, so the unit would become less responsive to other correlations in the environment”. Thus a certain unit (let’s say a group of neurons) would become especially responsive to input from certain units and unresponsive to input from other units. What is more, “[t]hese other units could then tune their weights to respond to other correlations in the environment” (Manukata and Pfaffly, 2004, pp. 142-143). That is, as the first unit specializes in receiving input from certain units, the units that are ignored by this first unit may connect with other units. “In this way, Hebbian models can self-organize so that units

specialize in representing distinct statistical regularities in the environment” (Manukata and Pfaffly, 2004, pp. 142-143).

But “[a]s connections change to strengthen certain neural responses to stimuli, this can reduce the possibility of other responses, which can impair learning” (Manukata and Pfaffly, 2004, p. 144). They give the example of Japanese language speakers who have learned, correctly, in their native language to hear the /l/ and the /r/ as the same sound, which they continue to do when learning English, where this is incorrect, a situation which is only remedied by them learning to hear the difference on the basis of exaggerated examples, which are made less exaggerated over time, to the point where they can hear the difference between the /l/ and the /r/ in natural speech. This example is used to explain the existence of critical periods in learning, but it is equally relevant in arguing that there is a decreasing amount of things for which the person does not already have a scheme to assimilate it into.

If there are increasingly fewer things that an individual does not already have a schema for, that they cannot somehow integrate into their view of things and ways of dealing with things, this means that over time the individual becomes more rigid in their ways of seeing and doing things. This accords with the experience of many people who have seen older people become more set in their ways; it is a case of “old habits dying hard”, of “not teaching an old dog new tricks”.

These processes of growth, integration and differentiation can, according to some theorists, be explained purely in terms of the self-organization of the elements of association, habit and valence discussed above. Thus Paul Van Geert writes that “development is possible ... [as] neural nets of the adaptive resonance type can construct higher levels of complexity without being issued with new resources or contents by an external source. This demonstration of the possibility of increasing complexity through self-organization is of central importance to any general theory of development” (Van Geert, 1998, p. 5). But, regardless what the correct explanation is behind these processes, they are shared by most, if not all the theoretical accounts of learning.

In the main theories of learning self-renewal happens when the individual re-organizes in the face of a situation that cannot be assimilated, that they do not have a satisfactory response to, that cannot be integrated in the existing ways of being of the individual. The response to this inability to assimilate the experience would be for the individual to re-organize (to accommodate, differentiate, adapt). This could be said to amount to a shift in perspective, in approach or attitude, where, staying with our example, the teacher would, say, cease to experience the situation as a problem and begin to see it as something to accept without feeling the need to resolve it. But this is not what happened in our example, where the teacher remains open to the situation, neither accepting the situation nor wanting to solve it. There is, therefore, no mere re-organization, but rather, a dissolution of an existing organization without replacing it with another one.

It could, of course, be argued that what is experienced as a dissolution of an existing way of organizing experience is, in effect, just another re-organization. Other than this being perhaps true in a purely formal way (every change being an instance of re-organization), there is a real phenomenological difference between the two in that there is an experiential difference between, on the one hand, having a perspective, an approach and taking a stance, and, on the other hand, letting the situation be as it is. If this is then combined with the experience of being in more direct contact with the situation now that one has ceased to grasp it in any particular way, we find that there is an event that, though it constitutes a real change in the individual, is not easily explained by the theories of learning I am considering. This is possibly because the accounts have focussed on the re-organization and growth of existing structures rather than their dissolution – which may itself be because the notion of being in contact with a situation without there being a structure that mediates that contact is unintelligible in these accounts.

In the chapters following this one, we will see how an account of change that is different from the ones that follow out of the conventional theories of learning can be said to represent radical self-renewal rather than a modification of existing structures, because it is based in the dissolution of existing structures. As part of this account it will be argued that the notion of being in contact

with a particular situation without there being a structure that mediates the contact is indeed intelligible. At this point all we can do is raise questions concerning the validity of the explanations these conventional theories of learning can give for an event of radical change, such as we have encountered in our example.

### *2.2.2 Learning involves a dialectic between existing and possible structures in the learner*

In the previous section we saw how, according to the main theories of learning, there is growth, as well as increasing integration, differentiation and rigidity in our ways of being (our knowledge, will, feelings, movements, skills, and so on). In this section I will take this point further by showing how the main theories of learning all conceive learning as involving a dialectic between existing and possible structures. The point I want to make in this section is that, according to the theoretical accounts of learning, all learning is inescapably linked to previous learning, making it again more unlikely for an individual to learn something that does not build on and follow naturally from existing structures.

Paul Van Geert discusses this aspect of the continuity between existing and possible structures in the learner at some length. He explains how, in models of neurological learning, when computer models of neurological networks are given tasks to be learned “[t]he learning system obtains information [about what needs to be learned] in terms of its own current learning state by making errors. The errors lead to updating the connection weights, which eventually reduce the distance between the current state of the system (its actual state) and the properties exemplified by [what needs to be learned] (the potential state)” (Van Geert, 1998, p. 5). That is, not only do the networks begin the learning process with their actual state, they also “understand” the information that is given to them “in terms of their current learning state”.

This is perhaps more easily understood in terms of yet another theoretical approach to learning, information-processing theory, which understands learning in terms of the application of rules to information that comes into the system – where the system is usually understood in analogy with a computer.

This approach “makes a distinction between rules or strategies on the one hand and the information resulting from applying those strategies on the other. The resulting information is then integrated in a way that either consolidates or modifies the available rules and strategy sets” (Van Geert, 1998, p. 5). Again, what we see is that the system itself collects (selects) the information it uses (by applying rules to input), and that, as a result of the information which it has collected and the way it has processed this information, the very strategies of both collecting and processing information are modified.

In terms of Piaget’s and Vygotsky’s theories, as Van Geert understands them, “there exists a fundamental dialectic between a primarily subject- and a primarily object-driven force, which constitutes the motor behind the developmental process. This dialectic involves a tension between a consolidated, current level [...] and a potential, future level of development”. What is perhaps most important in this for our discussion is that the “potential, future level of development” is “still confined by the current state of the subject” (Van Geert, 1998, p. 5). That is, not only is *the response* to the thing in the environment based in the current state of the individual, the *way the thing in the environment is understood* is also based in the current state of the individual.

So we can see that there is an inevitably conservative force in our learning about things. And we can easily see how understanding and responding to a current situation being inextricably linked to the individual’s current take on the situation can have deleterious consequences, for example, in human relationships. One only needs to think of all the long-standing conflicts between individuals or groups of people where, inevitably new occurrences are understood in terms of current understanding. It is likely that, in such cases, prejudices get “confirmed” again and again. This is especially likely to happen between people of different cultures and traditions (say, in Britain, white teachers and pupils from ethnic minorities), where the differences in values and in the interpretation of actions leave a lot of space for such “confirmation” of prejudice.

Note that a shift in perspective, approach, or stance may not really be an option here, as, to remain with our current example, the perspective of the pupils from the ethnic minority may well be so alien to the white teachers as to be inaccessible. A shift to a kind of meta-perspective (as in “I need to suspend my prejudices and keep in mind that the pupils see the world very differently from me”) may be a first good step, but would need to be followed by a gradual coming to understand the pupils’ perspective, and this could ultimately result in a kind of super-perspective in which both cultural perspectives are accommodated, probably containing a fair amount of internal tension (for example, around an issue such as the role of women in society).

I am, however, not looking for a gradual integration of two perspectives, but for the actual dissolution of the current perspective. What was suggested by the example of the teacher thinking about the troublesome pupil is that there could still be a contact with the situation, a relationship with the pupil, which is not based in the current state of the teacher. Thus the example reported how the ways in which the teacher had hitherto structured his relationship with the pupil simply fell away, as a result of which there was a new-found contact with the situation. What is implied is that the new way of relating to the situation concerning the pupil was not a modification of the existing state of the teacher as he was previously (e.g. slightly put off by the pupil’s effeminate way of behaving), but emerged only as a result of the previous state dissolving. One could aver that the openness resulting from the dissolution becomes the new “current state” of the teacher and that, therefore, there is continuity after all. This is no doubt true in a formal sense, but it is also easily seen that, provided the dissolution is complete enough, there is no continuity between the previous state that was dissolved and the one that arose after the dissolution – and it is this kind of discontinuity that is the salient one in the context of the current discussion.

The possibility of a response which is not a modification of one’s current state may sound unintelligible in the context of learning, because we very much see learning as involving the modification of an existing entity, so that, even if we were inclined to grant the possibility of “*a response* which is not based on one’s current state” as a kind of extreme spontaneity, a creativity *ab nihil*, an act of

divine inspiration, we would probably be reluctant to call such an event learning. But, as we will see later (See section 3.2.1), there is a way of conceiving of this possibility that is not incoherent, if we allow for there be contact with a situation even after the dissolution of existing structures and, as we will see in Chapter 7, if we understand any kind of perspective, approach or stance itself to be processal in nature.

### ***2.2.3 Learning has an intentional object***

Paul Hager reports how Hirst and Peters proposed that one of “the two necessary conditions for learning” is “that it has an object” (Hager, 2005b, p. 651) (we will encounter Hirst and Peter’s second necessary condition shortly). This is such an “obvious” aspect of learning that many theorists of learning do not appear to make it explicit: whenever we learn something we are engaging with something (a thing, a state of affairs, a person, an idea) and as a result of the learning we acquire a feeling towards, knowledge of, an attitude towards, a way of acting on or achieving *something*. I will contrast this with the possibility that learning occurs in such a way that it is not in relation to any specific intentional object.

Marton and Booth, taking a phenomenological approach to learning, presuppose the intentional structure of consciousness in their discussion of learning. They write that “The verb ‘to learn’ has to have an object” (Marton and Booth, 1997, p. 84). This can be understood as having two moments or aspects, both of which stem from the assumption, taken from Brentano that all “psychic” (what we would nowadays call *psychological*) events have an intentional structure in that they are about something, something apart from themselves. This is sometimes called the transcendental structure of psychic life, where the term transcendental means *referring to something other than the organism itself*. Thus, Marton and Booth cite Brentano: “No hearing without something being heard, no believing without something believed, no hoping without something hoped, no striving without something striven for, no joy without something we are joyous about, etc.” (Marton and Booth, 1997, p. 84).

Within this notion of intentionality, Marton and Booth distinguish two different ways in which learning has an object. First, there is what the learner

is trying to do when they are learning (Marton and Booth's study is about when learners are intentionally setting out to learn something), stemming from the fact "that people have distinctly different ways of understanding [...] what learning is" (Marton and Booth, 1997, p. 47). In behaviourist terms the object would be the stimuli, both unconditioned and conditioned, as they are initially responded to. In neuro-scientific accounts of learning the learning object would be seen in terms of what neural networks are activated initially in relation to something, before the actual experience modifies the tendency of the organism to respond. We can see how this is similar to Piaget's notion of assimilation, where the object towards which the learner acts is taken in a certain way, as a certain kind of object. We can also see how this is similar to Vygotsky's current stage of development, where the learner has a current way of taking an object (Van Geert, 2000).

Second, there is the notion that learning has a "direct object ... the content that is being learned" (Marton and Booth, 1997, p. 84). In behaviourist terms this is the tendency of the organism to associate stimuli with other stimuli or with responses *after* this pattern of association has been modified as a result of experience. In neuro-scientific terms this is the way neural networks are being activated in relation to something, after their activation patterns have been modified by experience. This is Piaget's accommodation and Vygotsky's higher level of development, as it has been reached with the help of a more competent other. This direct object of learning also corresponds with the second "necessary conditions for learning" as proposed by Hirst and Peters, namely, "that some standard of achievement has been met" (Hager, 2005b, p. 651), where Hirst and Peters introduce the normative element that is implicit in the other accounts of learning mentioned here.

Thus there are two moments to a learning object, first, the way it is taken at the beginning of the process and, second, the way it is taken at the end of the process. Or, to put it in a more formal way, one that better reflects the ongoing character of the learning process: the way the object is taken at  $t_1$  and at  $t_2$ , where  $t_1$  is the earlier point in time and  $t_2$  the later one. These two aspects of the object of learning give us the *dialectic* between the existing and possible structures discussed in the previous section. They give us the temporal

dimension of learning as a process from one state of being to another. They also tell us that the object of learning is per definition in a state of flux, as the way the object is experienced is continuously changing. Ultimately the notion of learning having an intentional object is the consequence of seeing the psychic (the mental) as necessarily intentional, and it is this notion that will get challenged in this thesis.

Note that in suggesting that there may be learning that does not happen in relation to an intentional object I do not dispute that thinking, perceiving and acting are intentional in nature. What it suggests is that there may be a process of learning that occurs, as it were, at right-angles from the intentional relationship. The teacher in our example, walking up the hill and worrying about the pupil, suddenly finds that “the things he finds around him all appear as within the space of his awareness”, which means that what has changed is not so much the things (the flowers and the trees, the wind and the bees) or even his relationship with them, but the space in which they appear, as now they do not appear to him as “outside of him” but as within the space of his awareness.

The process that led to this change is not one that occurred in relation to the objects of his intentional experience but one that occurred to the way in which any objects of experience appeared to him. Such a change, as it is not a change in the appearance of any specific object or class of objects, cannot be the result of a change in the relationship to the object. Indeed, apart from the fact that all objects now appear in a different space of awareness, his relationship with individual objects may well have remained essentially unchanged (liking the flowers and afraid of the bees, for example). We can, therefore, say that, since the main theories of learning tend to conceive of learning as necessarily having an intentional object, they cannot account for the kind of learning that was exemplified in the illustration at the beginning of this chapter.

With this last example we can conclude that the examples discussed in this chapter have given us reason to believe that a *learning to be authentic* will have to be conceived of in terms quite different from those used in the conventional theories of learning. It was argued that the presupposition that learning is a

process of growth, increased integration and differentiation, towards increased rigidity goes counter to any experience where there is radical self-renewal that is based in the dissolution of existing structures in the learner. It was further argued that the notion that learning is always a modification of the existing way of being of the learner is counter to a new way of relating to something that comes after there has been a dissolution of any previous ways of relating to it. We then looked at an aspect of the structure of the process of learning, which, in the theories we discussed always includes an object of learning, and it was argued that the pre-supposition precluded the possibility of a learning that resulted in a change in the very structure of experience itself. In short, our current theories of learning cannot provide us with an account of learning to be authentic, so long as the presuppositions that have been discussed in this chapter remain in place.

#### *2.2.4 Learning as formative of much of existence*

One aspect of current understanding of learning as it is found in the influential theories of learning we are looking at in this chapter is that it is the whole person who learns. It is instructive to look at this aspect of learning before we look at Heidegger's notion of authenticity. Thus, Peter Jarvis, writing within the field of adult education, defines human learning as "the combination of processes whereby the whole person - body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses) experiences a social situation, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combination) and integrated into the person's individual biography resulting in a changed (or more experienced) person" (Jarvis, 2006, p. 13).

Though there are theorists who believe that learning concerns primarily the acquisition of knowledge and skills, such as D. W. Hamlyn who writes that learning is the "acquisition of a form of knowledge or ability [skill] through the use of experience" (Hamlyn, 2005), there is a clear trend towards a more holistic view of learning. Thus Paul Hager writes about an "emerging understanding of learning" where learning "includes not just propositional understanding, but cognitive, conative and affective capacities as well as other

abilities and learned capacities such as bodily know-how, skills of all kinds, and so on" (Hager, 2005b, p. 662).

The importance of the idea that learning involves the whole person is twofold. On the one hand, it is, as Jarvis puts it "the whole person ... experiences a ... situation", which means that in principle the whole person is involved in any learning event. That is, even the simplest feat of memorization involves physical, social and emotional aspects as well as cognitive ones, even if, say, the emotional aspect is so marginal as to make no noticeable impact on the outcome. On the other hand, the involvement of the whole person means that it is not just "propositional understanding" but things to do with the will, emotions, practical skills, and so on, that are affected by learning. That is, what motivates us, how we feel about things, how we move and act, are all shaped as a result of learning.

What is more, many theorists of learning would nowadays contend that "learning and development are inseparable" (Ireson, 2008, p. 14). This means that from the day we are born, even during gestation, we are learning, and that "learning processes share all of the complexity, organization, structure, and internal dynamics once exclusively attributed to development" (Kuhn, 1995, cited in Ireson 2008, p. 14). Recent discoveries that "maturational changes can be triggered by learning mechanisms" (Manukata & Pfaffly, 2004, p. 145, emphasis added) only help to reinforce the notion that learning and development are inseparable.

This is not to deny that some things may be innate, such as the tendency in babies to visually track moving objects, or to be more interested in human faces than inanimate objects. What it means is that the development of the innate beginnings of the person is a process of learning, and that therefore the person as such, apart from their innate reflexes, such as blinking at flashes of light, is itself largely the result of learning. That is, there is not much in who we are as individual human beings that is not affected, shaped, by learning. We are the result of an on-going process of learning, a process that began as soon as we started to exist, that involved all the different aspects of our being, and that is continually integrating all the different aspects of the process.

This is important in the context of this investigation, because, as I argued earlier, the process of becoming authentic involves a dissolution of existing structures in the learner. If, as is suggested in this section, these existing structures are, by and large, the result of previous learning (in the conventional sense as described in the main accounts of learning), this means that the process of becoming authentic consists, to a large extent in the reversal of the learning that has occurred before. Seen in this way, learning as growth and modification and the dissolution of previous learning that is part of learning to be authentic may well be two aspects of the same process.

## 3 Heidegger's notion of becoming authentic

### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued that the presuppositions that learning is a process of growth, of increased integration, differentiation and rigidity raises questions about the possibility of radical self-renewal on the part of the individual. I argued that the notion that learning is always a modification of the existing way of being of the learner is counter to the possibility of a response which is not based on one's current state. I argued that the notion of learning as always involving an intentional object of learning made impossible any notion of a learning that involved a change in the very structure of experience. In other words, the metaphysical assumptions made in the conventional theories of learning, which take learning as a process of *modification and growth* seem to rule out the possibility of a kind of learning that is different enough to allow for learning in relation to *life and living beings* in the way I said was necessary in the introduction.

In this chapter I will take up Heidegger's notion of authenticity and begin to consider how the process of becoming authentic could do duty as the kind of *learning to be authentic* I said in the introduction was called for. That is, such a *learning to be authentic* would have to allow for the individual to learn in relation to *life and living beings* in such a way that the entities involved were

not taken as either practical or theoretical entities. Indeed, learning to be authentic would have to lead to a sense for the being of the entities themselves.

I will argue in this chapter that Heidegger's notion of the individual, Dasein, allows for an engagement with things in a way that is prior to these entities to be taken as practical, theoretical or otherwise. I will also argue that different philosophers of education have indicated that authentic existence is a mode of being that refers to the individual Dasein both as it really is and as who it can possibly become as a result of personal flourishing, and that this happens in a process of "dying and rebirth", a kind of radical self-renewal I said earlier was necessary in relation to learning about *life and living beings*.

I will also argue that the notion of authenticity is distinct from that of autonomy, as it has been found in education, where authenticity appears to be the more fundamental concept. We will see how authenticity involves a notion of truth that is more fundamental than a correspondence notion of truth and that this entails changes in the way we conceive of the way we assess the validity of a claim to authenticity. Finally, I will consider three characterizations of the process of becoming authentic that can be found in Heidegger's writings and see how these are understood differently, depending on whether they are taken as referring to processes that occur at a practical or theoretical level or processes that occur at the level of the a priori, the level before the being of the entity has been decided on.

These considerations of different aspects of Heidegger's account of authenticity will have given us a further sense of the kind of learning I am after in this thesis. They will also have raised questions about Heidegger's notion of authenticity itself, notably ones relating to the way he envisages the interpersonal and collective dimension of human existence. All this will be further developed in the following three chapters, which take up Heidegger's description of the process of becoming authentic for each of the three main aspects of the human being as he portrays it (understanding, attunement, and being-with) and take these three accounts beyond what can be found in Heidegger's writings, to establish the nature of the process of becoming authentic in such a way that this process can be seen to consist of *learning to be*

*authentic*. In the last chapter of the thesis an attempt will then be made to generalize from the way in which the three aspects of the human being have been seen to become authentic to produce an overall definition of *learning to be authentic* and to consider how *learning as modification and growth* can be integrated with *learning to be authentic* to produce what can be called *authentic learning*.

## **3.2 The structure of Dasein**

### **3.2.1 Dasein as openness**

At the most basic level, Dasein is thought of as an empty space, an openness where being and beings can appear. Sometimes Heidegger uses for this the term “clearing”, as in a clearing in the forest, an empty space among the otherwise dense growth of trees and shrubs. Another way of putting this is to say that Dasein is being-in-the-world. This means that Dasein is worldly existence, that it *is* its engagement with the entities it finds in the world, and that there is nothing substantial (like a soul) that exists as something internal that then needs to reach out to (transcend to) the things that are external to it. Rather, Dasein is the very process of transcendence, of standing in relationship to the entities it encounters. This transcendence in itself is nothing but openness.

In the clearing of this openness the processes arise that give us the actual manifestation of the individual Dasein: understanding (*Verstehen*), attunement (*Befindlichkeit*) and being-with (*Mitsein*). These are the three ways in which Dasein finds itself in the world. *Understanding* is what could be called the action-perception aspect of being-in-the-world and it includes more or less everything we would classify as knowledge and skills. *Attunement* indicates the way in which being-in-the-world is coloured by emotion and mood. And *being-with* is the dimension of being-in-the-world that is connected to other living creatures and makes communication possible. Ultimately, understanding, attunement and being-with constitute a unity; they are separated only as a way of gaining analytical clarity. One way of looking at these three processes is to see them as faculties, as inherent powers or properties that become abilities and competences as they are developed.

In this openness things are disclosed, they enter into experience, they appear in Dasein's awareness. But things are disclosed in different ways, as practical entities (what Heidegger calls the ready-to-hand), as theoretical entities (what Heidegger calls the present-at-hand), or as entities belonging to what I have been calling "the human domain" (which Heidegger calls entities with the nature of Dasein or existence). If something is disclosed as ready-to-hand, it is disclosed as a practical entity, something we interact with, handle, manipulate, the way we do objects we find in our practical dealing with things: objects of use and pieces of equipment are ready-to-hand entities. If something is disclosed as present-at-hand, it is disclosed as a theoretical entity, something that has an essence and characteristics (qualities and relations), and we relate to it in the way we relate to theoretical ideas.

Inauthentic Dasein tends to disclose itself as either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand, and this is where, according to Heidegger, it goes wrong, because Dasein itself is neither something ready-to-hand or present-at-hand, but rather something with the nature of Dasein itself, of "being-in-the-world", of "existence". The main change from inauthentic to authentic existence consists in Dasein learning to take itself as an entity with the nature of Dasein, as openness, transcendence, a finite process, being-with, and so on. What is more, when Dasein discloses itself as an entity with the nature of Dasein it also discloses the entities it encounters in the world in the right way (practical or theoretical entities but, more importantly, also other entities with the nature of Dasein). The disclosure of the being of an entity, therefore, has to occur at a level that is prior to Dasein taking a stand on whether something is a practical or theoretical entity or an entity with the nature of Dasein.

In other words, Dasein's openness itself is not inert but can, in its own way, engage with the entities Dasein encounters in the world. Heidegger refers to this emptiness as "a structure which makes possible for it being-fulfilled by certain goods of the life-world" (Heidegger, 2004, p. 250). Thus the openness is not like an empty page but consists in the "essential *openness to values* and *primary love of meaning* of the personally existing being" (Heidegger, 2004, p. 250). In the context of this thesis this does not require a radical sense of being receptive all the way down in a way that could easily become unintelligible,

but what is needed is a notion of openness that allows for *actual* ways of understanding, attunement and being-with to subside, while the *possibility* of understanding, of being affected, and of communicating remains.

As we will see later in the thesis, the notion of authenticity implies that any actual ways of understanding, being emotionally affected and communicating subside, opening up the possibility of Dasein engaging with entities in a way that is prior to any such actual ways. This can be thought of in terms of Dasein becoming empty of any prepared responses or, indeed, of any learned responses. But this does not mean that in this state the nervous system, sense perception, or any innate responses to environmental events (such as ducking when a large object flies towards one) cease to operate. Rather, the concepts of openness and emptiness are, in this context, phenomenological: the *experience* is one of there being no specific understanding, being affected or communication. For example, the experience is one of listening to someone talk without inwardly responding (in terms of agreeing or disagreeing, liking or disliking) to what they are saying. This is then experienced as an act of listening in complete inner and outer silence, even as one is possibly moved by what is being said, is able to remember what was said later on, is able to respond intelligently after one has stopped listening.

A considerable part of this thesis will be dedicated to making intelligible exactly what the nature of this kind of experience is, given that a short description, such as the one offered here, is open to interpretation, for example, with respect to whether the “inner silence” is superficial, leaving all kinds of subconscious reaction processes in place, or so complete that there is no thinking going on in the listener whatsoever and, therefore, no possibility of subsequent response. A way of conceiving of the possibility of existing ways of understanding, attunement, and being-with falling silent (dissolving) in such a way that it is possible for them to be later re-activated (being re-constituted) will be discussed in Chapter 7.

### ***3.2.2 The tripartite structure of Dasein***

The tripartite structure of action-perception (understanding), being emotionally affected (attunement), and communicating (being-with) occurs

within the openness that is fundamental to Dasein. Understanding involves both our practical know-how of coping with things and our theoretical knowledge of it. Heidegger's word "understanding" is to be understood in the sense that whenever we engage with an entity, when we perceive it or act in relation to it, we have an understanding of what the entity is and we gain further understanding of the entity in relating to it practically and theoretically. This way of conceiving of action and perception is in many ways in line with the main theories of learning I considered in the previous chapter, in so far as these are not representationalist, because Heidegger's idea is not that there is in the individual somewhere a representation which is modified as a result of perception and which serves as a basis for action. We will look at understanding in depth in Chapter 4.

The aspect of "attunement" is the basic emotional way of being we have at any given point in time, where this emotional way of being discloses both the world and ourselves in a certain way – much like the mood that may disclose the student's world as a dreary place and himself as a failure, if he has just failed his exam or, conversely, the world as a beautiful place and himself as the beneficiary of good fortune, if the girl he is in love with has just reciprocated his feelings. This, attunement as mood is, for Heidegger, the basis for emotions that are directed towards a certain object (a person we are angry with or a flower we feel tenderness towards), in that even emotions that are clearly directed towards an entity have the structure of disclosing both oneself and the entity in a certain way (the person as annoying and oneself as irritated) in a way that the two are not separate (one cannot emotionally experience a person as annoying without feeling something like irritation). Importantly, mood is something that *arises* or *comes over one*, in that we do not experience them as *originating from* a certain particular place (in the way perceptions and actions do) or as *directed towards* a certain particular place (as perceptions and actions also do), but as *colouring* the whole of experience, even if, as we saw, it may also involve a directional (understanding) aspect. I will discuss attunement in depth in Chapter 5.

Heidegger takes "being-with" as constitutive of Dasein just as much as understanding and attunement. This is perhaps unusual in western thinking,

with its emphasis on the individual as the ultimate unit of analysis, because the being-with dimension is part of Dasein, being-in-the-world, itself. "Being-with belongs to [Dasein], which in every case maintains itself in some definite way of concerned Being-with-one-another" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204). That is, rather than saying that the individual is primarily an independent entity which only secondarily finds itself in relation to other individuals, Heidegger is saying that being-with-one-another belongs to the very essence of the individual. One could say that the individual is part of the social world they belong to in just as fundamental a way as it is understanding and attunement. As such, Heidegger, unusually perhaps, does not base communication in action-perception (as when messages are transferred from one to the other) but in a prior being-connected of human beings and other living creatures. I will look at being-with in depth in Chapter 6.

For all three Heidegger has an authentic mode<sup>9</sup>: authentic *understanding* means that Dasein understands itself in terms of itself rather than the things it finds in the world; authentic *attunement* means that Dasein has a certain affective stance in life, one which does not identify itself with things in the world and yet maintains a nearness to these things; authentic *being-with* means having direct, wordless, communication with others. As we saw earlier, the notion of authenticity implies that any *actual* ways of understanding, being emotionally affected and communicating subsides, opening up the *possibility* of Dasein engaging with entities in a way that is prior to any such actual ways. We could say that authenticity is the possibility of existing as pure openness where any actual ways of being in the world have fallen silent, but where one is still relating to things, to practical and theoretical entities, but also to oneself, others, nature, life as a whole. As such, we can begin to see how authenticity may be a candidate for the kind of "sense for entities in themselves" or

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<sup>9</sup>Thus Heidegger writes, using a terminology it would take too far to explicate here, that "resoluteness" [we would say authenticity] is "constituted by anxiety as attunement, by understanding as a projection of oneself upon one's ownmost being-guilty, and by discourse [communication] as reticence" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 343).

“understanding of the being of entities” I said in Chapter 1 would be necessary for an individual to be able to learn in the domain of *life and living beings*.

### **3.3 Authenticity in philosophy of education**

#### ***3.3.1 Authenticity as compatible with learning to be authentic***

A first understanding of what the notion of authenticity means in the context of education can be gained by looking at the dual aspect of the term as referring to both a reality that has been hidden and a potential that may yet be realised. “Authentic” is the translation of the German “*eigentlich*”, which is a concept with its roots in “what one really is” and its branches in “what one is in potential”. On the one hand “*eigentlich*” simply means “really” or “in reality”, as in, for example, “he’s not really a trainee teacher; he’s really an Ofsted inspector in disguise”. On the other hand, “*eigentlich*” refers to a possibility rather than an actuality, the possibility of realising one’s true potential of being “who one really is”. One way of putting this double movement of “becoming who one already is in reality” and of “becoming one’s true self” is to say, as Heidegger does, “Become what you are!” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 186). This at first sight paradoxical statement is explained by Ian Thomson: “I can indeed become who I am if the who I am now is not my own self (a self I have made my own), but merely a borrowed self, a self-understanding appropriated piecemeal from ‘everyone and no one’” (Thomson, 2004, p. 448). In this way, becoming authentic as becoming *who one is* is a movement from being an inauthentic to an authentic self.

In the context of education this notion of “becoming who one is” can be taken to be either contrary to conventional educational practice or in line with conventional educational values. IlanGur-Ze’ev, for example, calls for a “counter education”, setting authenticity up as contrary to current notions of education, which, he believes, alienate the individual from themselves. This critique of education is, of course, a familiar one that resonates with many of what are sometimes called critical pedagogies (See, for example, Freire, 1970/1996), that see the task of counter education as one of liberating the individual from the socialisation that normally occurs in education, because, to cite Gur-Ze’ev, “Then, and only then ... will the overcoming of the given be

possible and truth as uncovering realize itself' (Gur-Ze'ev, 2002, p. 71). Bonnett (2002), on the other hand, while not denying the need for a certain amount of resistance against established educational practices, argues that the notion of "personal authenticity" is one that resonates with the central value in a liberal society of allowing individuals to be who they are and to enjoy an education that is personally meaningful. That is, "in characterizing some central components of what might be meant by 'human integrity', [personal authenticity] provides a view of personhood and therefore, in a liberal tradition, a view of what must be respected and developed in the treatment of young people during their education" (Bonnett, 2002, p. 230).

This possibility of interpreting the process of "becoming who one is" as both counter to and in line with much of the thinking that underlies education as it currently exists in the western world reflects some of the deep inner tensions within education, notably that of education as, on the one hand, allowing the individual to flourish in their own right and as, on the other hand, socialising the individual into certain practices and according to values that are given by the culture the individual grows up in. As we will see towards the end of this chapter, the solution suggested by most of the philosophers of education who have written about authenticity is that of a double movement, of "turning away" from the movement of socialisation and of "turning back" towards the culture one is situated in, but doing so in a different, authentic, way. Importantly for the question of learning to be authentic as a species of *learning to be authentic*, this means that the question becomes one of what the learning is that allows one to both "turn away" and "turn back".

Several philosophers of education have written about Heidegger's notion of authenticity as a valuable one for education. With the exception of Michael Bonnett's account of "poietic thinking" in his *Education as a Form of the Poetic: A Heideggerian Approach to Learning and the Teacher-Pupil Relationship* (2002), which I will look at in some detail later in the chapter, none of these accounts have set out to describe the process of becoming authentic itself in terms of learning. They have mostly been occupied with setting out a view on the nature of authenticity and making the case for authenticity in education, where authenticity may refer to either an educational aim or to a quality of the

learning process. As my interest is in the process of becoming authentic, I will not discuss in detail the arguments for making authenticity central to educational practice here, but merely reiterate some of what was said in those accounts.

As we saw in Chapter 1, we already find the call for putting authenticity in a Heideggerian sense at the heart of education in the writings of Donald Vandenberg who, in the early 1970s, made a case for making the Heideggerian concept of authenticity central in philosophy of education. Vandenberg wrote in *Being and Education: An Essay in Existential Phenomenology* that “the role of philosophy of education should be to raise the question of the being of children and youth that they might respond to the call of being and become who they can authentically become” (Vandenberg, 1971, p. 11). Some of the essential elements of authenticity that Vandenberg identified were self-awareness and a sense of ownership over who one is as a person. That is, the role of philosophy of education is, according to Vandenberg, first, “to waken people who are becoming teachers to awareness of their own being, thence to enable them to choose who they will be in their subsequent encounters with pupils” and, second, “to enable their pupils to choose for themselves who they will be” (Vandenberg, 1971, p. 10). The stress is, with Vandenberg, on the passive and active aspects of self-understanding, where having a true awareness of who one is allows one to “choose” who one will be (where the word “choose” has to be taken with caution, as it is not meant to refer to a choice between options that are at hand).

More recently, Ilan Gur-Ze’ev has taken up Vandenberg’s the call for an education that promotes authenticity, self-awareness and self-realization. As we saw earlier, Gur-Ze’ev calls for a “counter education”, an education that is to counter the effects of “normalizing education”, the socialization that brings about this inauthentic self-understanding, what Heidegger calls the understanding oneself from out of “*das Man*”<sup>10</sup>. As we will see in more detail later, “*das Man*” is Heidegger’s term for an understanding (both of things in

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<sup>10</sup> I will be using the original “*das Man*” throughout the thesis, though most philosophers writing in English have used either “the they” or “the one”.

the world and of oneself) that is neither one's own understanding (as it is one that one has been socialised into), nor an understanding that is true to the being of all the things it tries to understand (notably those belonging to what I have been calling *life and living beings*), but one in which one understands oneself as an object rather than that which one is in oneself. Thus, this "normalizing education", according to Gur-Ze'ev, constitutes a kind of violent imposition of a thing-like identity on the learner, in that it "produces the human subject as some-thing that prevents her from becoming some-one, a true subject" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2002, p. 66). As with Vandenberg, we find that understanding oneself in a certain way and being in a certain way are inextricably linked.

Gur-Ze'ev also identifies the way that education tends to frame our relationship to the world on an emotional level and the way it motivates the learner to conform. With this he brings in an important affective element into the question of what it means to be authentic. Thus, he writes that, to be authentic, "the human subject must [...] resist the threats and temptations of security, pleasure, and success offered by [das Man], by society" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2002, p. 71). This emotive or affective aspect, as we saw earlier, stems from Heidegger's notion of "attunement", the way we find ourselves located emotionally in the world.

Michael Bonnett identifies a further aspect of authenticity, when he writes that it is the "openness to things themselves" which Heidegger has identified as a fundamental aspect of Dasein that plays an essential part in its being and becoming authentic. In relation to this fundamental openness Bonnett uses the phrase *thinking as poiesis* (bringing forth), which is a form of "thinking as engagement with things which is both personal in its commitment and transporting through its openness to things themselves" (Bonnett, 2002, p. 238). What is more, this thinking has its own rigour, which "requires constant and close attention to the signs which are its way, to a sense of that which is as yet withdrawn, not yet manifest. It requires a genuine listening to that which calls to be thought in the evolving situation" (Bonnett, 2002, p. 239). It is this aspect of listening that introduces a communicative dimension to authenticity, where one's "understanding of being" is not a construction of the mind, but

rather something that is informed, as a result of one's fundamental "openness to things themselves". Thus it is in this poetic (authentic) thinking, Bonnett argues, that "contingency and the many-sidedness of things is recognized and the non-human powers involved in the arising of things is sensed and responded to" (Bonnett, 2002, p. 238).

So far we have seen that, for the philosophers of education cited, becoming authentic involves a true understanding of who one really is (both in the way one "looks at" oneself and in the way one acts), a certain way of being located emotionally in the world, and a way of being open to things themselves. We can, therefore, see an emerging correspondence between the notion of authenticity and *learning to be authentic*, where there is radical self-renewal (in becoming who one really is), where the change in the structure of experience resonates with a change in one's way of being emotionally located in the world (though this will only become really clear in Chapter 5), and where one is open to the being of entities, in the sense of "having a sense for" the entity itself.

### ***3.3.2 Becoming authentic as "turning away from the world" and "turning back"***

I will now consider how the philosophers of education who have considered the process of disclosing oneself to oneself as one really is have looked at this process. They have all characterised it, albeit in different terminologies, as one of "turning away from the world" and "turning back". Iain Thomson takes up the idea of authenticity as involving self-realization in his Heidegger's Perfectionist Philosophy of Education in Being and Time (Thomson, 2004), where he turns to Heidegger's *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962) to answer the question "*How do we become what we are?*". He writes that "The goal of this educational odyssey [of becoming what we are] remains simple but revolutionary: To bring us full circle back to ourselves, by first turning us away from the world in which we are most immediately immersed and then turning us back to this world in a more reflexive way" (Thomson, 2004, p. 457).

To make intelligible the idea of becoming what one (already) is Thomson uses Thomas Hurka's account of perfectionist ethics, to argue that in *Being and Time* Heidegger (a) had the idea that there is something distinctive and unique

about human beings, that (b) our “greatest fulfilment or flourishing follows from the cultivation and development (hence the perfection) of these significantly distinctive skills or capacities”, and that (c) there is a link between these two in that we are either, by nature, naturally disposed to reach this fulfilment or flourishing, or that we need to struggle for it, as it is against our nature (Thomson, 2004, pp. 440-442).

Thus, according to Thomson, “Heidegger singles out Dasein as the unique possessor of an understanding of being”. Another way of putting this understanding of being is to say that Dasein can disclose an entity as either a practical (ready-to-hand) one, a theoretical (present-at-hand) one, or an entity with the nature of Dasein itself. Here we encounter the notion of having an understanding of the being of entities (a sense for entities as they are in themselves) I discussed in Chapter 1. Then I said that not only did the individual need a way of learning about entities in the human domain, they also need a way of deciding whether the entity they are dealing with is indeed such an entity or a practical or theoretical one.

In perfectionist terms, we could say that (a) what is, according to Thomson, distinctive and unique about Dasein is its *understanding of being*. The flourishing that comes from the cultivation of this distinct and unique *understanding of being* is (b) conceived of “in terms of an embodied stand – ‘authenticity’ – that each of us is capable of taking on our own being”. In other words, it is in the mode of authenticity that our understanding of being becomes “our own” and that we come to see ourselves and the entities we encounter in the world as they really are. And (c) the link between this *understanding of being* and the “embodied stand of authenticity” is “[a]uthenticity’s double movement of death and rebirth [which] is a movement in which we turn away from the world, recover ourselves, and then turn back to the world, a world we now see anew, with eyes that have been opened” (Thomson, 2004, p. 443).

We find this same movement of “turning away from the world” and “turning back” with Bonnett, who frames this movement in terms of both an active and a passive element to authentic learning. Authentic learning (and I would add,

learning to be authentic) is active in the sense that “[p]ersonal authenticity is an achievement”, in that “[w]e have to extricate ourselves from the frame of mind that constitutes [*das Man*] and which proximally and for the most part conditions our perceptions” (Bonnett, 2002, p. 232). The “rebirth” for Bonnett, citing Charles Taylor, happens against a “horizon of significance ... a valuation system of a historically grown community – the authoritative principles, rules, values, and norms that are expressive of the socially prevalent conception of the good life” (Bonnett, 2002, p. 233).

Thus, the “understanding of being” that Thomson identified is, according to Bonnett, brought to “perfection” only in “openness to things themselves”. Ilan Gur-Ze’ev refers to this openness as an “unveiling as lettings-things-be<sup>11</sup>” and contrasts it with the “normal violence directed at imposing realities and meanings” (Gur-Ze’ev, 2002, p. 71). The “turning away from the world” is thus a turning away from the world as handed down to us through *das Man*, through “normalizing education”, a world whose “realities and meanings” are imposed, projected onto the world, taken over in an inauthentic way by the individual from society. Gur-Ze’ev contrasts this inauthentic way of knowing the world with “transcendence ... in which Being, which is normally veiled and exiled, reveals itself” (Gur-Ze’ev, 2002, p. 71).

The moment of “rebirth” or “turning back” is when one returns to the resources of one’s cultural tradition to appropriate them in a way that is authentic. As Michael Bonnet writes, there is an important passive element to authentic learning with the existence of a “superordinate cultural normative framework [which] directs the focus of discussion away from the notion of the authentic individual as somehow operating in splendid isolation from the real world and places it instead on the quality of his or her relationship with the world” (Bonnett, 2002, p. 233). The individual can only be authentic in a human society, which necessarily involves things like language, culturally sanctioned knowledge and ways of doing things, and so on. This “return” to

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<sup>11</sup> “Letting things be” is a term used by the later Heideggerian, *Gelassenheit*, which refers to the ability to let things present themselves to consciousness “as they are” and which ultimately derives from the medieval Christian mystic Meister Eckhart, an indication of the religious connotations Heidegger sought to convey.

*das Man* is inescapable, but if it is done in an authentic way, it is done in a way that is open to the being of entities, both of oneself and of entities other than oneself. In Chapter 7 I will look at what this “return” may look at in some detail.

The language surrounding authenticity is often dramatic, with words like death, guilt, and anxiety. This is so, because the process of becoming authentic involves the whole person, the totality of one’s life, all the way down to one’s deepest feelings, one’s most fundamentally held beliefs, and one’s most basic ways of being in the world. To put it differently, giving up what is given to us through *das Man* involves giving up much if not most of the person we are. It is for this reason that authenticity involves a moment that is often characterised as a kind of “dying”. It is for this same reason that the moment of “rebirth” necessitates a return to these culturally given ways of seeing and doing things, as they are simply the “currency” in which human life is transacted.

To sum up, Heidegger’s notion of authenticity has been discussed by a number of recent philosophers of education. In so far as the process of becoming authentic has been described by these philosophers of education, it has been characterized as a kind of “death and rebirth”, a “turning away from the world” and a “turning back” in such a way that one gains an authentic (*genuine* as well as *one’s own*) understanding of one’s own existence as well as that of the entities one encounters in the world. This is a double movement of both becoming who one really is and reaching one’s full potential as a human being. It is a process in which one goes from having adopted the ways of seeing and doing things of the society one grew up in, Heidegger’s *das Man*, through a kind of existential death in which one finds openness to the things themselves and to “who one really is”, to adopting anew those ways of seeing and doing things that are given in one’s cultural tradition that one decides are worthy of adoption, in the full awareness of the limitations involved.

#### **3.4 Becoming authentic as bringing oneself back from *das Man***

I will now briefly look at Heidegger’s notion of becoming authentic as “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-

313) and consider two criticisms levelled at it. The notion of “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313) is one of the ways in which Heidegger characterised the process of becoming authentic in *Being and Time*, where he writes that the process of Dasein’s ensnaring itself in inauthenticity “can be reversed only if Dasein specifically brings itself back to itself from the lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 312, translation modified). One way of understanding the notion of “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” is as the moment of “turning away from the world”, before one “turns back” to the world in such a way that one no longer gets lost in *das Man*, but is able to appropriate the recourses of one’s culture in an authentic way. Also, for Heidegger, “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” involves a renewal of one’s “understanding of being”, especially the being of oneself, where this process occurs at the level of the a priori.

*Das Man* is, among other things, Heidegger’s notion of the individual’s inauthentic self-understanding, a self-understanding that is inauthentic in the sense of not being their own understanding, but rather a self-understanding that one has been socialised into, where the individual “understands itself in terms of the possibilities of existence that ‘circulate’ in the contemporary ‘average’ public way of interpreting [the individual]” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 435). “Bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” becomes synonymous with being authentic in the sense of being true to oneself, to one’s own understanding of things and especially of oneself. The plausibility of this aspect of authenticity will be discussed in the next section.

What is more, inauthentic self-understanding is not only a self-understanding that has been adopted without the individual having really come to that understanding for themselves, it is also an understanding that does not understand the individual *in terms of itself*. That is to say, inauthentic self-understanding understands itself in terms of entities, objects, and roles it first finds in the world around itself rather than in terms of itself. Because our attention, our concern, is, in the first instance, directed towards the world in which we live, we create and may even be born with a conceptual apparatus that has been developed (through evolution and learning) with an eye on making sense of and coping in the world we inhabit. We perceive objects,

causal events, patterns of similarity and difference in the world around us. We interact with the things and situations we meet in the world. We abstract from particulars, we reason, predict, and generalise from the things and situations we find in the world. And then we understand ourselves through the same conceptual apparatus we developed for dealing with the world we find ourselves in. In short, we understand ourselves as practical or theoretical entities.

We find something similar in the objection we may have to someone understanding another person as an object for manipulation (as when the person is “used” for some purpose), an abstraction (as when the person is treated as “a number”), or a role (as when the person is identified with their role and not seen as “a person”). In such cases the Kantian notion of the individual being “an end in itself” is sometimes mooted, to indicate that an individual can only be understood truly in its own terms and not in reference to something else. What Heidegger has done is take this notion of the person needing to be understood as an end in itself and given it its own ontological category, that of entities with the nature of Dasein, also called existence. “To be inauthentic means [according to Heidegger] to objectify oneself as a continuing ego-subject, thereby concealing the fact that one is really openness or emptiness. To be authentic means resolving to accept the openness which, paradoxically, one already is” (Crowe, 2006, p. 164).

One shortcoming in Heidegger’s account of *das Man* is, I believe, that he fails to appreciate how, in order for Dasein to understand itself in terms of itself, it cannot rely on an understanding of itself from its own past experience. Dasein needs to forego understanding present situations in terms of the past, if it is to be able to adequately meet a situation it finds itself in in the present. This is not a point that is stressed very much in Heidegger’s writings (though he gives other reasons for Dasein’s understanding of a situation requiring a basic openness of mind), but it occurs often enough to make one want to add it as a third aspect of “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*”. That is, encountering oneself from out of an understanding one recalls from past experience can be seen as being based in *das Man*, by virtue of the structure of recollection being one of a subject recalling an object, which then recalls

Dasein as either a theoretical or practical entity and thus inauthentically. We will encounter a number of examples where this aspect of *das Man* is important.

In sum, “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man* involves three, related aspects. First there is the movement of refraining from understanding oneself and the things one encounters from out the ways of understanding that have been handed down to one through tradition and as part of being socialised into a certain culture. This movement involves an understanding that, in order to function in the society one is in, one will eventually have to return to these ways of understanding things that have been handed down through tradition, but one will do so in a different way. Second, there is the movement towards understanding oneself in terms of oneself and not in terms of the things one finds in the world (in terms of practical or theoretical entities). Third, it has been suggested that we should add a movement towards not understanding things and oneself from out of a past understanding one may have acquired through previous engagement with the thing.

### ***3.4.1 Dreyfus: Das Man is unintelligible***

One critique of Heidegger’s notion of *das Man* comes from Dreyfus, who writes that Heidegger’s account of being-with and *das Man* leaves us with a contradiction: “on the one hand, he argues that we are ontologically being-with-others [see Section 3.2.1.2], and on the other, he argues that Dasein is mine, that my being is my responsibility, that to assume it authentically, I must sever my ties with *das Man* and most importantly, that I die alone” (Sorial, 2005, p. 95). “This leads Dreyfus to conclude that Heidegger’s account of *das Man* and self-ownership is ‘incoherent,’ ‘confused’ and ‘incomprehensible’” (Cited in Sorial, 2005, p. 71).

In what follows I will briefly argue that we can rescue Heidegger’s account of *das Man* and mineness if we understand *das Man* as a moment in Dasein’s intentional being-in-the-world rather than a structural part of it, when we understand the notion of mineness as non-reflective, and when we acknowledge that for a fully satisfactory account of the relationship between the collective and the individual we will need to revisit Heidegger’s account of

authentic being-with. This will not only defuse Dreyfus' criticism but also bring into focus aspects of authenticity that will become central in our account of learning to be authentic, namely, the way *das Man* and authentic understanding are related, the non-reflective nature of Dasein's self-awareness, and the importance of a modified notion of being-with.

According to Sorial, Dreyfus's complaint is that, though *Das Man* "describes the ontological structures of Dasein", Heidegger "repeatedly characterises these structures in negative and disparaging terms (inauthenticity in the pejorative sense)". Dreyfus believes that, "[i]f these structures are inauthentic, then the implication is that they need to be overcome. However, if they are part of Dasein's fundamental structure, then the overcoming of these inauthentic structures is rendered impossible" (Dreyfus 1991: 226-9, cited in: Sorial, 2005, p. 76). So the complaint is that Heidegger claims that *das Man* is both part of Dasein's fundamental structure and something that needs to be overcome.

The first thing to be clear about, if one is to understand Heidegger correctly, is that the experience of mineness needs to be understood as a non-reflective experience. As Heidegger writes: "The self is there for the Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception, before all reflection" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 159). This non-reflectivity needs to be contrasted with a reflective (present-at-hand) experience of mineness, where something (in this case the collective dimension of *das Man* and being-with) is perceived as either belonging to one or not belonging to Dasein.

From the reflective perspective it is, indeed, incoherent how *das Man* can be both essentially part of Dasein and apart from it, after all, either  $y$  belongs to  $x$  or  $y$  does not belong to  $x$ , but  $y$  cannot both belong and not belong to  $x$ . In the case of a non-reflective experience, however, one can have ownership of something that one nevertheless feels is not oneself in an authentic way, for example when one behaves in a certain way and then comments on it later, saying that "one was not quite oneself at the time". Indeed, one may well have felt *at the time* that "one was not oneself", without necessarily going as far as

disowning the behaviour as one would in an episode of dissociative mental illness, when one may have the *reflective* experience one's being was taken over.

We can, therefore, see that understanding the experience of mineness as a non-reflective one, affords shades of meaning that are excluded from a reflective experience of mineness, making it possible for an individual that some way of being is both theirs and not theirs. It should be noted that the quality of mineness is there both in the moment of inauthenticity (when Dasein is lost in *das Man*) and in the moment of authenticity, when the processes that constitute *das Man* have (temporarily) abated. The issue is, therefore, not one of Dasein either experiencing mineness or being lost in *das Man*, but rather one of authentic or inauthentic mineness, where, in the case of authentic mineness, *das Man* has abated, or to use Heidegger's terminology, Dasein has been brought back from lostness in *das Man*.

But, one might object, as Dreyfus no doubt would at this point, there is no significance or intelligibility apart from *das Man*, so it still makes no sense to talk about Dasein apart from *das Man*. That is, "Dreyfus interprets *das Man* as constituting the horizon of meaning within which a community interprets itself. He writes: 'all significance and intelligibility is the product of the one [*das Man*]' and that it is 'the ultimate reality' the 'end of the line of explanations of intelligibility'" (Sorial, 2005, p. 71). But what Dreyfus seems to ignore is that for Heidegger it is not the case that, when *das Man* has abated and Dasein is authentic, its relationship with the things and people it finds in the world has ceased to exist. It is just that at that point that relationship has no specific shape in terms of *actual* actions, perceptions, responses, verbal expressions, and so on. I looked at this notion of a relationship (of understanding, attunement or being-with) prior to any concrete, actual relationship in Section 3.2.1, where we saw it was one of the fundamental presuppositions in Heidegger's philosophy.

What is more, I also stressed, when I discussed what Bonnett and Cuypers wrote about "horizons of significance" (Section 3.5.2), that the moment of liberation from *das Man* is indeed just that, a moment, because, in order for Dasein to function in any way in the world it will have no choice but to return

to *das Man*, in that all specific, actual ways of acting or understanding things are part of *das Man*. And I will return to this issue in Chapter 7, when we look at the possibility of Dasein returning to *das Man* in a way that remains under the guidance of the openness to the being of things that characterizes authentic existence.

There is, however, hidden in the confusion surrounding mineness and *das Man*, an unresolved issue in Heidegger's notion of authenticity. This becomes clearer when I reformulate Dreyfus's apparent contradiction between Dasein being structurally co-constituted by *das Man*, while needing to regain a sense of mineness in authenticity, into a contradiction between Dasein being structurally co-constituted by being-with, while needing to become individualized in authenticity. That is, being-with is presented by Heidegger as a structural part of Dasein (and not merely a mode it may or may not have), when his account of authenticity emphasizes the need for Dasein to become individualized (*vereinzelt*). What is more, Heidegger's account of authentic being-with has, as we will see later, not been worked out in a satisfactory way. I will return to this question later (Sections 5.3.4 & 6.1.2.1).

### ***3.4.2 Singular being and multiple clearings***

It has been said that authentic Dasein, as it has been "brought back from lostness in *das Man*" has access to the being of entities and, indeed, as will become clear in the next chapter, an understanding of being itself (as temporality). It has also been said that Dasein is essentially "a clearing", openness, which means that the being of entities and being itself have to somehow manifest in that openness, if Dasein is to have an understanding of being. What is more, Dasein has been said to have the quality of mineness, which implies that it is individualized, that each Dasein has its own individual "clearing", especially in the authentic mode (though I also said that there was an, as yet, unspecified way in which even authentic Dasein had an interpersonal, being-with dimension, which I will look at in depth in Chapter 6). The possible contradiction in all this is that of there being as many different individualized "clearings" as there are Daseins, whereas there is only one *being*.

Thus Theodore Schatzki discusses the objection, made by Frederick Olafson in the latter's *Heidegger and the Philosophy of Mind* (1987), that there is a contradiction between two aspects of Heidegger's notion of Dasein *as a clearing where being manifests*. On the one hand, being is, according to Olafson, taken to be single and unique, while, on the other hand, each individual Dasein is its own clearing. The possible contradiction, as it is brought up by Olafson, that Schatzki discusses is that, while "the singularity and uniqueness of both being and reality require that there exists a single clearing in whose terms things are able to show themselves to people", there are in fact as many clearings as there are Daseins. And, "[i]f there were to exist a plurality of clearings, then, on this view, being 'would be essentially plural in character'" (Schatzki, 1992, p. 87).

This issue is relevant in the context of this thesis, because it throws into doubt the very notion that Dasein can be truly open to the being of entities. Schatzki writes that "what things can show themselves to any one of these people as being is governed by the particular space of possible ways of being understood by that individual" (Schatzki, 1992, p. 91). This implies that what being can show up is always determined by the individual Dasein, which means that there can be no true openness to the being of entities. In other words, because Heidegger takes as his starting point that we cannot have access to being other than through the clearings where it manifests, this raises the question as to how being can still be said to be singular and independent of the individual clearing, if it can only manifest in any of a number of clearings, all of which are different from each other. The salient point for us is the ultimate possibility of Dasein to be truly open to the being of entities.

Schatzki does argue that the singularity of being is compatible with the multiplicity of clearings and does so by indicating that there is a commonality between the different clearings. That is, "the commonality of being [...] lies not in the existence of a single realm of being independent of and prior to any particular projection of it, but in a commonality that holds between a plurality of clearings concerning the specific ways of being in which things can manifest themselves" (Schatzki, 1992, p. 89). As there is a commonality between the ways things can manifest in the different clearings, there is, according to Schatzki, a commonality of being. This is, I believe, not the right way to

defend Heidegger's position, if only because it sacrifices the notion of "a single realm of being independent of and prior to any particular projection of it", something which I believe is incompatible with much of Heidegger's thinking, especially in so far as it seeks to connect with the religious domain.

For Heidegger to be able to counter the charge that the notion of Dasein being the clearing in which being manifests is contradictory to the possibility of there being a singular and unique being we will need to look beyond the commonalities Dasein has in its understanding of being. First it is important to take seriously Heidegger's assertion that "the being of beings 'is' not itself a being" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 26), which immediately casts doubts on the validity of the demand that being be singular and unitary. The notion that Dasein's understanding of being needs to ultimately refer to one singular "being" is valid in so far as "being" is something substantive, some thing, a being, because otherwise the different understandings of being that are found in the clearings of the different Daseins could not be all said to be about the same thing, to be all about being, and therefore not even understanding of being at all. But all this changes as it becomes clear that being is itself not a being.

Graham Priest explains that for Heidegger this means that "if being is not a being, it follows that one cannot say anything about it. For to say anything of the form 'Being is [so and so]' would be to attribute to it being, and so make it a being, which it is not" (Priest, 2002, p. 240). We can see a clear similarity with Heidegger's notion of the present-at-hand (theoretical entities), and could paraphrase Priest in Heideggerian language by saying that to say something about being would be to make it something present-at-hand or ready-to-hand (to leave the third category of beings, those with the nature of Dasein aside for the time being). According to Priest, Heidegger was guided by the notion that one could only say things about objects (beings) but not about concepts like

being, because to say something of the form of “Being is ...” would be to treat it as an object (Priest, 2002, p. 240)<sup>12</sup>.

Though this obviates the need to seek a correspondence between individual Daseins’ understandings of being and being itself, it does not yet make Heidegger’s position intelligible. If, on the one hand, he talks about Dasein’s understanding of being and, on the other hand, he treats being itself as something that one cannot say anything about, there still remain two questions. The first being what being is, if it is not a being. The second question being what the understanding of being of Dasein is, if it is not an understanding in the sense of being able to say something about being without transgressing into the realm of the unsayable.

Priest answers the first question by referring to Heidegger’s *What is Metaphysics?*, where Heidegger cites Hegel’s statement that “pure being and pure nothingness are [...] the same” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 94). The structure of the argument Heidegger uses, according to Priest, is that 1) Being is what it is that makes beings be, 2) Nothing is what it is that makes beings be, 3) Hence, being is nothing. “The first premise is true per definition”. The third part, the conclusion, “follows validly, assuming that nothing is a substantive here” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 242). This means that it is the statement that “Nothing is what it is that makes beings be” requires discussion.

Priest reconstructs the logic behind the assertion that “Nothing is what it is that makes beings be” in the following way. A “being is, and can only be, because it is not a nothing. It stands out, as it were, against nothingness. If there were no nothing, there could be no beings either” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 242). Further, “if nothing negates itself, it produces what it is not: something. Thus a being is exactly nothing nihilating<sup>13</sup> itself. Being is, then, nothing operating on itself” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 243). As Heidegger puts it in *What is*

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<sup>12</sup> Note that later in his career, after the Kehre, Heidegger does look for ways to say intelligible things about being, by turning to poetic language. At the time of *Being and Time*, however, he still held fast to the notion that nothing could be said about being.

<sup>13</sup> “Nihilating” is a translation of the German *nichten*, one of Heidegger’s many neologisms.

*Metaphysics?*: “From the nothing all beings as beings come to be” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 95).

The second question, what Dasein’s understanding of being consists of, if it is not to transgress into the realm of the unsayable, is answered by Priest that in principle “one cannot say anything of nothing. To say anything, whether that it is something or other, or just that it is, or even to refer to it at all, is to treat it as an object, which it is not” (Priest, 2002, p. 241). But, Priest continues, “one can, according to Heidegger, have knowledge [of nothing] by acquaintance” (Priest, 2002, p. 242). As we will see later in this thesis, Dasein’s encounter with nothingness (as nothingness in anxiety, as finitude in understanding, and as silence in being-with) is the key moment where authenticity occurs.

The upshot of all this is that the different understandings of being that we find in the clearings of the different Daseins are all ultimately based in an acquaintance with the nothing. It is, therefore, not the commonalities between these different ways of understanding in the positive sense. The commonality lies in the acquaintance with nothingness, and this is the same nothingness that gets nihilated when a being comes into being. The idea, therefore, of authentic Dasein, as it has been brought back from lostness in *das Man*, is one of it returning to the openness which it is in essence and connecting with the nothingness from out of which beings may emerge.

### ***3.4.3 Confusion between socio-historical and ontological alienation***

Another criticism in relation to this idea of bringing oneself back from *das Man*, comes from Lambert Zuidervaart, who accuses Heidegger of wrongly taking a socio-historical situation for an ontological one. Zuidervaart writes that, in Heidegger’s account, Dasein needs to withdraw from (as Zuidervaart puts it, “be alienated from”) the world in order to become authentic: “To be authentic, Dasein must be triply alienated, alienated from everyday concerns, from the public world, and from public interpretations of everyday concerns. For Heidegger, this ‘must’ reflects not a historical condition but an ontological necessity” (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 88). For Heidegger this withdrawal from the world is an “ontological necessity”, that is, it is necessary for every Dasein,

regardless of time and place, if it is to become authentic, if it is to live the full, flourishing life it is, in principle, capable of living. But Zuidervaart claims that Heidegger's account is, in fact, specific to the socio-historical context that existed at the time and place of Heidegger's writing, and that it "turns a socio-historical problem into an existential virtue" (Zuidervaart, 2007, pp. 88-89).

Zuidervaart writes that "[w]hat Marx criticizes as societal ruptures – the alienation of workers from their labour, products, and fellow workers – Heidegger celebrates as ontological clues to the most primordial truth of Dasein" (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 89). And he adds that "[t]he very notion of an interior self whose authenticity resides in public withdrawal [...] is itself the philosophical expression of a modern cultural tendency whose social matrix lies in the development of a market economy, privatized family life, and a depoliticized middle class" (Zuidervaart, 2007, pp. 88-89). Not only does Zuidervaart claim that what Heidegger treats as an existential (ontological) issue is, in fact, a socio-historical one, he also, implicitly, accuses Heidegger of being complicit in maintaining the capitalist status quo, by positing a notion of authenticity that involves, essentially, a de-politicized withdrawal from the kind of public life that could make a change in the capitalist status quo possible.

One way of countering the claim that Heidegger's notion of authenticity is specific to the socio-historical situation of western, industrialised, capitalist society is to point out the similarities between Heidegger's account and those from different times and geographical locations. John D. Caputo has written of the relationship between Heidegger's thought and that of the 14<sup>th</sup> century mystic Meister Eckhart. This book also contains a chapter called "Heidegger, Eckhart, and Zen Buddhism" (Caputo, 1986, pp. 203-217), where Caputo argues that there are not only striking similarities between the writings of Heidegger and Eckhart, but that this similarity extends to Zen Buddhism. Thus he writes that "once one turns to Zen, one does [...] find striking and revealing similarities to Heidegger" (Caputo, 1986, p. 204). What is more, "Meister Eckhart is frequently pointed to as a Christian mystic whose experience seems to be remarkable like Zen" (Caputo, 1986, p. 204).

The socio-historical situations within which Meister Eckhart's thinking and Zen originated were very different from the one Zuidervaart claims gave rise to Heidegger's thinking, and yet Meister Eckhart and Zen have very similar analyses of the individual's alienation. Economically both Meister Eckhart's world and the world of Zen were feudal and pre-industrial rather than capitalist and industrialized, with neither the privatized family life nor the depoliticized middle class Zuidervaart claims can be cited to explain the shape of Heidegger's account of authenticity. It seems, in sum, that Zuidervaart's charge that Heidegger's account of authenticity has its roots in the socio-historical situation in which Heidegger lived turns out to be untenable, once one takes into account the similarities between Heidegger's account and those of Meister Eckhart and Zen Buddhism.

### **3.5 Authenticity and autonomy**

It has been suggested (Section 3.3) that authenticity can be understood as a perfectionist ideal in education and, indeed, the main thrust of this thesis implies that it can. To begin bringing out in more detail what such a perfectionism based on authenticity involves, I will discuss the notion of autonomy as it has been used as a perfectionist ideal in education. In this I will draw on two discussions of the relationship between notions of autonomy and authenticity in *Philosophy of Education*, those of David Cooper (Cooper, 1983) and of Michael Bonnett and Stefan Cuypers (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003).

In these discussions three aspects of the notion of autonomy as it has been used in education, are criticised, where they refer mostly to the use of the concept of autonomy by R. S. Peters (1966) and R. F. Dearden (1972). Both Cooper and Bonnett and Cuypers maintain that rational autonomy, as it had hitherto been used in education, a) involves the use of critical rationality, b) involves choice, and c) involves choices that are the individual's own and not merely copied from others. An example of this kind of notion of autonomy is given by Bonnett and Cuypers, who cite R. F. Dearden writing that when a person is autonomous "the explanation of why he thinks and acts as he does [...] must include a reference to his own choices, deliberations, decisions, reflections,

judgements, plannings or reasonings” (Cited in Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 327).

I will begin by discussing some of Cooper’s and Bonnett and Cuypers’ objections to the use of this specific understanding of the concept of autonomy in education. Then I will argue that in all the above three areas the question of authenticity, as it is understood in this thesis, precedes that of autonomy. That is, the way that “an individual’s access to reality” is conceptualised in autonomy is one that assumes a number of aspects of the way reality is accessed, all of which are possible ways of being within Heidegger’s notion of authenticity, but by no means the only ones nor necessarily the most fundamental ones. As a result, I will have to conclude that the notion of rational autonomy is not able to answer the issues I am trying to address in this thesis.

### ***3.5.1 The notion of autonomy in education***

Cooper and Bonnett and Cuypers point out that in education, and specifically in the work of R. S. Peters (1966) and R. F. Dearden (1972), when autonomy is put forward as a desirable aspect of the individual, it is assumed that, in the relevant cases, the way to access reality involves critical rationality, choice and a sense of ownership. In phenomenological terms we could say that, when autonomy is put forward as desirable, a) the thing that is intended is thought to be best intended as the kind of thing critical rationality has a purchase on, where b) the individual’s intentional stance towards the thing involves a choice concerning the thing, and where c) the individual is such that the individual can have ownership over the rational purchase and choice involved.

This notion of autonomy is, for example, represented in the legal system in the western world, in that a person is, generally speaking, only legally accountable in so far as they display the aspects of autonomy mentioned above. This is not to say that an individual who cannot count as autonomous in this way cannot be legally prosecuted and incarcerated, as in the case of young children or the mentally ill. But in our society autonomy is connected with freedom, and only a person considered autonomous is eligible for the freedoms this society grants. But this freedom comes with certain responsibilities – such as that of

knowing and abiding by the law. But the question raised by Cooper and Bonnett and Cuypers is whether this notion of autonomy is equally appropriate in the context of education. That is, the notion of autonomy, as involving critical rationality, choice and ownership, becomes problematic for certain authors if it is taken either as the most basic way of being of a human being or as the one desired way of being of that human being.

Autonomy becomes problematic in the context of education when the stance of critical rationality, involving choice and ownership, is taken to be *the* fundamental way in which human beings exist, thus reducing most if not all ways of being of the person to such a stance. This is the notion that “deep down” all our ways of being involve critical rationality, choice and ownership. On this reading, it would be a critical-rational choice for a person to react in a spontaneous way or to “lose themselves” while dancing at a pop concert. This idea has, I believe, *prima facie* difficulties concerning its plausibility. It seems self-contradictory to say that an act that is spontaneous or that involves “losing oneself” is an act that consists of making a critical-rational choice. Even to say that such an act is preceded by a critical-rational choice is, I believe problematic, as we think of spontaneity and “loosing oneself” as having a different origin than critical-rational choice: we tend to think of them as arising of their own accord and not as deliberate acts. It would, therefore, be difficult to argue that the critical rationality, involving choice and ownership, we find in the notion of autonomy is what we all are, deep down, in the basis of our being, and it not clear that any advocate of autonomy in education is currently making such claims.

The notion of autonomy, as I will take it here, does not claim to represent the most fundamental way of being of the individual. It does, however, often claim to represent the individual’s highest point of development. This becomes problematic when the critical rational stance is taken to be the one for persons to aspire to in all or most circumstances. Bonnet and Cuypers take up this point, as they write that in philosophy of education “rational autonomy ... is often set up as operating with a view of rationality that aspires to incorporate a wide range of `other educational aims such as breadth of knowledge and understanding, and moral, social, and personal development, by conceiving

them as either forms of rationality or as highly rational enterprises” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 337). They mention as examples morality deriving from the rational principle of respect for others and emotions conceived as forms of cognition. This appears to put autonomy in the privileged position of being a, if not *the* necessary condition for such moral and emotional development. This is something that Bonnett and Cuypers dispute.

Of course, not many people subscribe to the view that such rational autonomy is either the only or the only desirable way for a person to be. Most people would allow for the desirability of “uncritical” responses, for example in the emotional or the religious spheres of life, or the ability to be spontaneous or “lose oneself” while at a concert. Indeed, the ability to react in a spontaneous way to certain events is often seen as more appropriate than a response that is purely rational. In education, however, the emphasis has until recently been on the development of this kind of rational autonomy, though it must be said that more recent discussions about the aims of education have also emphasized emotional and other non-rational aspects (See, for example, DfES, 2003)

For the present discussion the issue is not primarily one of whether critical-rational choice is the most fundamental way a human being can be, but rather whether education should limit itself to teaching such critical-rational responses in all situations. This is Bonnett and Cuypers’ charge, and we will see that there are good reasons to believe there are other ways of responding that should be part of education. In what follows I will take in turn the aspects of ownership, choice and critical rationality that are part of the notion of autonomy and consider the objections that have been made by Bonnett and Cuypers and Cooper. I will finish by looking at the Heideggerian notion of the different ways in which things can be revealed and the idea that what is revealed through the critical rationality that the notion of autonomy refers to is inherently limited. I will suggest that Heidegger’s notion of authenticity includes but goes beyond such a notion of autonomy.

### *3.5.2 An autonomous decision needs to be one’s own*

Autonomy is usually thought to require that the choice and rational deliberation involved are the individual’s own. And it is not this ownership as

such that Bonnett and Cuypers take issue with. Indeed, they stress that “there seems little value in breadth of knowledge that has no personal significance for the knower” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 337). What they object to is that, in their view, this notion of ownership is not made problematic enough in the discussions about autonomy we find, for example in R. S. Peters’ work, in that, seemingly, “provided a thought occurs ‘inside one’s head’, as it were, and has been assessed according to rational criteria, it is one’s own” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 327).

On the one hand, we find in the earlier writings of Michael Bonnett the charge that Peters’s notion is not radical enough, in that Peters’s ownership is an ownership of the public rationality we find in our traditions rather than of something truly one’s own. Thus Bonnett writes that “[t]he development of mind for Peters [...] ultimately consists in the internalization of the standards of rationality where rationality itself [...] is seen as a phenomenon of social life. Thus reason even when it takes place in the individual’s head is an internalization of public procedures” (Bonnett, 1986, p. 114). An example of this can be found when R. S. Peters writes about the person as an “individual centre of consciousness”, whose “ideas and expectations ... are the product of the initiation of an individual into public traditions enshrined in the language, concepts, beliefs, and rules of a society” (Peters, 1966, pp. 48-49).

As an alternative to such a social-rationalist position Bonnett suggests the possibility of the individual already being in contact with things prior to these public traditions. He makes reference to Heidegger’s notion “of truth as revealing - an open dwelling with things prior to judgements of correctness”, where “when we truly speak, judge, evaluate, we must in some sense already be with that of which we speak”. And he adds that “it will be this prior dwelling with things and not public standards alone which allows for the possibility of genuine communication and human awareness” (Bonnett, 1986, pp. 117-119). This “prior dwelling with things” again reminds us of Heidegger’s idea that it is possible to engage with things prior to any specific engagement with them as theoretical or practical entities (Section 3.2.1). This is, in turn, very much like the notion of having “a sense for entities as they are in themselves” which is the main focus of this thesis.

On the other hand, Bonnett and Cuypers object to a notion of ownership which ignores the fact, as they see it, that any understanding necessarily occurs in the context of a tradition, the social-cultural context of the individual, what they call “horizons of significance”. They argue that, “[a]lthough social dependence and conformism are usually regarded as incompatible with being true to oneself, [...] dependence on, and conformism with, other people’s opinions and social frameworks are not so much impediments as they are constitutive contributions to living authentically” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 335). They go on to write that “[a]ny conception of being true to oneself that staves off horizons of significance and dialogical relationships becomes fundamentally distorted or corrupt” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 335).

If it is true that the social relations in which the individual finds him or herself are in some way constitutive of them, if these social relations are not only thwhatat the individual engages in but are what makes up (not merely influences) the individual, the social relations themselves become, in some way the focus of education. This is a consequence Bonnett and Cuypers themselves do not spell out, but it does follow from their position. I will look at what such an education of the social relationship itself would look like when I discuss Heidegger’s notion of being-with and how the communal dimension of being-with becomes authentic in Chapter 6.

I can, therefore, sum up this section on the idea that autonomy involves the reasoning one engages in, the beliefs and values one has, has to be “one’s own” by stating that this notion of ownership, unproblematic though it may appear at first, raises at least two further questions. First, there is the question of the extent to which an individual can transcend their social and cultural context. Second, there is the question as to the ontological status of the social and cultural influences, and whether they are constitutive of the individual, in which case they themselves ought to become, in some ways, the object of the educational endeavour.

### 3.5.3 *An autonomous decision involves choice*

In a recent work on autonomy in philosophy of education, Christopher Winch writes that it is normally assumed that “[a]utonomy is concerned with *choosing* what is worthwhile for oneself, however we conceive of the worthwhile in any particular society” (Winch, 2006, p. 95, emphasis added). From a phenomenological perspective this particular notion of choice usually means that there is an individual who is separate from the things the act of choosing applies to. This notion of choice is very much grounded in what I have called understanding something as a practical or a theoretical entity (Section 3.2.1). If the choice is made from critical rationality, the choice is essentially theoretical, in that it is thought to be based on deliberations made in relation to entities that exist apart from the individual making the choice, where the entities are thought of in terms of their essences and characteristics and there is an assessment of the entities in relation to the choice being made. The choice in question is thus a theoretical one, if we take theory to mean the consideration of entities and their characteristics.

A first objection that can be made to this notion of choice is that it emphasizes theory over practice and theoretical knowledge and wisdom over skill and practical wisdom or phronesis. Indeed, different educational philosophers have emphasized the importance of such practical wisdom (See, for example Dunne, 1993). Though this objection to a notion of choice that objectifies the situation and the issue in relation to which a choice needs to be made is pertinent, it does not pose any insurmountable obstacles for the notion of autonomy, as autonomy can be made to accommodate such a more practical version of choice, for example by invoking Aristotle’s notion of virtue, as was done by Alasdair MacIntyre in his book *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 1981). The real challenge to the notion of choice comes from the notion that perhaps sometimes choice of either the theoretical or practical kind is not involved in important situations where one acts and takes responsibility for those actions.

In relation to this Bonnett and Cuypers discuss Harry Frankfurt’s (1999) notion of “volitional necessity” in relation to the latter’s notion of care as “caring about” what is important to us, which needs to be understood in the

context of the attempt to “formulate the fundamental structural conditions of the fact that we are creatures to whom things matter”. “According to Frankfurt, caring about and loving something exhibit a special kind of necessity, [...] in virtue of which caring and loving are not altogether under a person’s voluntary control”. The counterpart of this “volitional necessity” is “unthinkability”, “a mode of necessity, which constrains or limits the dynamism and organization of the will” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 329). That is, that we care about something is not necessarily the result of choice.

Bonnett and Cuypers write that, if one takes on board Frankfurt’s notion of volitional necessity “two conceptions of autonomy are revealed: voluntaristic and nonvoluntaristic”, where, on the one hand, “autonomy can be thought of as constituted by ‘choosing’ or ‘decision making’”, while, on the other hand, “authenticity can be thought of as constituted by ‘caring’ or ‘loving’ and is constrained by ‘volitional necessity’”. The latter “depends upon the substantial will and, due to the necessities of this will, to a considerable extent lies beyond a person’s immediate voluntary control” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 330).

If Bonnett and Cuypers are right about this, there is an aspect to the individual person that is ruled by such a volitional necessity, where this volitional necessity is neither a matter of choice nor, importantly, some deficient mode where the individual is in some way moved to act in certain ways that are beyond their control, as when overwhelmed by addictive or animal urges. An example that springs to mind is that of a pupil who is put in a position where they are instigated by their friends to partake in bullying another pupil but simply “cannot do it”. Here the individual does not make a rational, theoretically based, choice not to bully, nor is it a drive or addiction that keeps them from committing it.

In relation to the possibility of volitional necessity as opposed to choice, it needs to be made clear that such a notion of volitional necessity is relevant only if it is not the case that one *chooses* to follow what appears to be the necessity of one’s volition. In such a case the choice would still be the most basic way in which the decision was made. This raises a number of questions, such as what happens in cases when (as is presumably possible) one chooses to

resist the volitional necessity one experiences or when there is a conflict of impulses (think of the movie *Sophie's Choice*, where a mother is forced to choose which of her two children is put to death) both of which have this volitional necessity. There is, therefore, a question as to what the relationship is between such a volitional necessity and the ability to make decisions.

One way of answering this question is to say that different aspects of life ask for different aspects of the individual to respond to them. That is, different aspects of life require one to respond to them either practically, theoretically or from out of, for example, such volitional necessity. The cruelty involved in *Sophie's Choice* becomes painfully clear in that case, as it becomes clear that Sophie is asked to make a choice where no choice, but only necessity, is apposite. By making her choose, she is forced to treat her children as she would theoretical or practical entities (as those are entities in relation to which choice is appropriate).

In sum, in the context of this thesis the suggestion that an autonomously taken decision involves choice raises a number of issues. First, there is the suggestion that there is another way in which decisions can be made, that of volitional necessity, and, if this is true, the question arises as to what the learning would be in relation to such a faculty of volitional necessity. Second, there is the question of when it is volitional necessity and when it is choice on which a decision should be made (to take just the two discussed in this section, though there may be more), and what it is that should “decide” between the two (or more), which brings us to the Heideggerian notion of “getting the being of an entity right”.

#### ***3.5.4 An autonomous decision involves critical rationality***

Discussing R. S. Peters and Dearden, Cooper observes that their preference for autonomy over authenticity “bears witness to the central place they allocate to rational criticism in the mental development of someone who is to ‘choose what he is to become’, and whose attitudes are not to be ‘explained without reference to his own activity of mind’” (Cooper, 1983, p. 21). And he adds that “[b]ecause of this emphasis upon rational criticism, it is with indoctrination and conditioning that the education for autonomy is pre-eminently contrasted”

(Cooper, 1983, p. 21). The three implications of this emphasis on critical rationality that I will discuss are that, first, this critical rationality is usually thought of in terms of public discourse, that, second, this critical rationality is conceived of in terms of giving reasons, and that, third, it ignores what Cooper calls the genealogical dimension of values and beliefs.

The emphasis on public criteria of rationality can, according to Bonnett and Cuypers, lead to a conflict between, on the one hand, “the requirements of public rationality” and, on the other hand, “the subject’s own sense of his or her existence” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 332). That is, there may arise a tension between two of our criteria for an autonomous decision. Cooper makes a similar point, when he gives the example of someone sticking to a religious conviction in the face of the public arguments that militate against this belief, and he writes that “we do not do right to try to shake him out of his [religious] conviction. To do so successfully could induce a feeling of self-betrayal, of being bullied by people cleverer than himself, a lack of confidence in his right to ‘stick to his guns’, even a loss of dignity and sense of individuality” (Cooper, 1983, p. 22). The issue that arises out of the above is what the criteria would be to decide whether the public or the personal criteria should prevail. If someone is a hard-line misogynist we do, in my opinion, not do right by encouraging them to “stick to their guns”, nor is it right to just leave it at that there being a tension there between their private conviction and public discourse (which, I am assuming, disapproves of misogyny). In Section 6.4.1 I propose a way of dealing with this kind of issue.

The second difficulty with critical rationality is that it is often thought of in terms of giving reasons. Thus Cooper argues that there is in Peters and Dearden an “exaggerated stress upon rational criticism”, because there are “efforts and attitudes of mind which should surely be encouraged, but which have little to do with seeking or giving further reasons” (Cooper, 1983, p. 21). Cooper gives the example of the desirability for a person “to obtain a clear assessment of his own motives”, where we would expect the person only in “unusual circumstances” (Cooper, 1983, p. 21) to give reasons for regarding himself as having such motives, as, to take Cooper’s example, being ambitious for honours and position. The other example Cooper gives is that it may be

seen as desirable for a person “to remain open to new possibilities of emotional response and fulfilment, in matters of music, say, or in one’s sexual life” (Cooper, 1983, p. 22). Here, Cooper argues, reasons can be given both for and against a person remaining open to new possibilities, but the real reason for a person to do so, is according to this example “because otherwise he is a limited human being” (Cooper, 1983, p. 22). Further, Cooper stresses that one does not always need to provide criteria for doing certain things, for example devoting “time and energy to hearing and studying Beethoven’s music” (Cooper, 1983, p. 22).

A similar question arises in response to Cooper’s argument as did in response to the previous point, namely, how one would decide whether, in this case, giving reasons was or was not the appropriate thing to do. It seems to be appropriate to give reasons for actions or observations that are based in reason. And Cooper suggests that there are exceptions to this that are undervalued if the emphasis is too much on a kind of autonomy that entails critical rationality. Thus, when we notice that we are motivated by something like ambition or honour, this observation is itself not the result of a process of reasoning; and that the value of remaining open to new possibilities is not something we infer but something that we can “see” follows directly (without being mediated by a process of reasoning) from our being a human being; and that certain activities appear likewise valuable in their own right and not so because we infer that they are but because we “see” they are. What these examples point towards is a kind of direct access to things, and I have used the word “noticing” or “seeing” to indicate the directness of the experience. The question, therefore, arises what the situations are in which reason or “seeing” are appropriate, and this is, again one which the discussion about authenticity hopes to provide an answer to.

The third difficulty with the emphasis on critical rationality is, according to Cooper, that the notion of autonomy, when it is yoked to critical rationality, “has no place for that dimension of examination Nietzsche called ‘genealogical’”. He contrasts this with the notion of authenticity where the “concern with how one came by one’s beliefs and values” (Cooper, 1983, p. 25) is usually of central importance. This genealogy is the “investigation into the

myriad causes, influences, props, fashions, interests, desires, and social conditions that enter into explanations of why people hold the values and beliefs they do" (Cooper, 1983, p. 24). Here Cooper warns against overuse of the notion of the "genetic fallacy", the idea that it is a fallacy to suppose that "questions of truth can be settled, or even touched, by considerations of the causes, interests, or whatever which may generate or maintain beliefs" (Cooper, 1983, p. 24). Cooper does not claim that the genealogy of a belief can decide its truth or falsity, rather, "genealogical is of the first importance in affecting people's attitudes towards their values and beliefs; not by offering confirmations or disconfirmations, but by 'clearing' or 'indicting' how they are arrived at" (Cooper, 1983, p. 24).

In relation to the discussion about authenticity that is put forward in this thesis this last issue means that whenever we are dealing with an individual's values or beliefs, there is always a genealogical dimension to them. In other words, values and beliefs are always someone's values and beliefs and are never free-floating ones that exist in a vacuum. This is linked with the question of ownership of such values and beliefs I discussed earlier. It is also linked with the question of responsibility, as Michael Bonnett argues when he makes the point that essential to the notion of authenticity is the personal responsibility one takes for the choices one makes and the commitments one enters into, regardless whether these were entered into wittingly or not. And he adds that "it is such commitments, and the precise ways in which they are held, which will come to constitute the core of that meaning-giving subjectivity" (Bonnett, 1986, p. 122). In a more general way, though, it can be argued that the genealogical dimension of the values and beliefs we have lies in the fact that we are historical beings (and as such better conceptualised as processes than substances – See section 2.3.2) who always exist as relating to our past and future. A notion of autonomy that conceives of the individual as having beliefs and values based, first and foremost, in reason ignores this historical dimension and will, therefore, have difficulty being clear about the kind of historical beings we are.

### *3.5.5 The ontological argument: the limits of what can be revealed in a rational, objective way*

The above can be summarised by saying that the notion of autonomy, as I have found it, is based on a particular way in which human beings can have access to things, but by no means the only one. Thus, Bonnett and Cuypers point out that the rationality promoted in autonomy is a particular way of revealing something, which “is always at the expense of other ways of revealing it” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 338). They write that rational thinking “relates us to the world and achieves its rigor by the application of public rule-governed procedures to experience in terms of which it is thus organized and validated”. They add that “[w]hat shows up in this framework of objectivity is heavily conditioned by the largely instrumental purposes that underlie the standards (conventions, criteria, etc.)”. Such a rational way of taking the world is, they claim, “far from impartial”, in that it “can be seen to underwrite a pervasive calculative stance towards the world” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 338), and they mention the effects such a stance has on the environment (presumably because of the exploitation of nature it encourages), but one could easily think of other areas in life where such a “calculative stance” has a deleterious effect, such as personal relationships, and others concerning life and living beings, which is the domain in relation to which this thesis seeks to discover an appropriate form of learning.

The point Bonnett and Cuypers make is that every way of “revealing” something, be it through critical rationality or otherwise (for example, through poetry or practical engagement with the thing) always involves a “negation” of other ways of “revealing” the thing. It has been suggested in this section that what is lacking is a way to arbitrate between the different ways in which things can be revealed – and this question will be pursued in the rest of the thesis. One way of approaching this is suggested by Bonnett and Cuypers, who write that what is called for is an awareness of this “negation of other ways of revealing the thing”, so that through this awareness of the “denial” of other ways of apprehending the thing can “restore” its “inherent otherness” which is essential to its “integrity” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 338). Such “[a]wareness of negation is not awareness of nothing, but a remembrance of

what is being forgotten when we sum things up in categories and attempt to order our lives and the world in terms of them” (Bonnett and Cuypers, 2003, p. 338).

In sum, the notion of autonomy as we have encountered it in writings about education has a notion of ownership that leaves open the crucial question of the relationship between the individual and their social-historical context, entails the concept of choice in a way that still leaves open when and where making a choice is the appropriate way to make a decision, and, likewise, emphasizes critical rationality in a way that leaves open what the appropriate circumstances are for such critical rationality, rather than another way of access to the thing in question, to be the basis of one’s actions and decisions. In short, rational autonomy takes the entities it encounters in the world as either practical or theoretical ones, and that, I have been saying from the beginning, is the limitation the process of *learning to be authentic* aims to overcome.

### **3.6 Becoming authentic as a process of awakening, “giving oneself up”, and finding one’s true self**

Now that we have some understanding of what authenticity involves, I will take a first look at the process of becoming authentic. The process of becoming authentic can be characterised as a process of awakening, of giving oneself up, or of finding one’s true self. I will take a closer look at these three ways of characterising authenticity, and conclude that the notion of “turning away from the world” and “turning back” as it is found in philosophy of education is appropriate in this context.

I will consider the process of becoming authentic (as a process of awakening, of giving oneself up, or of finding one’s true self) against the backdrop of the distinction Heidegger makes between disclosure and discovery, between what constitutes *disclosing* the being of things (What things can possibly exist?) and *discovering* actual things (Which things do actually exist of all the possible things that could exist?). This distinction will help bring out how learning to be authentic is different from versions of awakening, of giving oneself up, or of finding one’s true self. But before I look at these three ways of characterizing the process of becoming authentic, I will consider how disclosure is, for

Heidegger, a more fundamental form of truth than the kind of truth we may discover.

Heidegger ranks disclosure as Dasein's primordial truth. Thus he writes that resoluteness, as a "distinctive mode of Dasein's disclosedness", is existentially "the primordial truth", and that "[s]uch truth is primarily not a quality of 'judgement' nor of any definite way of behaving, but something essentially constitutive for being-in-the-world as such [Dasein]" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 349). As David Cooper puts it, Heidegger's notion of truth contrasts with the notion of truth as the agreement (one could also say "correspondence") between a proposition or a representation and objects or facts in the world. Cooper writes that "while this conception [of truth as correspondence] is not simply mistaken, Heidegger levels two criticisms against those who subscribe to it. First, they treat 'agreement' as a matter of similarity between two entities, a representation and an object or fact represented", which he rejects as unintelligible. "Instead, he argues, we should think of a true assertion as disclosing or uncovering an object". Second, "it is not ... assertions or judgements which are the primary vehicles of truth. For it is we – Dasein – who disclose and uncover" (Cooper, 2002, p. 54). It is therefore Dasein itself that is in truth or untruth.

Disclosure is a concept Heidegger uses for the way in which the being of entities are accessed by Dasein. They are, therefore, essentially about Dasein's understanding of the being of entities. The German word for "to disclose" is *erschliessen*, which consists of two parts: the prefix "er"<sup>14</sup>, which functions in much the same way as "dis" does in disclose, and "schliessen" which means to close. In the German the word *erschliessen* means "to open up", where what can be opened up is, for example, a country for trade, an oil well or a mine for extraction, a book for meaning, the heart for experience, a hotel for guests. *Erschliessen* can also mean that something reveals itself to someone, the meaning of a book can be revealed to the reader, nature can reveal itself to

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<sup>14</sup> Note that the German prefix "ent" usually means the same as "er", which is a further indication of the closeness of the terms *entschliessen* (to decide) and *erschliessen* (to disclose)

someone, someone can reveal themselves to someone else. In short, authenticity discloses.

What happens in the event of true disclosure is that Dasein itself is disclosed to itself (Section 3.2.1) in a non-reflective self-awareness (Section 3.4.1) at the same time that the being of the entities it is in contact with is being disclosed. “Whenever a ‘there’ [the most basic truth about Dasein is, according to Heidegger, that it is ‘a there’] is disclosed, its whole being-in-the-world – that is to say, the world, being-in, and the self which, and an ‘I am’, this entity is – is disclosed with equal primordially” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 344). This is in line with the idea presented earlier, that the being of entities is disclosed at the level of the a priori, at point where both the “active” *intentio* and the “passive” *intentum* emerge. It thus brings together “what we take something as” with “how something presents itself to us”. One could say that what is disclosed in authenticity is the deep structure of *the way something presents itself* or of *what it is taken as*.

That is to say, the truth of disclosure is more basic than propositional truth, the truth of a judgement, or the truth of an action, of a way of behaving. Hence it would be misleading to say that authentic existence consists of holding certain propositional truths or behaving in a certain way. As disclosure is the way in which Dasein first discloses anything (itself or the world) one could say that before disclosure there is nothing for Dasein. In contrast, for Dasein to discover something, there needs to already be a world in which things can be discovered and “things”, in the broadest sense of the word, to be discovered: if Dasein has no *world* of any sort and no sense of there being *things* of any kind it is impossible for Dasein to discover anything. Discovery presupposed disclosure.

### ***3.6.1 Awakening as discovery and disclosure***

My first characterisation of the process of becoming authentic is that of awakening, which can be found in the following quotation from *Being and Time*: “If Dasein discovers the world in its own way and brings it close, if it discloses to itself its own authentic being, then this discovery of the ‘world’ and this disclosure of Dasein are always accomplished as a clearing-away of

concealments and obscurities, as a breaking up of the disguises with which Dasein bars its own way” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 167). This awakening thus refers to a renewed understanding of both the self and the world. Note that this notion of authenticity as an awakening is linked to Heidegger’s notion of the aim of philosophy. “Plato says in one of his major dialogues that the difference between the philosophising human being and the one who is not philosophising is the difference between being awake ... and sleeping...”<sup>15</sup>(Heidegger, 1995a, p. 23).

The kind of awakening Heidegger is interested in is, in his words, ontological (pertaining to the being of entities) rather than ontic (pertaining to actual entities). That is, disclosure is primarily ontological and discovery is ontic, and I will take them as being two distinct ways in which Dasein has access to being and beings, even though, as we saw in Section 3.6.1, disclosure, as more fundamental than discovery, is sometimes also used as encompassing both. In the case of awakening, there is the risk of conceptualising the state from which one awakens and the state in which one wakes up in terms of our ordinary (practical or theoretical) conceptions of things. That is, that one would find out that such and such is the case, where what is the case is facts like any other facts we encounter rather than facts of a different nature altogether.

An example of this would be if a child discovered that his father, whom he had hitherto held up as his hero, was, in fact, deeply corrupt in his dealings with his business partners. For the child this could amount to a discovery which brings about a kind of awakening. His father is suddenly seen in a different light and with this comes a change in how he sees his own world: no longer is the beautiful house he grows up in the fruit of honest labour and business nous, it represents rather the ill-deserved gains of dishonesty and manipulation. Though this kind of discovery represents an awakening of sorts, it is not the kind of awakening Heidegger refers to when he talks about authenticity. The

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<sup>15</sup> Many, more recent, interpreters of Heidegger, for example, Miguel de Beistegui point out this element in Heidegger’s philosophy: “Returning the practice of philosophy to its Greek, specifically Platonic origin and inspiration, Heidegger understands philosophy as an awakening of life itself”. Or again in his claim that for Heidegger philosophy “is the most sustained attempt to face life, to turn it back on itself in order to make it transparent to itself and grasp its ownmost and highest possibilities” (de Beistegui, 2005, p. 25)

ontic discovery discloses what kind of person, of all the possible kinds of persons, his father actually is. This is different from ontological disclosure which would be the disclosure of what it is to be human, what the possibilities of being human are in the first place.

As we saw in our discussion of autonomy (Section 3.5.4), in education we find the ontical approach to awakening in many critical forms of education which aim to awaken the pupil from the slumber of traditional ways of seeing things. Often the word narrative, or grand narrative, is used for the ways of looking at the world and themselves that the pupil grows up in. The awakening these critical forms of education aim for is that of the pupil seeing what is false about them. For example, the idea that people in western democracies are free would be critically analysed, shown to be a narrative which hides many aspects of our lives that are not free, as a result of, for example, schooling, media manipulation or the lack of any real political choice. As we saw in our analysis of autonomy, it is then claimed that a person who is able to critically engage with such narratives is better able to be an authentic person, because they can form their own opinions and are not as much subject to being told what to think as people who have not learned to think critically in such a way. An example of such a critical pedagogy is Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970/1996; Freire, 2004), and I will say more in Section 7.1.2 about how it differs from the approach promoted in this thesis.

Though there is, I believe, a lot of merit in many of the critical forms of education, they do not think of awakening in the same way as Heidegger does. For Heidegger awakening, in the context of a discussion of authenticity, does not wake up to the fact that X is not Y but Z (e.g. "the education system is not there to help the individual flourish but to serve as a tool of the oppressor"), not even to the fact that there are such things as Xs, Ys, and Zs (e.g. "in this world there are oppressors and the oppressed and usually the oppressor, if successful, hides behind a mask of benevolence"). What Heidegger's authentic awakening discloses is, as we have seen, that as human beings, as Dasein, we are, more often than not, lived by the public discourse of *das Man*, and that we tend to take the entities, including ourselves, as practical or theoretical entities. This awakening to one's "lostness" in *das Man* is an awakening to the

nature of one's own being and, at the same time, an awakening to the being of the world and others; it puts the whole of human existence in a different light.

### *3.6.2 Giving one-self up as discovery and disclosure*

A second way in which authenticity can be characterised is that of "giving oneself up". Thus "[a]nticipation [the realisation of the finitude of one's existence, see Section 4.2.2] discloses to existence that its uttermost possibility lies in giving itself up, and thus shatter all one's tenaciousness to whatever existence one has reached" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 309). Here the act of giving oneself up can be seen as an act of resolve in the face of the disclosure of the truth of one's most authentic way of being. We will not usually come across calls for the self to be given up in western education, but, if we bear in mind the religious dimension of Heidegger's notion of authenticity, we can easily understand why "giving oneself up" would be part of it. As in the case of awakening, the danger with the notion of "giving oneself up" is that of conceiving of the self in terms of our ordinary everyday understanding as either a practical or a theoretical entity rather than in terms of an entity with the nature of Dasein.

Sometimes such "giving oneself up" is thought of in terms of the individual giving up a belief they have about themselves, in order to discover a truer self. For example, when a young man, who believes that his most cherished asset is his image of the tough and callous womaniser discovers that he can give up that part of his self in order to become who he really is, for example, the faithful lover who is set to become a dedicated husband and father. In the context of education the notion of "giving oneself up" is often found when individuals subject themselves to the authority of a system, a regime or a master, because of the perceived need for the individual to give themselves up, to surrender their ego. Rather than saying that there is a true self hidden underneath the person that is there now, or that the person needs to be shaped in the right way, this notion of "giving oneself up" implies that any form of self needs to be relinquished, usually so that god or some divine power can take hold of one. Jesus Christ's obedience to his "Father" in going to his own

crucifixion is perhaps the prototypical version of this kind of giving oneself up in western civilisation.

The danger of understanding such “giving oneself up” in practical terms is that the self is taken as ready-to-hand (a practical entity like an object one could give up by leaving it behind). It is then seen as a nuisance or as a threat, the cause of suffering or the impediment to one’s realisation as a human being. And such a discovery of the self as an impediment is likely to result in one acting towards the self as such. For example, one may deny oneself any “nourishment” of the self and renounce all worldly goods; or one may set out to punish oneself for any manifestation of selfishness in order to teach oneself not to allow the self to take over; or one may subject oneself to a regime or the will of another person as a way of practising life without the self.

In the case of taking the self that is to be given up as something present-at-hand (a theoretical entity like a concept one could give up by replacing it with another one), the individual has a representation of the self as an entity within a framework of entities and relations that explains what the self is and what it does. Staying with the notion of “giving up”, the self may be equated with the material, the worldly, in contrast with the spiritual, it may be seen as a manifestation of darkness that has to be dispelled or overcome, it may be seen as a theoretical posit, one that is not based on any empirical evidence, and so on. Then there will be either an account of how that liberation was possible and even inevitable, or of how it was impossible, just something one needs to learn to live with. All of which may suggest things one could do (which would take the self as ready-to-hand understood from within the present-at-hand scheme), or it could suggest mental representations one could foster that would bring about the liberation from the self, such as the repetition of mantras, the evocation of certain images, the Christian practice of thinking about the four last things (death, judgement, heaven, and hell), or meditation on certain sacred writings.

But where the notions of the self as practical and theoretical both run into difficulty is that it is not clear what or who it is that would give up the self in the first place. For there to be something ready-to-hand or present-at-hand

there needs to be something that takes the entity as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. This is linked with what I said about the notion of *learning as modification and growth*, namely, that such learning requires there to be an object of learning. But in the case of “giving up the self” what is it that “gives up the self” as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand, other than the self? It is, therefore, not a matter of discovering that the self must be given up, but of disclosing the self in a way that is prior to any practical or theoretical take on it. The result of disclosure is, as we have seen, not a judgement or a way of behaving but, rather, a way of being. Heidegger then claims that in disclosing the nature of the entity of the self “all one’s tenaciousness to whatever existence one has reached” is shattered (Heidegger, 1962, p. 309). Thus the “letting go” of the self is neither the result of an action one takes nor of a judgement one has of how things are, but it happens in the disclosure itself. How this can be made intelligible is the subject of the following three chapters.

### ***3.6.3 Finding one’s true self as discovery and disclosure***

A third way of characterizing the process of becoming authentic is that of finding one’s true self. Heidegger writes that “because only the self of the [self belonging to *das Man*] gets appealed to [by the call of conscience] and brought to hear, *das Man* collapses. ... [and] the self, which the appeal has robbed of its lodgement and hiding-place, gets brought to itself” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 317). Here the idea is that of the inauthentic self, as it is constructed out of or by *das Man*, collapses and the true, authentic self comes to the fore. Characterizing the process in this way is clearly linked with “giving oneself up” as the inauthentic self “collapses” and with awakening, as one awakens to what one is authentically and finds one’s true self. This “finding” is an instance of disclosure, of revealing to oneself what the possibilities are that the self has, rather than finding any particular actualisation of these possibilities.

The true self has often been conceived of as present-at-hand in so far as it has been thought to have certain characteristics which were true to it. For example, a person may have conformed to certain expectations and behave and even think like the person they felt they were expected to be. In this case the true self would behave and think differently from how they normally behave

and think. This person would then, in discovering their true self, find out that, “deep down” they are inclined to behave and think differently from how they normally do. The true self is also often seen as a ready-to-hand entity, when the person uses it as if it was a physical object in the environment. Thus the person may “assert themselves”, take a stand on who they are, say “this is the kind of person I am”, or “fight for their right” to be themselves.

It is important within the context of a phenomenological investigation to acknowledge that such a theoretical or practical discovery of a true self is often based in experience. It is, therefore, not to dismiss reports of cases where individuals find their true self, for example, because they discover that a certain role does not suit them and they assert themselves as a different person. The question that needs to be raised in the context of authenticity, though, is that there is no way of telling that what is being experienced as the true self is not simply an older version of the inauthentic self, as when a person was told to behave and think in a certain way and later told to behave and think differently: from a Heideggerian perspective both are inauthentic, it is just that one is older than the other.

One of the problems is that it is not at all clear what this “true self” would consist of. We may tend to behave and think in ways that are heavily influenced and shaped by our environment, but it does not follow from this that there is something that behaves and thinks, like a prior self, which is not thus affected by our environment. What is more, because every human being grows up in some sort of an environment where some sort of demands will be made of it, where certain things will be expected of it, where there is, at a minimum, a preference on the part of other people as to what constitutes desirable behaviour and correct thought, it then becomes difficult to see what would be a coherent account of a self that is truer than the one that has grown up among people and done so in its own way by taking certain aspects of the environment as salient and by responding to those salient aspects in its own way.

For Heidegger the authentic way in which Dasein may find its true self is when it understands itself not in terms of something practical or theoretical,

but as something with possibility as its essence (Section 4.2.2). It is, therefore, not any particular actual way of being that is true to Dasein's self but existence as possibility, as not any particular characteristics in the way that practical or theoretical entities have characteristics. This is again the essential openness at the core of Dasein that we encountered before. As was said at the beginning of this chapter, it is from out of the openness (with possibility as its essential nature) that the *actual* ways of a particular Dasein emerge. None of these actual ways are authentic in themselves, because they are all the result of having grown up into *das Man*. Finding one's true self, therefore, does not consist in finding any particular way of being, but in returning to the state of openness, possibility that exists when all the actual ways have subsided.

In sum, the notions of awakening, giving oneself up and finding oneself can easily be taken to refer to discoveries one makes about oneself at the level of the ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. However, when this happens they are taken in a way that misses the point Heidegger wants to make. In looking for authentic existence, one is, according to Heidegger, not looking to awaken to "facts" about life one did not know before, but to what it means to be a human being, to what "facts" are possible for a human being in the first place. One is also not looking to get rid of or explain away the self, but rather to disclose to oneself that the kind of entity one is has "giving itself up" as one of its essential possibilities. One is not looking for one's "own" way of *seeing* or *doing* things, but for one's own way of *being*, where being cannot be reduce to what one does and believes, but comes *prior* to that. For Heidegger, authentic existence does not lie at the level of how one sees or does things, but *prior* to that, at the level of existing as openness and possibility. To repeat part of an earlier quote, the disclosive truth of authentic existence is "something essentially constitutive for being-in-the-world as such" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 343).

### **3.7 In sum**

In this chapter I have attempted to give a first characterization of authentic existence and of the process that, according to Heidegger leads to authentic existence. We saw that Heidegger's Dasein is, in essence, openness and possibility, that within this openness the processes of understanding,

attunement and being-with emerge and that authentic existence consists in the falling silent of these processes, where the actual process that leads to this falling silent occurs at the level of the a priori and not in the relationship between Dasein and the entities it encounters in the world (objects of learning).

We saw that a number of recent philosophers of education have conceived of the process of becoming authentic in terms that are essentially perfectionist, conceiving of it as a double movement of both becoming who one really is and reaching one's full potential as a human being, as a result of a "death and rebirth", a "turning away from the world" and a "turning back", in such a way that one gains an authentic sense for of one's own existence as well as that of the entities one encounters in the world.

We saw that the first moment of the process of becoming authentic, the part that involves a "turning away from the world", is characterized by Heidegger as "bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*". This involves three, related aspects: extracting oneself from the ways of understanding things into which one has been socialised; understanding oneself in terms of oneself and not in terms of practical or theoretical entities; understanding things and oneself from not out of a past understanding of them. The moment of "turning back" then involves a return to *das Man*.

We saw that the notion of rational autonomy that has been influential in education would not be able to answer the issues I am trying to address in this thesis in that it invariably takes the entities it encounters in the world as either practical or theoretical; it is unable to elucidate the notion of ownership so as to resolve the crucial question of the relationship between the individual and their social-historical context; it is unable to determine when and where making a rational choice is the appropriate way to come to particular a course of action; it is unable to determine what the appropriate circumstances are for critical rationality, rather than another way of access to reality, to be the basis of one's actions and decisions.

We saw that in relation to the question of truth, Heidegger speaks of disclosure as being more fundamental than truth as the correspondence

between a proposition or a representation and reality: the truth of disclosure is more basic than propositional truth, the truth of a judgement, or the truth of an action, of a way of behaving. As authentic, Dasein is “in truth” in that Dasein itself is disclosed to itself in a non-reflective self-awareness at the same time that the being of the entities it is in contact with is being disclosed. We saw that the issue of concern in relation to the veracity of an authentic experience does not lie in the public domain, because of the a priori nature of authenticity. Even so, a question was raised regarding the intersubjective dimension of authenticity, which will be taken up later in the thesis.

Finally I considered characterizations of the process of becoming authentic one can find in Heidegger’s writings. I first argued that an overly voluntaristic interpretation of this process is unwarranted. We looked at the ways in which the process has been described as one of “awakening”, of “giving oneself up”, and of “finding oneself”, where we saw that all three refer to processes of disclosure of the kinds of things that can *possibly* exist rather than to the discovery of things we *actually* believe exist, where it is always the self that is disclosed as something for which Dasein did not previously have the ontological categories, possibly involving changes in the structure of experience itself. That is, all three characterizations of the process of becoming authentic involve a radically different understanding of what it is for Dasein to be.

I can now say that, based on the above, the process of becoming authentic is a process of falling silent that occurs at the level before there has been a decision as to the being of the entity in question (practical, theoretical or as belonging to *live and living beings*), where a connection with the entity remains even as the basic faculty of relating to the entity (understanding, attunement and being-with) has subsided. This process is a “turning away from the world”, a turning away from understanding things as a result of enculturation, engagement with practical and theoretical entities, and previous experience. This is followed by a “turning back” to the world in a new way, where what is new has been disclosed at the level of the being of entities and may involve a structural change in the experience of the self. As we will see in detail in the next three chapters, this process is compatible with the notion of *learning to be*

*authentic*, in that it includes radical self-renewal and a change in the structure of experience, in such a way that it is not based in the relation to an object of learning and where the result of the process is that of Dasein having a sense for the being of entities in themselves. However, questions about Heidegger's account of the relationship between Dasein and other Daseins, individually or collectively, have come up that will be addressed at length in Chapter 6.

## 4 Authentic understanding

### 4.1 Becoming authentic as gaining an authentic understanding of oneself

#### 4.1.1 *Understanding as projection*

Understanding is one of the three aspects of Dasein's "comportment", its ways of relating to things. Thus understanding determines, in part, how we relate to things, people, ideas, ourselves, the world, nature - in short, everything. As we saw earlier, understanding, for Heidegger, refers to both our practical engagement with things (the ready-to-hand) and our theoretical understanding of them (the present-at-hand). "If understanding is a basic determination of existence, it is as such the condition of possibility of all the Dasein's particular possible manners of comportment [ways of relating to things]... not only practical but also cognitive [theoretical]" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 276). For Heidegger understanding itself does not only contain the possibility of understanding an entity as ready-to-hand, present-at-hand or existence, it is also something deeper than either practical or theoretical engagement, it is, as it were, the source of both.

Heidegger writes that "the understanding has in itself the existential structure we call projection" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 184). Heidegger's word, projecting, is the translation of *entwerfen*, which literally means "throwing" something "off" or "away" from one, and it may also be used in the sense in which a geometer

“projects” a curve “upon” a plane<sup>16</sup> (Heidegger, 1962, p. 185, editor's footnote). Thus we understand something by projecting, by projecting it upon possibilities – like projecting what the possibilities of a certain situation are before understanding the entity one wants to understand in terms of those possibilities. Importantly, these possibilities are not usually explicit: “the character of understanding as projection is such that the understanding does not grasp thematically [i.e. explicitly] that upon which it projects – that is to say, possibilities” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 185).

We could take as an example an individual's understanding of a hammer as something one may drive a nail into a wall with. In this case the hammer is encountered as a piece of equipment, as something one may use in an instrumental way, doing something with it in order to achieve a certain goal. The entity (the hammer) is thus projected onto its possibilities (being a piece of equipment) and only understood after these possibilities have been projected. Often humorous situations play on this kind of projection, as when a naive individual projects an entity (for example, a piece of modern art) onto the wrong possibilities (for example, onto equipment), with the result that they do something out of place (for example, hang their coat on the piece of modern art).

The word projecting is potentially confusing if it is taken in the sense analogous to “projecting an image on a screen” where the image determines what gets seen on the screen, just as when we say that “someone projects a feeling they have onto someone else”, that is, when we use the word projecting in the same way as “sticking a label onto something”, attaching a meaning to an entity that this entity does not have of itself. Rather, the entity that determines the meaning something can have is not an image, a label, a meaning that we project onto the thing but *that which the entity gets projected onto*. To return to the analogy of the screen, when the image is projected onto the screen, it is, in the way Heidegger understands projection, the screen that

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<sup>16</sup> In ordinary German usage *Entwurf* is also used in the sense of “designing” or “sketching” some “project” which is to be carried through, but this is emphatically not the meaning Heidegger envisages.

determines what image it is possible to appear on it (more on this possible confusion later). We can thus also say that we understand something “in the light of”, “by projecting it onto something else”, or “in terms of” something else.

#### *4.1.2 Our theoretical understanding is based in our practical understanding*

It was said in the section on Heidegger's perfectionist philosophy of education, that Dasein has, according to Heidegger, as its distinguishing characteristic that it has an understanding of being. Perhaps the first thing that springs to mind in hearing the phrase *understanding of being* is some kind of theoretical understanding. But, as we saw in the introduction, Heidegger posits that we can understand the being of an entity either theoretically, or practically or, indeed, in a way that is appropriate in relation to *life and living beings*. First I will look at the relationship between Dasein's theoretical and its practical understanding of being.

With respect to the latter, “when Heidegger singles out Dasein as the unique possessor of an understanding of being, he is referring primarily to the fact that Dasein is the only kind of entity which takes a stand on its being practically” (Thomson, 2004, p. 443). We display an *understanding of being* in how we live our lives, in what we do, as much as in how we theorise. When we treat something as a certain kind of something (let's say, a pupil as a receptacle of knowledge) there is a certain kind of understanding of what kind of entity the pupil is, even if we do not hold the explicit (theoretical) belief that “the pupil is a receptacle to be filled with knowledge”, but merely act in that way.

That is, Heidegger thought of theory as derivative of practice. First, in the sense that we only become theoretical about something, when our practical flow of engagement with the thing has been interrupted. Second, in the sense that our theoretical concepts are ultimately derived from our practical engagement with things. And third, in the sense that *being theoretical* is itself a practice. That is, our way of dealing with the pupil involves a certain understanding of what kind of entity the pupil is, and it is only when our usual

flow of interaction with the entity (the pupil) is interrupted<sup>17</sup> (e.g. the pupil resists the knowledge being poured into him or her) that we may begin to try to understand *explicitly* and *theoretically* what kind of being the entity (the pupil) has, in which case we may bring into practice some of our theoretical skills (such as going to the library to read up on the topic and analysing the situation).

To give another example, the theoretical way of understanding things in terms of categories, classes, genus and species, is, according to Heidegger, derivative of such practical understanding of things. Thus we can classify a red pen as a kind of pen, a pen as an implement for writing, an implement for writing as an instrument for communication, and so on. But we can also classify the same pen as a material entity, as a manmade material entity, as a machine-produced entity, and so on. The way in which these theoretical meanings of the object are derivative of the practical one is that the very question of what kind of theoretical entity something is *presupposes* a practical context. One only asks about the pen as an instrument for communication if one is interested in doing so, for example if one is researching the development of instruments for communication through history, which means that one is asking the question as a historian. Or, if one is asking about the pen as a machine-produced entity, one is perhaps doing so out of an interest in setting up a pen factory, which is again practical. Even the purely academic interest one may have in things presupposes an overarching practical context of the person who is asking the question.

Heidegger describes the origin of theoretical thinking in practical thinking in terms of an interruption in the flow of a smooth coping with things. If we are emerged in the flow of life, coping smoothly, we use things (like pens and doors and roads) without them becoming explicit (Heidegger would use the word “thematic”). Rather, Heidegger would say that these things are “transparent” when we are in the flow of things, in the sense of us not noticing them in any explicit way, as we are focussing on what we are doing, like

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<sup>17</sup> Note that the term interruption here isn't primarily a pause. Interruption refers to a break in the flow of practical engagement

writing, leaving a room or driving on a road. It is only when things fail to go smoothly, when the pen runs out of ink, the door is stuck or the road becomes pot-holed, that we begin to take explicit notice of them. This is, according to Heidegger, the origin of our theoretical, present-at-hand, understanding of things, an understanding which is, as such, based in our practical, ready-to-hand, understanding.

#### *4.1.3 Our practical understanding is structured by our self-understanding*

Thus we have practical understanding and theoretical understanding, where the latter is based in the first. For Heidegger, however, both are based in Dasein's self-understanding. As Ian Thomson writes, Dasein "lives in an intelligible world implicitly structured by the stand it takes on its own identity" (Thomson, 2004, p. 443). That is, what something means to us depends on how we see ourselves. For example, as a teacher, the exercise books and the red pen in my bag are understood in terms of marking student work (what Heidegger calls the "towards-this"), which I understand in terms of the monitoring and giving feedback that is part of the practice of being a teacher (what Heidegger calls the "in-order-to"), which, in turn, I understand in terms of my being a teacher (what Heidegger calls the "for-the-sake-of-which"). As Heidegger puts it, this time in the opposite order from our example, "The 'for-the-sake-of-which' signifies an 'in-order-to'; this in turn, a 'towards-this'" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 120).

To put it differently, getting the meaning of these entities right (What kind of pens are these?) depends on getting their role in the activities right (What does it mean to mark student work?), which in turn depend on getting the whole of the role right (What does it mean to be a teacher?), which depends on getting oneself right (What does it mean to be me?). The questions put within brackets are phrased in a theoretical way but they are not questions one necessarily asks oneself explicitly, they serve merely as illustrations, as verbalisations of what is essentially tacit.

One could counter that with many practical activities we understand the activity in terms of the wider practice rather than in terms of our self-

understanding. Thus we understand the activity of making a worksheet in terms of the practice of being a teacher. But, Heidegger would argue, we understand this wider practice, in this case *being a teacher*, ultimately in terms of ourselves. And this is true regardless of whether one is a teacher oneself; one could understand *being a teacher* just as well in terms of one's dislike of the teachers one had as a child, or in terms of one's relationship with one's spouse, who once wanted to be a teacher.

But, as I said earlier, our understanding of ourselves (being a teacher) is also something we project. Therefore, some of the confusion surrounding the meaning of projection is due to the fact that, to return to the analogy of the screen, one does not only understand entities by projecting them onto the screen, *the screen itself is also projected*, that is, that which illuminates the entity one understands is also projected: one projects the entity one understands onto what is itself a projection. To return to the earlier example of understanding the red pen and the exercise books in terms of being a teacher, one does not only project the "pen and exercise books" onto the activity of "marking" and the activity of "marking" onto "being a teacher", one also projects "being a teacher" onto something. The question of understanding oneself then becomes a question of *what it is one projects oneself onto*: that is, *in the light of what or in terms of what* does one understand oneself? And this brings us right to the heart of the issue this thesis aims to resolve. If we understand things in terms of the possibilities we project for those things, what are the possibilities that allow us to understand ourselves as a *living being*?

Heidegger, as we have seen, believes that the inauthentic individual understands themselves in terms of *das Man*, that is, in terms of the ways of understanding and doing things that they adopt unwittingly as they grow up in a particular society; in terms of, as we saw in the introduction, the entities they encounter in the world, the practical (*ready-to-hand*) and theoretical (*present-at-hand*) entities; in terms of what they recall of a previous understanding. Using the terminology of projection, we could say that the inauthentic individual project themselves onto a role, a kind of person, that exists in the discourse of the culture they live in, thus identifying themselves with being a teacher or some other persona from their culture; they project

themselves onto *ready-to-hand* entities, thus understanding themselves as an entity that can be used, for example to meet some expectation, to experience pleasure, or to make a certain impression; they project themselves onto *present-at-hand* entities, thus considering themselves theoretically, for example as an immortal soul or an expression of the genetic code; they project themselves onto a previous understanding they had of themselves, which, in practice, means that they do so in terms of the discourse of the society they live in or *ready-to-hand* and *present-at-hand* entities. As was said in the introduction, this understanding of oneself as a practical or theoretical entity misses the essence of who one is, as one's being belongs to what I called *life and living beings*.

#### ***4.1.4 Authentic self-understanding is understanding oneself in terms of oneself***

As was said, all understanding ultimately originates from or refers back to Dasein's self-understanding. I also said that all understanding projects entities onto their possibilities. The question that then arises is what it is that Dasein's authentic self-understanding is projected onto. Heidegger's answer is that Dasein's authentic self-understanding is projected onto nothing, because it can be understood out of itself (contrary to the ready-to-hand and present-at-hand, which can only be understood by being projected onto something).

F. Volpi traces this notion of understanding something in terms of itself back to Aristotle<sup>18</sup>. Volpi notes that Heidegger appropriates Aristotle's notion of *praxis* (as opposed to *poiesis*) to designate Dasein. *Praxis*, for Aristotle and Heidegger, cannot be understood in terms of anything but itself. *Praxis* is something that is done for its own sake. "In the absence of any region in which it can be constituted, *praxis* has to be self-constituting; and in this way it becomes the originary ontological determination, self-sufficient, its own objective. It becomes *ouheneka*, Worumwillen [for-the-sake-of-which]" (Volpi, 1996, p. 50). Dasein exists "for its own sake" and not as an instrument for achieving a goal other than being itself. *Praxis* contains its own goal and is not instrumental: "the distinctive characteristic of *praxis* is the fact that it is not

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<sup>18</sup> The same point is made in (Dahlstrom, 2001)

with reference to anything else (*heneka tinos*) like *poiesis*, but that it contains in itself its own goal (*hou heneka*)” (Volpi, 1996, pp. 56-57). What is more, this understanding of something in terms of itself only can be either *aware* of something or *ignorant* of it, rather than be right or wrong about it in the sense of having correct beliefs about it. Something that can be understood out of itself cannot be misunderstood in the sense of being misinterpreted, it can only be missed altogether.

One could as an analogy to *praxis* think of a work of art, in the way that we sometimes think of art as existing for its own sake only – art for art’s sake. If art is understood in this way it is, contrary to an instrument, a consumer good or an object of theoretical reflection, not made to serve any purpose other than itself. The notion of the individual existing for its own sake is sometimes expressed in terms of the individual “being an end in itself”. This refers to the notion that the individual is neither an object to be used in instrumental ways nor one that needs theoretical justification. The individual human being exists for its own sake, and as such, can never be subsumed under something higher than itself (whether that be a practical purpose or a theoretical category). That is, according to Heidegger, all understanding projects entities onto an understanding of the being of the entity (in terms of the possibilities this kind of being has). Because Dasein is properly understood in terms of itself only, it cannot be projected onto anything but itself, if it is to be understood in an authentic way.

## **4.2 The nature of authentic self-understanding**

### ***4.2.1 Authentic Dasein understands itself as process***

Rather than understanding Dasein as a practical or theoretical entity, as something with an essence that persists through time, Heidegger conceives of Dasein as a process. As Reiner Schuermann puts it, “Heidegger’s point of departure is the notion of subject as ‘process’ (*Vollzug*)” (Schuermann, 2008, pp. 57-58). And he adds that “[t]he meaning of the subject’s being is time; the subject’s Being cannot be referred back to anything other than Dasein, out of which it would then ‘enter’ into time” (Schuermann, 2008, pp. 57-58). That is, there is not a substantial entity that is located within time (even if, from a

scientific standpoint this is not incorrect, but this investigation is phenomenological), but rather, this entity itself is the process of time, it is *in essence* the process of time, temporality. “The ‘essence’ of this entity lies in its ‘to be’ [*Zu-sein*]” (Heidegger, 1962).

In the next chapter, on authentic attunement, we will see that Heidegger takes Dasein to be fundamentally openness, transcendence, in the form of being-in-the-world. In the present chapter we see that, according to Heidegger, it is temporality, or process, that is the nature of that which emerges in this openness. That is, Heidegger argues that authentic understanding means that Dasein understands itself in terms of temporality, where this temporality, unlike the things we find in the world and even the being of entities, is something that can be understood in terms of itself. Thus we can say that authentic Dasein understands itself in terms of temporality and that Dasein is, in essence, temporality.

To understand Heidegger’s notion of temporality, we need to let go of both the common sense and the scientific notions of time. Both of these envisage time as a sequence of “nows”, one that stretches from the indefinite past into the indefinite future. They envisage the individual as occurring “in” time, as coming into being at some point and going out of existence at a later one, not affecting the actual course of time itself. Though this may be an adequate way of conceiving of the time of science, it is, according to Heidegger, not the way in which we experience time. Heidegger’s phenomenological investigation tells him that we have to understand time differently, if we want to do so in a way that it corresponds with the way that things present themselves to our awareness before they are coloured by common sense or other ways of thinking about the entity.

An authentic understanding of time has, according to Heidegger, several aspects. Daniel Dahlstrom mentions five aspects of “genuine timeliness [authentic temporality]” (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 337). The first of these is that genuine temporality comprises “ways in which to be-here is to be ‘outside’ or even ‘beside oneself” (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 337). This is very much in line with the notion of Dasein as transcendence I will discuss in the next chapter. That

is, it is not that one exists and that, once that has been established, one may turn towards the past, present, or future. Rather one exists *as* turning toward the past, present, or future. In this, genuine temporality is not an entity but “it unfolds”, it emerges. “Temporality ‘is’ not an entity at all. It is not, but it *temporalises* itself” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 376-377).

Thus, temporality is the way in which Dasein is “outside” or even “beside itself”, as a kind of reaching out toward things in a way that can be characterised as being turned towards the past, present or future. Dasein can, as such, be characterised as openness and process. As Michael Zimmerman puts it, “Human understanding, then, does not take place inside a mind locked in the skull. Instead, understanding occurs because human temporality is receptive to particular ways in which things can present or manifest themselves. ... [w]hat we ordinarily take to be the ultimate constituents of ‘mind’ – thoughts, beliefs, assertions, and so on – are for Heidegger phenomena that occur within the temporal clearing constitutive of human understanding” (Zimmerman, 1993, p. 243).

Another way of putting this is to say that Dasein is, essentially, process, rather than, say, a substance. To deepen our understanding of the process nature of Dasein, I will briefly look at what, in the context of his discussions of the concepts of guilt and anxiety in *Being and Time*, Heidegger calls Dasein’s “being-the-basis of a nullity” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 329). This concept of “being-the-basis of a nullity” defines the dual aspect of, on the one hand, Dasein being “thrown” into a world which is not of its own making, and, on the other hand, Dasein projecting the meaning of that world in understanding. We have here the picture of a free-floating process of finding oneself in a world (being thrown), while at the same time having no choice but to project one’s understanding of that world, which represents Heidegger’s notion of understanding.

That is, how I understand things is based on my upbringing, my cultural background, my life experiences, but these are not essential to my being; even so, I need to take responsibility for the way I understand things. One could object here that one’s cultural conditioning and the way one has been brought

up are what is essential to one, and that to argue otherwise is to posit a substantive self, like a soul, at the core of Dasein. But we need to remember here that Heidegger does not posit some substantive essence at the core of Dasein, but rather a process. And the only things that can be said to be more essential than this process is the openness, the emptiness at the core of Dasein's being. "Out of" or "within the space of" the openness processes of being emerge: actual Dasein is nothing more than these processes.

#### *4.2.2 Dasein as possibility and finite totality*

Another aspect of Dasein's authentic self-understanding is that it takes itself as finite. This is linked with Dasein understanding itself in terms of temporality. "Genuine timeliness [temporality]" (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 337), as Heidegger understands it, is finite. This is, of course, very different from the common sense notion of time as an endless succession of "nows". The grounds for such a statement lie in phenomenological observation, in that Heidegger's claim is that, if we return to the way we experience time and take away all the "ideas", the presuppositions we have about time, we actually experience time as finite – at least in so far as we experience it from the first-person perspective. The evidence for such a claim (and its possible refutation) will lie in first-person phenomenological observation, and can never be scientific in any positivist sense. I will take the claim as initially plausible from a phenomenological perspective and hope that the following discussion will confirm that plausibility.

In the previous chapter we saw that the notion of authenticity can be understood in terms of a double movement of death and rebirth. We also saw that it could be understood in terms of Dasein giving up the existence it has arrived at. Thus I looked at Heidegger writing that Dasein's "uttermost possibility lies in giving itself up, and thus shatter all one's tenaciousness to whatever existence one has reached" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 309). These notions of existential death and "giving up oneself" can be linked with the experience of time as finite. That is, in so far as Dasein actually understands itself as finite temporality, as a process that contains its own end as its ultimate horizon, it will understand itself as it really (authentically) is and thus become authentic

(in the perfectionist sense of both reaching its full potential and existing according to its real nature – Section 3.3.2).

One way in which Heidegger puts the connection between understanding oneself as finite and being authentic is that only by understanding oneself as “being-towards-death” does one understand oneself in one’s totality. This is because one’s death is always already part of one’s existence, in the sense that it is certain and as such a constant presence on the horizon of one’s understanding of things (given that one’s understanding of anything is based on projections and projections are inherently futural). As Reiner Schuermann puts it, “In its process (Vollzug), the subject, considered in itself, is [...] utterly finite. This ... is the meaning of ‘wholeness’ or ‘totality’ (Ganzheit). Ganzheit is not the sum total of traits belonging to Dasein, but its finite autonomy; its utter facticity, with no recourse to an infinite subject” (Schuermann, 2008, pp. 57-58).

Dasein is, as we saw in the previous section, the basis of its own being, but it is the basis of its *whole* being only insofar as it is facing its *whole* being – and it does so only when it faces existential death, “the possibility of the impossibility of existence”. As such death is not an event that lies in the future (though it is that as well, when taken from a third-person perspective, from a ready-to-hand or present-at-hand perspective) but something that is always part of the totality of Dasein’s existence. “Death is not ‘added on’ to Dasein at its ‘end’; but Dasein, as care, is the thrown (that is, null) basis for its death. The nullity by which Dasein’s being is dominated through and through, is revealed to Dasein itself in authentic being-towards-death” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 354). In other words, “Dasein exists as thrown Being towards its end” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 295).

What is more, because Dasein is process that emerges out of openness, and because it is possible for these processes to subside, we have to say that essentially, Dasein is possibility. After all, if a process (a way of being) emerges in the openness of Dasein, then this is one of Dasein’s “ways to be”. But if Dasein is “in a certain way” this presupposes that it can be in other ways as well. That is, the actual way in which Dasein is represents only one of many

possible ways of being that could emerge. We can, therefore, say that authentic understanding involves Dasein understanding itself both as *possibility* and as *finite temporality*. We will see later in this chapter that Heidegger uses the word “transparency” to further characterize the nature of this understanding: “When one has an understanding of being-towards-death – towards death as one’s ownmost possibility – one’s potentiality-for-being becomes authentic and wholly transparent” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 354).

### **4.3 How does Dasein get to understanding itself as a finite process?**

#### ***4.3.1 Authentic self-understanding as transparency***

Now that we have a first grasp on what authentic self-understanding entails and how it can accommodate processes of learning as modification and growth, I will return to the main question this thesis aims to answer, namely that of the process of learning to be authentic. In relation to authentic self-understanding, Benjamin Crowe writes that “[t]he image one gets [...] is that life has become aware of itself somehow, has suddenly recognized that it has been living in a mode of falling. One has ‘seen through’ one’s life as it has been lived” (Crowe, 2006, p. 173). In a similar vein, Miguel de Beistegui writes about Heidegger’s notion of Dasein that “what is most singular about the human Dasein is that it is open (on)to itself, open to its own openness, and so can, up to a point, become transparent to itself, and thus be in a position to grasp its ownmost possibilities. This is the *Durchsichtigmachen* of life itself, its self-clarification, or explication” (de Beistegui 2005).

This “seeing through” one’s life is what Heidegger calls “transparency”, which in German, *Durchsichtigkeit*, literally means “through” [durch] “sight” [Sicht]. Transparency is the way in which the whole of Dasein’s existence becomes aware of itself as temporality, openness and possibility. “The sight which is related primarily and on the whole to existence we call ‘transparency’ [*Durchsichtigkeit*] (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 186-187). Importantly, “sight” is not to be understood in terms of sense-perception but rather in terms of knowing one’s way around a situation, of being aware (in the most general sense of the term) of the situation and oneself in it. “In giving an existential signification to

'sight', we have merely drawn upon the peculiar feature of seeing, that it lets entities which are accessible to it be encountered unconcealedly in themselves" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 187). Ultimately, Heidegger would claim, understanding is itself irreducible to something else (such as perception or knowledge), which is the reason why he uses "sight" not in a literal sense but as a word to indicate the way in which understanding can be *directed towards* entities, has *access* to entities, and *guides* its ways of engaging with these entities. In this thesis the term "awareness" is often used to indicate Dasein's access to beings and being itself in the most general terms.

Heidegger distinguishes "circumspection" [Umsicht], which allows for the access to, awareness of, ready-to-hand entities, "considerateness" [Ruecksicht], which allows for the access to, awareness of, other human beings, and "the sight which is directed upon being as such" [Sicht auf das Sein als solches], which allows for the access to, awareness of, the being of entities (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 186-187). Sight is used to denote what "guides" our interaction with an entity and what gives that interaction its particular "character" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 98). It is like an awareness in which one looks around in order to find out how to comport (relate) towards the entities one finds in the world (circumspection), towards the people one encounters (considerateness), towards the being of entities (the sight which is directed upon being as such) or towards oneself (transparency).

Transparency refers to the way in which we are *directed* towards ourselves, the way we gain *access* to ourselves and the way our engagement with ourselves is *guided*. An important aspect of this kind of transparency is that it is not a kind of reflective self-awareness<sup>19</sup>, where the self becomes the object of reflection (practical or theoretical). If Dasein understands itself "this understanding, this becoming manifest of the self, is not a self-contemplation in the sense that the ego would become the object of some cognition or other" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 277). What occurs is a kind of impersonal, unitary "*it is disclosed that*", which is a form of disclosure that discloses being-in-the-world as a whole, that is,

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<sup>19</sup> See Section 5.4.1 for a discussion of non-reflective self-awareness in relation to attunement.

both the individual and the world at the same time. Heidegger writes that “[t]he self is there for the Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception, before all reflection. Reflection, in the sense of a turning back [reflecting *on*], is only a mode of self-apprehension, but not the mode of primary self-disclosure” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 159).

Importantly, the non-reflective nature of self-awareness goes for inauthentic Dasein as well as for authentic self-awareness. Thus Heidegger writes that “[t]he genuine, actual, though inauthentic understanding of the self takes place in such a way that this self, the self of our thoughtlessly random, common, everyday existence, ‘reflects’ itself to itself from out of that to which it has given itself over” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 161). This is so, because Dasein “finds itself primarily and constantly in things because, tending them, distressed by them, it always in some way or other rests in things. Each one of us is what he pursues and cares for” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 159). For example, one may understand oneself in terms of one’s role in life, the things one possesses or would like to possess, the things one likes or dislikes, and so on. Heidegger’s claim is that this way of understanding oneself is more fundamental than the reflective ideas we may have about ourselves, because these reflective ideas are ultimately based in the non-reflective ways of being in the world we have.

Thus our every-day (inauthentic) self-understanding is primarily non-reflective. For example, when we are asked what we are doing, we can usually tell directly (for example, “I am trying to fix the door”) without having to step back from ourselves and reflecting on it. We could then say that, in so far as we are absorbed in the things we find in the world (fixing a door, explaining maths to a pupil, worrying about the mortgage), we non-reflectively understand ourselves as absorbed in these activities. “It is as though the Dasein’s [being] were projected by the things, by the Dasein’s commerce with them, and not by the Dasein itself from its own most peculiar self, which nevertheless exists, just as it is, always as dealing with things” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 289). That is, “[t]o understand ourselves from the things with which we are occupied means to project our [being] upon such features of the business of our everyday occupation as the feasible, urgent, indispensable,

expedient" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 289). So we could say that according to the way in which we are engaged with things our understanding of ourselves will be shaped by those things. Dasein tends to understand itself "from out of that to which it has given itself over" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 161).

So the first step in the process of gaining an authentic understanding of oneself is to be non-reflectively aware of the way in which we understand ourselves in the first place, inauthentically, in terms of the activities and the things we are engaged with. That is, we understand ourselves in terms of our engagement with those things, but what is lacking is that we are aware of the very process of understanding ourselves in terms of those things. So the question becomes one of becoming aware of the process that yields our inauthentic self-understanding. To put it differently, our understanding becomes transparent in our "seizing upon the full disclosedness of being-in-the-world throughout all the constitutive items which are essential to it, and doing so with understanding" (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 186-187). That is, as we "seize upon" (become aware of) "the full disclosedness of being-in-the-world" (the way we understand the things in the world as well as ourselves), we become aware of ourselves as we are. This is transparency: "Dasein is revealed to itself in its current factual ability-to-be, and in such a way that Dasein *is* this revealing and being-revealed" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 355).

If we are then to characterize the process of going *from* understanding oneself in terms of one's engagement with these entities (where one understands oneself as a ready-to-hand or present-at-hand entity) *to* understanding oneself in terms of the very process of projection itself (where one understands oneself as the finite process of projection), we can see that it is a process of withdrawal from one's absorption in the entities one finds in the world. Such a withdrawal from one's absorption in the world corresponds with the first part of the dual movement of "turning away from the world" and "turning back" I described in Chapter 3. In the next section I will look at the second part, the "turning back", but before that I will need to further specify the movement of withdrawal.

As I said earlier, authentic Dasein has a sense of itself as “thrown projection”, a kind of free-floating process that has no substantial basis, that is finite, and that understands things, including itself, where “understanding” means that it can *direct* itself towards these things, have *access* to them and be *guided* in its engagement with them by this understanding. Authentic understanding, in contrast to inauthentic understanding, is the possibility that all this awakens to itself, becomes transparent to itself. The process of withdrawal from one’s absorption in the things one encounters in the world is a process of not projecting the entities one understands onto the being of entities as projected but projecting them onto temporality itself. Temporality projects itself and does not require anything to be projected onto. The withdrawal is, therefore, one of *not projecting* the being of entities or of oneself, but of allowing the entities to project onto temporality itself. However, this process needs then to be further characterized as one of *ceasing to project* the being of entities, given that the, inauthentic, starting point of the process of becoming authentic begins with the projection of the being of entities in inauthentic understanding.

We can, therefore, say that the process of withdrawal needs to be understood, not in the sense of a “drawing in” or “drawing back”, but of the cessation of the activity of projecting, which itself begins in the cessation of the *fixing* and *committing* to the projection of the being of entities. This is a process of letting go. What withdraws is the commitment, the solidified state of being invested in a projection. And this process of withdrawal itself is experienced as a letting go of what is being projected as soon as it is being projected. That is, the mode of authentic understanding begins with one experiencing oneself as the ongoing process of projection that is not brought to a halt by the fixing of a particular projection in one’s commitment to it. In other words, being absorbed in the entities one finds in the world consists in fixing the being of those entities and committing to the way in which these are fixed. And refraining from this fixing and committing means that the projections, though

they may still come<sup>20</sup>, are allowed to go as well. This exposes understanding as a process.

Such a letting go of the being of entities that is being projected does, as was said, have to begin from a position where the being of an entity has been committed to and has become fixed. What this means is that the process of committing and fixing, of being committed and fixed, itself has to become transparent as such. This happens when the mode of being fixed is itself disclosed as essentially a process (an iterative process) of projection and when the being that is thus fixed is itself disclosed as possibility rather than something actual. In other words, the understanding has to be one of oneself as projecting the understanding of being in question, so that what is initially experienced as fixed is now experienced as being the result of an iterative process of projection. And this particular projection of an understanding of being then becomes transparent as just one possible projection out of many, where the other (possible but not actual) projections are given as possibility. This discloses the projection of the being of the entity as just that, a possibility and a projection. "Seeing" this will result in the letting go of the fixed understanding of being that is being projected, so that the process of projecting can henceforth be experienced as a process.

We now have a characterization of the first part of the process of becoming authentic in the domain of understanding. It is the dissolution of an understanding of the being of an entity as *fixed* into an understanding of the being of this entity as *a process of projection*, where this projection is itself of a *possibility*. This dissolution happens when the process that *fixes* and *commits* becomes self-aware as being a process of possibility. The starting point of this, what triggers it, may arise internally or come from without the process of understanding, for example, when it is pointed out to the individual that what appears to them as the fixed being of an entity is actually an iterative process of projecting the being of the entity. At any rate, the process begins with something breaking through the repetitive process of projection that fixes

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<sup>20</sup>Strictly speaking, Heidegger would say that the projections in the authentic mode come as possibility rather than actual projections.

one's understanding of the being of an entity. In Chapter 6 I will look in detail at this moment of breaking through.

### *4.3.2 Seizing the moment*

In the previous section we saw how, as Dasein becomes aware of itself as, among other things, a process of understanding that is based on projection, it gives up fixing and committing to the being of entities as it has projected that being. This dual movement of non-reflective self-awareness (which Heidegger calls transparency) and letting go was also characterized as a process of withdrawing from one's absorption in the entities one finds in the world. This, I said, corresponds with the aspect of "turning away from the world" which was, in the chapter on Heidegger's notion of authenticity, identified as part of authenticity. In that chapter a second aspect of authenticity was identified as "turning back" to the world, in the sense that the whole of authenticity was characterized as a "turning away from the world" and "turning back". I will now briefly look at the "turning back" part. This will require less space than our account of "turning away", because it follows naturally out of that first movement.

What happens is that, as Dasein becomes aware of itself as a process of understanding that projects the being of entities as possibility, with every projection there is the possibility of understanding the being of the entity Dasein encounters in that projection. That is, as Dasein is aware of projecting the being of an entity, that projection offers Dasein a way of grasping, understanding, the entity. But the entity, as understood in terms of the being which Dasein has projected, is also still understood against the backdrop of the process of understanding itself (temporality), because that process itself has become transparent (self-aware). Therefore, while Dasein grasps the entity in a projected understanding, it does not become absorbed in the entity. This is then enables the kind of authentic learning as modification and growth we looked at in Section 4.2.3.

This wider awareness of its own temporality within which the being of the entity is projected Heidegger calls "the situation". One could say that it is a kind of expanded awareness (one that includes the process of understanding

being aware itself<sup>21</sup>) within which a narrower context of awareness exists. This narrower context of awareness Heidegger calls “circumstances” [*Lage*,], which is the situation as it is given through tradition and culture. That is, one’s understanding of an entity is based in one’s personal experience, culture or tradition (*das Man*), because whenever one projects the being of an actual entity, this being is mediated through *das Man*. But while this is a necessary limitation of any kind of understanding of being one may project, it is still possible to project it within a wider kind of awareness, the awareness of the process of understanding itself as temporality. That is, despite the refusal to fix and commit, the entity is understood as a certain kind of entity (having a certain kind of being), in such a way that there is an actual understanding of the entity. This is the moment where Dasein “turns back” to the world, engages with things, acts, takes a stand, and so on.

Heidegger calls this moment of engagement “the instant” [*Augenblick*, also translated as “moment of vision”]. *Augenblick* is both a moment in time (the moment at which one takes an entity as having a certain kind of being) and a certain perspective on the situation (*Augenblick* consisting of the words for “eye” and “view” or “look” and thus signifies a certain view of the situation). It is, therefore, the moment at which the situation is viewed in a certain way. It “is that which, arising from resoluteness, has an eye first of all and solely for what constitutes the situation of action” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 287). But, though a certain perspective has been adopted, the wider non-reflective awareness of oneself as temporality, as the process of understanding, is hereby not relinquished. “It is the mode of resolute [authentic] existence in which the Dasein, as being-in-the-world, holds and keeps the world in view” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 287). And this means that Dasein does not get absorbed in the entities it is dealing with, Dasein does not get lost in *das Man* again, even as it engages with the entity in terms that derive necessarily from *das Man*.

As Dasein settles for the being of an entity, it does so in good faith. Heidegger calls this “holding-for-true”, and one could say that it is a form of taking

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<sup>21</sup> Note that this is not a contradiction, as non-reflective awareness can, contrary to reflective awareness, be simultaneously aware of both itself and that which it is aware of.

something as the entity it is *to the best of one's ability to determine this*. This is not a kind of relativism but an acknowledgement of the fact that at the level of the *being* of entities there is no higher court that one's immediate understanding of that being<sup>22</sup>. But, as has been said before, this understanding does not become fixed: "[t]he certainty of the [authentic understanding] signifies that one *holds oneself free* for the possibility of *taking it back*" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 355). And this in turn means, as we also saw earlier, that the process of projecting an understanding of being continues: "this holding-for-true, as a resolute holding-oneself-free for taking back, is *authentic resoluteness which resolves to keep repeating itself*" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 355).

So we have the situation where Dasein "simply cannot become rigid as regards the situation, but must understand that the resolution, in accordance with its own meaning as disclosure, must be held open and free for the current factual possibility" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 355). This does, however, not mean that Dasein does not take responsibility for its actions. On the contrary, because Dasein has not become absorbed in the public, anonymous understanding of the situation as it is given by *das Man*, it can and will take full responsibility, a responsibility it would otherwise quite easily be able to shrug off, as it would be able to pass on the responsibility for understanding the situation by saying that this is "how one tends to understand it" or "how it is always understood".

With regard to the process of learning the authentic "turning back" to the world I have considered in this section, we can conclude that this process is very much the same process as that of the "turning away from the world" I discussed in the previous section: it is the process of *understanding becoming transparent to itself* and of *letting go* the understanding of being that is being projected, as a result of which an understanding of being will be projected as *possibility* in a way that one *holds oneself free* for the possibility of *taking it back* and that *resolves to keep repeating itself*. We saw that the very beginning of this involves a moment of "breaking through", which I will look at in more detail in

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<sup>22</sup> Note that all scientific methods available to determine the truth of something already imply an understanding of the being of the entity the truth of which is being established, which means that it is logically impossible for such methods to establish the being of an entity.

Chapter 6. I have also briefly touched on the idea that this kind of non-reflective awareness is one that is greater than and encompasses the awareness one may have of an object, and I will look at this aspect in more depth in the next chapter. Finally, we saw that this kind of authentic understanding, even though it contains the elements of *taking back* and *repetition*, enables one to be resolute in one's actions and take responsibility for them.

#### 4.4 The process of understanding learning to be authentic

We are now in a position to recap the process of understanding learning to be authentic. It begins with inauthentic understanding, when Dasein understands itself non-reflectively from out of the entities it is engaged with (and does so in terms of practical and/or theoretical entities) and understands these entities from out of its understanding of itself: Dasein's self-understanding is projected onto the entities it is engaged with, just as the being of these entities is projected by Dasein itself.

This state of affairs is then "broken through", which occurs because understanding finds itself face-to-face with something it notices it cannot possibly resolve, because a certain affective disposition arises (See Chapter 5), or because of a communication by another Dasein (See Chapter 6). This awakens a sense of the limitations of Dasein's current understanding, as well as a sense that these limitations are self-imposed and, as such, may conceal possible other ways of understanding. This begins two, reciprocally related, mutually reinforcing, processes: a "letting go" of existing projections and an increasing non-reflective awareness of the process of projecting itself.

In terms of letting go of the projections, there is, as a first step, the cessation of the activity of *fixing* and *committing* to the projection of the being of entities. This is a letting go of what is being projected as fixed as soon as it is being projected. As a result, Dasein experiences itself as the on-going process of projection that is not brought to a halt by the fixing of a particular projection in its commitment to it. Also, this process becomes self-aware as being a process of possibility, as any actual projections are experienced as occurring within a process that is more fundamental than these projections themselves, and that could, therefore, also yield other projections.

In terms of Dasein becoming non-reflectively aware of its projections, there is again a reciprocally related process that drives it (as it were, a sub-process that is part of the overall process). It starts with either Dasein becoming aware of how it tends to understand itself in terms of the activities and the things it is engaged with, or with Dasein becoming aware of how it understands the entities it encounters in the world in terms of itself. Dasein begins to understand that both of these comprise a limitation, and that they are mutually reinforcing. What is more, to the extent that Dasein is more aware of itself as projecting the being of entities, it becomes more aware of how it understands itself in terms of the being of the entities it projects, and vice versa.

The awareness of understanding itself in terms of the entities it finds in the world gives Dasein the notion of the possibility of understanding itself in terms of itself for the first time in an authentic way (before it will have understood this possibility inauthentically), as a process of projection, with the result that Dasein is *directed* towards itself, gains *access* to itself and is *guided* in its engagement with itself by the process of projecting (temporality), rather than by the projections. It also gives Dasein the notion of understanding the entities it finds in the world in terms of temporality. The result of this is that Dasein ceases to fix and commit to the projection of the being of itself, in a process of letting go.

With these two, the process of letting go and that of becoming non-reflectively self-aware, we have the mutually reinforcing process of understanding becoming authentic. Dasein projects its self-understanding onto temporality, it projects it onto its own being and, thus, understands itself in terms of its own being and not in terms of the entities it encounters in the world. This temporality discloses understanding itself as a free-floating and finite process of projection. Authentic Dasein has a sense of itself as “thrown projection”, a kind of free-floating process that has no substantial basis, that is limited, and that understands things, including itself, by projecting the thing it understands onto an understanding of the being of that thing. At the same time, authentic Dasein understands that “letting go” of any projection of itself and things in the world is the only way it has to understand things in a true

way, where this “letting go” is experienced as a kind of existential death that leaves behind only openness (the possibility of being affected).

When this process is complete, Dasein understands itself and the things in the world in terms of temporality and no longer in terms of the entities it encounters in the world. Temporality projects itself and does not require anything to be projected onto, it temporalizes itself in a kind of impersonal, unitary “*it is disclosed that*”, which is a form of disclosure that discloses being-in-the-world as a whole, that is, both the individual and the world at the same time. This kind of non-reflective awareness is one that is greater than and encompasses the awareness one may have of an object. It is experienced as an impersonal “there is understanding”, which is an experience of the absence of the separation between a subject and an object pole of experience.

The being of the entities Dasein finds in the world is first projected onto temporality, which constitutes a pure contact with the entities, before there is either a practical or a theoretical engagement with them. When it concerns an entity with the nature of Dasein itself, this results in authentic being-with, a kind of communion where the other is experienced as one with Dasein and as an end in itself (See Chapter 6). This understanding will be different in actuality from the earlier understanding (which was based in inauthentic disclosure) in that the other Dasein will no longer appear as either a practical or theoretical entity.

Where it concerns other entities, these become understood, in so far as it is necessary to engage with them practically or theoretically, in accordance with the situation as a whole. “Getting an entity right” means taking it as the kind of entity it is appropriate to take it as, relevant to the situation and the entity itself, grasping the being of the entity, as a ready-to-hand entity, a present-at-hand one, or an entity like Dasein. Any actual understanding of a concrete situation is characterized by a readiness to “take back” and by “repetition”, resulting in a stance towards entities (both Dasein itself and other entities) that can be full of resolve and that takes full responsibility for itself and the actions that flow from it. The entity will be understood in a way that is capable

of returning to the entity in itself and of then “taking a stand” on that entity that is genuinely Dasein’s own.

#### **4.5 Educational consideration**

##### ***4.5.1 Relation with the main theories of learning***

If we now return briefly to the presuppositions I claimed were shared by the theories of learning I considered in Chapter 2, we can see how the process of understanding becoming transparent and of letting go one’s understanding of being relates to these theories of learning. I said that, for these theories of learning, learning is a process of growth, increased integration and differentiation, which tends towards increased rigidity, where learning is always a modification of the existing way of being of the learner, and where learning always involves an intentional object, with there being some sort of a separation between the subject and the object. I will look at these in turn in relation to the process of understanding becoming authentic.

We can reconcile learning as a process of modification and growth with the process of letting go, if we stick to the notion of understanding itself (and not just the learning that leads to the understanding) being a process. Though a full elaboration of this point would require more space, I can set it out in very broad terms. Viewing understanding itself as a process is, indeed, one way of interpreting Piaget’s notion of understanding, which can be said to imply that understanding does not consist of a representation but of an intentional act which is carried out in a specific way, where the act is “built up” or re-constituted again every time the understanding manifests in relation to a specific object. This notion of understanding as process is also compatible with the neurological notion of neurons that fire together wiring together, in that the structure of such neuronal acts as they repeat themselves is also one of a process taking shape. From this perspective, the process of letting go would simply mean that an understanding was not re-constituted in relation to the entity in relation to which it was originally constructed. This same process of understanding could then be re-constituted in relation to the entity at a later point, with the result that it would possibly grow and be modified as a result of this renewed engagement. The decision whether or not to re-constitute the

understanding would be the initial moment of “decision”, Heidegger’s “moment of vision” when the entity was or was not taken as a practical or theoretical object.

Where this is a notable difference, though, is that the process of understanding becoming authentic is itself not one of increased integration, differentiation and rigidity. On the contrary there is a dissolution of any established integration and differentiation and with it of rigidity. I said that this dissolution was based in a mechanism of increased transparency (non-reflective self-awareness) and letting go, where the increased transparency discloses the existing integration and differentiation as processal and based in possibility, which leads to a letting go of some of that integration and differentiation, which in turn increases the transparency, which in turn leads to more letting go, and so on. It is, therefore, in many ways the opposite process to the one that is described in the theories of learning we have been looking at. But it is not merely a process of dissolving what has been constituted, because this dissolving makes way for, liberates, awakens a wider understanding, that of understanding itself as finite temporality, *within which* the processes of integration and differentiation described by the theories of learning take place. We can, therefore, speak of a genuine expansion of awareness.

I also suggested that there was in the main theories of learning the presupposition that learning is always a modification of the existing way of being of the learner. This is true for the process of letting go and understanding becoming transparent as well, in the sense that the starting point is the inauthentic state of the learner, where there is a fixed understanding of the being of an entity and a commitment to it having that being. What is more, because the process of understanding as a process of projection lies at the heart of inauthentic understanding just as it does at the heart of authentic understanding, there is a sense of continuity with regard to understanding itself, in that it remains based on projection in both the inauthentic and the authentic mode. But the process of *learning to become authentic* itself, as a process of letting go, though beginning with inauthentic understanding, is essentially discontinuous, in that the end result (Dasein

experiencing itself as openness) cannot be said to be a *modification* of the initial state of there being a certain understanding of being.

What is more, the moment when the individual resolves on the being of an entity after having let go of their previous understanding of it, it is hard to imagine what the way of being of the authentic individual is other than nothingness. As we saw earlier in this chapter, the being of the individual is usually closely connected to the understanding they have of the being of the entity or entities they are engaging with, and in that context it makes sense that learning is based in the existing way of being of the learner. In the case of not yet having decided on the being of the entity involved, as we saw in the previous point, there is, as yet, not a definite way of taking the entity, and with such an absence of a way of taking the entity, the next moment, that of resolving on the being of the entity, cannot be said to be a modification of one's earlier way of being.

I said that, according to the main theories I discussed in Chapter 2, learning always includes an intentional object, with there being some sort of a separation between the subject and the object. It has become clear in this chapter that this is not the case in relation to the process of *learning to be authentic*, which is one of non-reflective self-awareness, an awareness that does not have an object as such<sup>23</sup> and where the entity that is learning coincides with what it is learning about. What is more, since the process is one of letting go, there is an initial object (at  $t1$ ) but not one at  $t2$ . This is different from what happens in the learning as described in the main theories of learning where the initial object (at  $t1$ ) is transformed into a second object (at  $t2$ ), as when rain turns from being understood as the angels emptying their watering cans (at  $t1$ ) to being understood as air cooling off and shedding some of its H<sub>2</sub>O (at  $t2$ ), in which cases there is something like an aspect shift and not a transition to authentic understanding. Importantly, the experience of this

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<sup>23</sup>Other than perhaps in a purely formal sense, if we assume that all awareness is awareness of something and thus has to have a formal object, but this would not invalidate that in the phenomenological sense such non-reflective self-awareness has no object.

letting go of an understanding of being is *experienced* as discontinuity and as a falling away rather than the transformation of an existing object.

We have in this section seen that the process of understanding becoming authentic is different in most, if not all, respects from the processes we found in some of the main theories of learning. In Chapter 7 I will consider whether the two accounts are compatible and can be merged so as to provide one account of authentic learning.

#### ***4.5.2 Implications for the way education conceives of the learner***

In the next two chapters I will put more flesh on the bones of the description of this process of becoming authentic (which is a unitary one, even if we analyse it from three different perspectives), when I consider how attunement (which will, among other things, further clarify the mechanism by which non-reflective self-awareness, what I called transparency in this chapter, can actually spread) and being-with (which will give us, among other things, the mechanism by which a breaking through to Dasein as process can happen) become authentic. But even before we have the whole of the process in view, we can consider, in tentative terms, some further educational implications of what has been discussed in this chapter.

##### ***4.5.2.1 The pupil is understood as a theoretical entity***

From the perspective of educational policy the learner (and the educator) is a present-at-hand (theoretical) entity. That is, the learner shows up in policy as a theoretical entity, one that has properties and relations, and that is treated as such. What we have seen over the past years is that the theoretical conception of the learner has encroached ever further towards the centre of educational practice. Educational policy can, per definition, only conceive of the pupil and the teacher as theoretical entities, as a result of the general and abstract nature of policy. Such policy then reaches educational practice in various ways: directives aimed at head teachers, the school inspectorate, educational targets and league tables. The teacher is then forced or encouraged to look at the individual learner through the categories supplied by the policy maker, they

are asked to identify pupils with special educational needs, gifted students, and so on, and to treat them respectively.

The first question this raises is what tensions such a way of conceiving of the learner as a theoretical entity creates. And, indeed, there is a constant stream of complaints from those actually involved with the pupils that policies fail to do justice to certain pupils as only certain aspects are measured in the assessment of their learning; that the targets impoverish the actual teaching and learning that occurs; that certain well-meant policies miss their aim, because their general nature fails to do justice to the actual context they apply to, and so on. We could say that such a theoretical approach to pupils is by many in education experienced as a miss-match with the actual pupil they are dealing with, thus hampering good practice.

But if we consider the matter carefully, we would have to conclude that such theoretical conceptions of pupils also have many benefits, at least potentially, in that it may help getting the right resources to the right pupils, by identifying them as in need of them; it can also help practitioners identify certain needs or risks, for example by alerting them to certain symptoms in students that may point towards them having these needs or running these risks; it may bring to light certain correlations that are only visible through a statistical lens directed at a large population, for example by statistically identifying a link between certain early experiences and academic success in later life. So the issue is not that the theoretical perspective on the pupil has no place in education, but that it needs to be applied in the right way.

What has been argued in this chapter is that the pupil, as Dasein, is not primarily a theoretical entity, and needs to be engaged with first of all as an entity with the nature of Dasein. From within such an engagement with the pupil it may then become clear that a certain theoretical perspective is called for in relation to a certain aspect of the pupil's being (for example to gain access to funds available for pupils with special educational needs, or to help assess whether the pupil is ready to go on to another school). But such a perspective should always be embedded within an approach that takes them as an entity with the nature of Dasein. In terms of educational practice this means

that, first of all, the educator needs to be able to treat the pupil as a Dasein and, secondly, it has to be primarily the educator who decides when and where a theoretical perspective is called for, which means that they need an understanding of the theoretical perspectives that could be potentially relevant.

There is a further consequence of the increasing prevalence of the theoretical perspective in educational practice, which is that increasingly the pupil is taught to look at him or herself in a theoretical way, thinking of themselves as being a certain kind of student (with certain properties and relations), being at certain levels of achievement in relation to certain targets, and so on. This internalization of the theoretical perspective on the part of the pupil is a corollary to the way they are approached in education, but increasingly there is the active teaching of such a theoretical view of oneself. Again, there are many potential benefits to such an approach, for example in the areas of metacognition and self-assessment, where it can give the pupil greater ownership of their learning processes and a better understanding of the criteria against they will be assessed. But again the issues arise that the theoretical perspective is a derivative one and should, therefore, not be the primary one. What is more, in certain domains of life the theoretical perspective simply misses the entity that it is trying to capture, for example in relation to learning to be good, happy, creative, inspired, loving, and so on, where no amount of conformity to the “characteristics” of a person with those qualities can ever bring about those qualities (even though it may fool some into thinking it does). Consequently, any attempt to teach and assess those in a way that takes the pupil as a theoretical entity will do more harm than good.

It should be noted, however, that many, if not most, of the objections educators have against the theoretical perspective stem from concerns that understand the pupil as a practical (ready-to-hand) entity rather than as an entity with the nature of Dasein. That is, if the test says that the pupil should be in set X, the objection to following the test recommendation will usually be practical, for example, that in terms of temperament the pupil fits better in set Y. Similarly, the policy-derived decision to teach content X will probably be criticized, if it is, on grounds such as that it was poorly attuned with the needs, previous

learning or interests of the pupils. In other words, though many educators are critical of the limitations of the theoretical perspective discussed in this section, much of the criticism is based in, often quite legitimate, practical considerations. However, it should also be noted that the theoretical perspective can help break practical traditions that are deeply engrained, experienced by many as natural, but shown through research to be detrimental to the child (for example, when it is shown that collaborative learning has many advantages and some of the individualism is taken out of traditional educational practice). I will now turn to these practical considerations.

#### *4.5.2.2 The pupil is understood as a practical entity*

Though it does not meet with the same kind of opposition from educational practitioners as does the theoretical perspective, taking the pupil as a practical entity too has many pitfalls. Indeed the tradition of educational practice, as it is handed down from generation to generation, by and large takes the pupil as a practical entity. This is education in the sense of “the way in which one deals with a pupil”, and it ranges from diverting a crying child’s attention to something funny to make them stop crying, through sending a teenager to an outdoor pursuit camp to get them away from their games console, through ensuring that a class is silent before starting the lesson, to physically restraining a violent pupil. As with the theoretical perspective, these can be beneficial. More than that: it is hard to envisage an educational practice that would not avail itself extensively of this practical perspective. The on-the-job training of trainee teachers is, for example, a clear acknowledgement that policymakers take the pupil primarily as a practical entity.

In terms of the theories of learning we have been looking at, such practical perspectives on the pupil result in what I have been calling *learning as modification and growth*. To put it differently, what the pupil does as a result of being taken as a practical entity they will be more likely<sup>24</sup> to do again, either in relation to the entities they find in the world or in relation to themselves. For

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<sup>24</sup> The fact that we have to talk about likelihood in this context is not because the child is taken as fundamentally a theoretical (statistical) entity but because what someone will do as a result of previous experiences is never pre-determined.

example, a child who is being sung to when they are afraid may learn to “self-soothe” in later life by humming to themselves or even just calming themselves down by activating the same inner state as was first activated when they were sung to. This example highlights the importance of getting right the kind of education that takes the child as a practical entity, because the same child may be calmed down by putting some whiskey in their milk, thus making a life of alcohol abuse that much more likely.

One of the main thrusts of educational critiques of the practical perspective on the pupil has usually come in the guise of a critique of instrumentalism (see, for example, Ball, 2004; Gur-Ze'ev, 2002), where the pupil is shaped (by engaging with him or her as a practical entity) in a way that is believed to result in a benefit for either other people than the child itself (like the community or the state) or a future conception of the child itself. For example, teaching a child to be a good office worker is usually an aim in a society where office workers are needed for the economy and where being an office worker is seen as a route to economic security for the individual involved. Apart from the principled critique of such instrumentalism that it takes the child as an instrument where it never should be (for example, from a Kantian perspective where the individual is taken as an end in itself), there is the criticism that such ways of educating the child may alienate the child from itself (Is this child not an artist at heart rather than an office worker?) and that they risk subordinating the interests of the child to that of the provider of the education (Yes, the state needs office workers, but would this child not be more secure economically if it did something else?).

An alternative way of looking at this critique of instrumentalism is that it is not so much the case that an instrumental approach alienates some children from themselves in some respects, but that it alienates all children from themselves, because there is, according to this notion of the individual, something inherently alienating in such an instrumental approach. At the basis of such a critique lies the idea that an individual has in themselves the potential to find their own “shape” and that such finding one’s own shape is part of what it is to lead a flourishing life. Consequently, any attempt to shape them per definition alienates them from this potential to find their own

“shape”. This version of the critique of instrumentalism comes close to Heidegger’s notion of Dasein as being an end in itself, though most such accounts will fall back on the kind of “finding one’s true self” which we saw, in Section 3.6.3, does not amount to the radical notion of the self as we find in Heidegger, but tends to take the self as some kind of substance, like a soul. Any categorical rejections of reward and punishment in the context education will usually fall under this kind of critique.

So what is the practical perspective on the child that does justice to its fundamental nature as an entity with the nature of Dasein? It appears that there simply is no substitute for the educator taking the child primarily as an entity with the nature of Dasein in the actual engagement with the child as it happens, because only then will they get the “situation”, as I called it in Section 4.3.2, for their practical decisions right (the context, in this case, being the child itself, because it can be understood in terms of itself only). When we then consider that the theoretical perspective is based in the practical one, and that the introduction of the theoretical perspective is in this context a practical act, we begin to see the primary importance of getting the relation between the perspective on the pupil as a practical entity and as an entity with the nature of Dasein right.

#### *4.5.2.3 The Pupil is understood as an entity with the nature of Dasein itself*

If we take the practical perspective (which, I have claimed, has priority over the theoretical perspective) together with the perspective on the child as an entity with the nature of Dasein, the primary consideration becomes one of whether the child is behaving in a way that is authentic or not. This is so, because any further learning will crucially depend on how the child understands the being of the entity it is engaging with, and this being, I have argued, can only be got right if the child has an authentic understanding of itself, which is to say, if it is authentic. This question is, however, not a theoretical or a practical one. Rather, it is expressed as a concern that the child be authentic and an appeal to the child’s authentic self (I will elaborate on this in Chapter 6, when I look at authentic being-with). The ensuing engagement with the child will, as it were, mirror the educator’s authentic self-

understanding, in that it will be one of on-going openness towards the child (taking the child as essentially *possibility*), one that is not brought to a close in a judgement about the child (or, as we will see in Chapter 6, an articulation of the child's being), one that is itself transparent (the teacher is non-reflectively self-aware of the way he or she approaches the child) and, as such, brings to light any fixed ways of taking things, based in commitment, on behalf of the child (or oneself, for that matter), for all to see as such fixed ways of taking things, so that they can be let go of.

That is, the concern on the part of the educator is that of awakening an authentic understanding, in the pupil, of itself and the entities it finds in the world – where this concern itself is neither a theoretical one (based in a theoretical conception of how things ought to be) nor a practical one (based in a traditional or habitual way of being towards the pupil). Rather, the concern is itself based in an understanding (however imperfect and tentative it may be) of the *possibility* of the self to be authentic, in a way that is neither theoretical nor traditional. As a result, such a concern is itself only as genuine as the educator's understanding at any given point in time. The actual way of being of the concern is one of experiencing understanding (regardless of whose understanding it is) as a finite process that is capable of becoming transparent to itself in a way that is not reflexive but direct.

The way authentic understanding is experienced is, as we have seen, not personal and this lack of personal ownership means that it is easier for the educator to let go of their own ways of understanding, a lack of identification (in the sense of fixing) that will also communicate itself to the pupil. This opens up the possibility of all forms of questioning and self-examination to freely take hold, and, in that sense, opens up the possibility of true rationality, as the lack of identification with the understanding one has achieved makes possible that this understanding gets shaped according to the criteria of reason rather than, say, prejudice or vested interests. But most important of all, the combination of increasing transparency and lack of identification with one's existing understanding makes possible for the pupil and the educator to let go of their existing understanding of the being of entities and achieve the openness that is part of the state of authenticity.

# 5 Authentic attunement

## 5.1 Authentic attunement

In this chapter I will argue that the process of coming to find oneself in an authentic mood is one of an increased *non-reflective self-awareness*, where the increase is the result of a spreading which starts with “staying with” the beginning of such *non-reflective self-awareness*. The change involved in this process is one of moving from experiencing oneself and the entities one encounters in the world in terms of *das Man* to experiencing oneself in terms of oneself and the entities in terms of the nothingness from which the entities emerge. The result of this change is the experience of oneself as “transcendence”, and of one’s relationship with things in the world as one of disconnection and openness, of “letting the entities be” and immediacy of contact with these entities. The mechanism that drives this change is that of a reciprocal movement of increased non-reflective self-awareness of oneself as transcendence and disclosure of the nothingness of the world.

The importance of such a mood of non-reflective self-awareness that is characterised by disconnection and nearness to the entities it finds in the world is twofold. First, it is an integral part of the process of learning to be authentic: it brings to awareness the structure of the self; it represents a turning away (disconnecting) from the world; it returns Dasein to the state of being-possible (rather than being absorbed in any actual way of finding itself emotionally in the world). Second, it entails an openness to things at the level of mood and emotion, enabling Dasein to respond adequately to events, in so

far as they require responding to, because Dasein's experience of itself and the world has not been coloured in advance by a mood that takes it and the things it encounters in any particular way (other than that the possibility exists of taking them in certain particular ways). Third, as a mood of disconnection and nearness, it is pervaded by "a peculiar calm" (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88), which is experienced as having the potential to respond emotionally if necessary, while not identifying with things in the world, so that one does not expend energy responding unnecessarily at an emotional level to what happens, even if one does act practically or theoretically. Fourth, the combination of the openness to things as they present themselves, the ability to "let be" the entity one encounters, and the possibility to respond emotionally in a way that is commensurate with this entity together make possible the emotional experiences of affection, love, and communion in an authentic way (More on these in Chapter 6).

## 5.2 Attunement and mood

In Chapter 3 I referred to the emotional dimension of Dasein's existence with the word *attunement*, which is a translation of the word "*Befindlichkeit*", the word Heidegger uses and which is sometimes also translated as *state-of-mind* or *sofindingness*. The word *Befindlichkeit*, itself a neologism, comes from the German "finding oneself" in a certain place, situation or emotional state. Thus one may ask, in German, "How are you finding yourself?", which would translate as "How are you doing?", where the notion of "finding oneself" has obvious spatial connotations in terms of being located in a certain place, or one could say, emotional space. The translation "attunement" is based in the fact that mood in German is called "*Stimmung*" which is related to the notion of tuning an instrument and consequently of being in tune with certain things in a certain way.

As we saw in Chapter 3, according to Heidegger "[m]ood has already disclosed, in every case, being-in-the-world as a whole, and makes it possible first of all to direct oneself towards something" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 176). This is at once the most important and perhaps most counter-intuitive aspect of a mood, as Heidegger uses the word. A mood, and all other ways in which

attunement manifests, is something that lies at the basis of, or permeates, the whole of one's experience. In the words of Matthew Ratcliffe, a "mood is not an intentional state directed at either the self or something other than the self and it is not a more encompassing state directed at lots of things." A mood is there *prior to* there being the experience of anything in particular. A mood does not "colour" some already experienced world. It is what opens up a world in the first place; it is through moods that we find ourselves in a world" (Ratcliffe, 2008, p. 48)<sup>25</sup>.

We can contrast being in a certain mood with having certain feelings *about* something, where the feelings we have *about* something do imply a separation between the one having the feelings and the entity they have the feelings about. Being in a certain mood, in contrast, means that one experiences both oneself and the world one finds oneself in as coloured by this mood. It will be assumed in the rest of this chapter that even a feeling that is directed towards a particular thing, a person, an object, or something like "life", is based in attunement. As was explained in Chapter 3, even a feeling that is directed towards a particular entity reveals both oneself (say, as amused) and the entity of is intending (say, as amusing) in a certain light. I will look at this in more detail as we go along.

Importantly, for Heidegger a basic mood is what makes possible for certain things to come to one's notice rather than other things: "[i]t is a condition of possibility for any specifically directed intentional state" (Ratcliffe, 2008, p. 48). We are familiar with this kind of phenomenon in that we may say that one

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<sup>25</sup>Note that by interpreting anxiety as a mood where there is no separation between the experiencer and what is experienced, I am ignoring the fact that Heidegger did sometimes attribute the structure of intentionality to anxiety: he sets out that Dasein is, in anxiety, anxious *about* something as well as anxious in the face of something (the nothingness of the world). Thus Heidegger writes that "Dasein is anxious ... about its ownmost potentiality-for-being." (Heidegger, 1962, p. 321). Some commentators have found Heidegger's extension of the structure of intentionality to include attunement contrived. I agree with this assessment and find Ratcliffe's (2008) notion of an existential feeling as unitary more appropriate.

needs to be in the *right mood* to understand a joke or to be receptive to certain kinds of music, that is, our mood either first makes it possible to hear a joke or be touched by a work of art or we may be brought in the right mood for jokes or art by initially being exposed to “a bit of” a joke or “a bit of” art. This can then lead to a mutually reinforcing cycle of first being exposed to “a bit of” a joke, to then getting in the mood for jokes, as a result of which one hears the funny side of more things, which increases one’s jocular mood, and so on. We will see in our discussion of the process of attunement learning to be authentic how there too there is such a positive feedback loop (reciprocity) that drives the process of learning to be authentic.

What happens to such basic moods is in education as important as the faculty of understanding I considered in the previous chapter. An example of a basic mood would be that of a pupil, let’s say a boy, who generally experiences the world as a hostile place. In such a case the pupil *finds* (experiences) *himself*, at a basic level, as being under threat in a world that is potentially very hostile. That is, his basic feeling about life in general includes the experience of a world that is threatening, even if this basic feeling is not usually experienced consciously. This basic feeling then discloses the world as inhabited by potentially hostile people and situations and probably, if he is not entirely traumatised, this is counterbalanced by the sense that there are also some people and situations that can protect him, like the friends he trusts, certain clothes and other possessions that make him feel confident, as well as ways in which he can momentarily escape the unpleasant sense of living in a hostile world, such as doing sports or going fishing, escaping in entertainment (playing video games, perhaps) or drinking alcohol. But apart from disclosing the world and the things that fill it in a certain way, this same basic feeling discloses himself as a certain kind of entity, one that is, in this case, essentially vulnerable, in need of protection and the occasional escape, one that perhaps needs to build up defences, remain alert to threats, hone his skills of defence and attack, and so on. In short, he finds the world as both threatening and providing shelter, and himself as both vulnerable and to some extent capable of looking after himself, where a constant effort is being made to minimise the former and strengthen the latter. Thus a mood is defined in terms of its

possibilities: where threat is a possibility, security also is, where being hurt is a possibility, as well as defending himself.

There are several ways in which mood, in the way it is used here, is relevant in education. I will briefly mention two examples here. The first is that the way of being in the world, of being attuned, which an individual “picks up” in early life may well persist even if what caused it has disappeared in fact. To return to our example, even though the actual threats that made the pupil feel vulnerable in the first place have in actual fact disappeared (for example, the hostile stepfather has moved out), the pupil still experiences the world as threatening and himself as vulnerable. A tragic example of this phenomenon is that of the child who has been abused and in later life finds it impossible to establish deep, trusting relationships because he or she is stuck in a mood that takes the other human being as a possible abuser, themselves as a possible abused and the world in general as a place that does not provide protection against abuse from those close to one. This phenomenon may be referred to as “internalisation”, where it is believed the circumstances of one’s upbringing are internalised, with the result that one structures one’s experiences in line with such internalised expectations.

The second example of the importance of attunement in education is that of the kind of mood that is conveyed through education itself, in such a way that the pupil adopts it as a more or less permanent one. An educational experience that is, for example, characterised by reward and punishment may well instil in the pupil, if it is done over a long enough time, a basic sense that “life” sometimes punishes or rewards one and that one is oneself subject to such reward and punishment, where one’s actions may attain a quality of seeking (reward) and avoiding (punishment), where one may perceptually structure a situation one enters for the first time in terms of possible reward and punishment, and so on. Being assessed, competing, being tied to a schedule, deferring to an authoritative figure (the teacher), being part of a group (the class) are other examples of “moods” that tend to be instilled into the pupil.

The basic mood of the educational experience has been much commented on, for example in discussions of “the hidden curriculum” (Meighan and Siraj-

Blatchford, 2003, pp. 63-182), which charge that some of the deepest influence schooling has on the individual is through aspects of the experience that are not part of the stated curriculum (such as Maths and Science or social and emotional skills), but come with the experience of schooling itself. In Chapter 3 we saw how we can make a fundamental distinction between discovery and disclosure: we may discover something (as one possibility among many other given possibilities), and we may disclose something (revealing what kinds of things are possible in the first place). With regard to mood, we would make a similar distinction. On the one hand, one may discover that different moods are possible: thus the victim of abuse may discover that it is possible to trust adults after all, where before they had experienced that kind of trust only, for example, in the company of animals or when immersed in a novel. On the other hand, and this is the kind of thing I am after in this chapter, the very possibility of mood itself may be disclosed, where this disclosure of mood as such discloses the possibilities of both inauthentic and authentic mood. What such a disclosure involves will become clear in the remainder of this chapter.

### 5.3 Moods of authenticity

Before I look at the process of moving from an inauthentic to an authentic mood, I will look at Heidegger's description of the mood that goes with authentic existence. This will give me the mode of being which learning to be authentic should result in, at least in so far as attunement is concerned. This mood of authenticity has been given different names at different times by Heidegger. In *Being and Time* it is existential angst, usually translated as anxiety, a state where, according to Heidegger, Dasein experiences itself "as it really is", i.e. authentically. It should be noted, though, that other basic moods have been suggested by Heidegger as the defining moods of authentic existence. In the 1929-1930 course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (Heidegger, 1995a) Heidegger singled out boredom and after 1930 "Heidegger became reluctant to identify one fundamental, defining mood; even so, we find that in his later thinking he gave greater attention to 'awe' (*die Scheu*) and 'astonishment' (*das Erstaunen*) in describing the prevailing affective disposition of Dasein's authentic existing, thereby recalling the importance of the mood of

“wonder” spoken of long ago by the ancient Greek philosophers” (Capobianco, 2007, p. 1).

It is important to note that Heidegger gave all of the concepts that refer to the mood of authenticity their own specific meaning which deviated significantly from their ordinary meaning. For example, with respect to the concept of anxiety, Heidegger writes in *What is Metaphysics?* that “a peculiar calm pervades [anxiety]” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88), which means that anxiety does not share some of the characteristics of common anxiety, such as the notable absence of calm. What is more, anxiety is not contradictory to joy. “Along with the sober anxiety which brings us face to face with [authentic being] there goes an unshakable joy in this possibility” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 358). Also, in the common form of anxiety one is anxious about some, at least in principle, identifiable thing, whereas in the anxiety that is part of authentic existence there is no such determinate thing in the face of which we are anxious. That is, there is “indeterminateness in the face of which and concerning which we become anxious [and this] is no mere lack of determination but rather the essential impossibility of determining it<sup>26</sup>” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88).

Though over time Heidegger gives different names to this authentic mood, they all have certain common characteristics: they disclose Dasein itself as transcendence, as “encompassing” both self and world; they disclose Dasein as individualized and as nothingness; they involve both a detachment from and an openness towards the things it finds in the world; they disclose Dasein as always being attuned, as things mattering to it, as always being in some kind of mood, and that it can be either inauthentic or authentic in its mood. I will characterise the disclosure of the possibility of mood in general Dasein’s *authentic non-reflective self-awareness*.

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<sup>26</sup> Note that this notion of the impossibility of determining what it is anxiety intends is in line with the notion, mooted earlier, that finding oneself does not, strictly speaking have an intentional object, but rather stands at the basis of how one experiences both oneself and the world one is in.

### 5.3.1 *The authentic mood discloses Dasein as transcendence*

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, Heidegger writes that “Mood has already disclosed, in every case, being-in-the-world as a whole” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 176). That is, understood authentically a mood does not only disclose both self and world in a unitary way, thus making it possible for certain kinds of things to be discovered, it also discloses being-in-the-world as a unitary entity, one that comprises both self and world. Of course, we may not be aware of the fact that mood discloses being-in-the-world as unitary, because we are absorbed in the entities that are discovered within the space of being-in-the-world, but, Heidegger would contend, this does not detract from the fact that mood actually discloses the unitary structure of self and world – and we will see in Section 5.4.1 how the notion of non-reflective self-awareness can help bring this aspect of mood into focus.

Heidegger’s notion of Dasein is not that of a subject as opposed to an object. Traditionally (for example in Kant’s critical philosophy and German Idealism in general) one of the meanings of the word transcendence has been that of the subject (the ego, the soul) coming into contact with things in the world (objects, itself as taken in a reflexive way, other people). For Heidegger, however, there is not a subject first who then establishes contact with things in the world. Rather, Dasein itself is this *process* of transcendence, it is “being-in-the-world”<sup>27</sup>. “Transcendence is not instituted by an object coming together with a subject, or a thou with an I, but the Dasein itself, as ‘being-a-subject’, transcends. The Dasein as such is being-towards-itself, being-with others, and being-among entities handy and extant” (Heidegger, 1982, p. 301).

One way of envisaging this notion of Dasein as being-in-the-world (a term that is hyphenated to indicate the unity between self and world) is, as we saw in Chapter 3, as openness. This openness, this open space where things can manifest, is there prior to there being anything like a subject or an object. This openness is itself transcendence, it is where self and world come together. “Self

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<sup>27</sup> Note that this does not amount to an Idealist position, as Heidegger denies neither the actual existence of things in the world, nor the possibility of Dasein to have access to such things.

and world belong together in the single entity, the Dasein. Self and world are not two beings, like subject and object, or like I and thou, but self and world are the basic determination of the Dasein itself in the unity of the structure of being-in-the-world" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 297). Dasein's authentic mood discloses the unitary nature of being-in-the-world to Dasein.

This notion of self and world belonging together goes, of course, very much against the common sense notion of an immanent subject which then needs access to things in the world - giving rise to the question as to how it is possible for an immanent subject to get such access and, ultimately, to scepticism. But Heidegger claims that phenomenologically things present themselves quite differently. Rather than there first being a subject that then seeks access to things in the world, there is first transcendence and only later the notion of a separate subject. "Exactly that which is called immanence in theory of knowledge in a complete inversion of the phenomenal facts, the sphere of the subject, is intrinsically and primarily and alone the transcendent" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 299). To try to arbitrate between these two positions would go far beyond the scope of this chapter, but ultimately Heidegger's argument rests on an awareness of what is given to experience in a phenomenological way, which means that at least one of the tests of its validity is phenomenological. It is hoped that this chapter will make enough of a phenomenological case for the plausibility of the notion of Dasein as being-in-the-world, openness, transcendence.

### ***5.3.2 Authenticity disclosing Dasein as individualized and existing in nothingness***

The mood of authenticity discloses Dasein (to) itself as transcendence in a radical way. It discloses Dasein itself as it is *in itself*, prior to any involvement it has in *das Man*, that is, in Heidegger's terminology, as individualized. And it discloses the emptiness, the nothingness that accompanies Dasein: in the mood of Authenticity "man is brought before the nothing itself" (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88). In *Being and Time* Heidegger characterises this notion of Dasein *in itself* and *in relation to nothingness* is with the concept of *thrown projection* (we already encountered this concept in Section 4.2.1).

On the one hand, authentic Dasein experiences itself as “thrown”, as finding itself in a world (parents, siblings, a place in which it lives, a language it speaks, norms it is required to follow, and so on) that predates it, with a “personality” (things it likes and dislikes, talents and weaknesses, a temperament, and so on) that predates even its awareness of this “personality”. What is more, in the mood of authenticity Dasein experiences itself as not being anything more basic than the being it has been thrown into. One could say that, in terms of being a something, Dasein finds that any “something” it is is purely a function of the personality and world it has found itself inhabiting, without there being a basis *in itself* for these. To return to the notion of becoming authentic in terms of “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313), one could say that Dasein finds that it is lost in *das Man* (it finds itself with a personality that has been appropriated from *das Man* and in a world which is not of its own making) and that it finds that apart from *das Man* it is not a “something”, but rather openness, a “nothing”.

On the other hand, authentic Dasein experiences that it “exists as thrown Being towards its end” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 295). As we saw in Section 4.2.2, authentic Dasein experiences itself as “thrown towards its end”, as irreducibly finite, to the extent that its very being becomes defined by this finitude. Authentic Dasein is always face to face with its own existential death, in Heidegger’s terms “the possibility of the impossibility of all possibilities”. And, just as authentic understanding involves an awareness of the nothingness of death, the mood of authenticity “puts Dasein’s being-in-the-world face to face with the ‘nothing’ of the world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 321).

The upshot of this is that Dasein experiences itself, in the mood of authenticity as having nothing substantial to either fall back on (a basis in itself or in the world) or project itself onto (an understanding of itself). Rather, Dasein has to ultimately understand itself as process (temporality) in relation to nothingness, if it wishes to understand itself in terms of itself rather than in terms of *das Man*. Dasein in the mood of authenticity is a Dasein that is denuded of the sense of being something in terms of *das Man*, living in a world that is also no longer understood in terms of *das Man*. The Dasein from which

the call of conscience originates is experienced on its own and in terms of itself only. And this makes sense in the context of understanding the process of becoming authentic is one of “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313).

### ***5.3.3 Authentic mood as detachment and nearness***

It has been argued that the idea that authentic attunement “makes manifest the nothing” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88) means that Dasein experiences itself as individualized and as existing in the nothingness of the world. This experience is sometimes referred to with the word “uncanniness”, which is the translation of the German *Unheimlichkeit*, which literally means “not-at-home-ness”, as the root of the word, *Heim*, means home. We can see how the meaning of uncanny as “uncomfortably strange or unfamiliar” (SOED, 2007) fits with the idea of feeling “not at home” - and this is the pun Heidegger is playing on. Another way Heidegger has of describing this feeling of uncanniness is that of Dasein’s experience of itself “as the ‘not-at-home’ – the bare ‘that-it-is’ in the ‘nothing’ of the world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 321). This corresponds with the notions, I discussed in the previous section, of Dasein experiencing itself as individualized, in terms of itself (the “bare ‘that it is’”) and in relation to nothingness (the “‘nothing’ of the world”).

We see how this distances the mood of authentic existence from the moods, described in the examples at the beginning of this chapter, of, for example, feeling under threat in a potentially hostile world or feeling curious in a world full of things to discover. What the mood of authenticity does is not disclose Dasein as a certain kind of Dasein (for example, being potentially under threat or as the potential discoverer things), but as possibility itself, as something that has the possibility to be affected by mood, where it is the possibility that is the essential characteristic of Dasein, before any particular way of being affected has manifested. That is, “anxiety discloses Dasein as being-possible, and indeed as the only kind of thing which it can be of its own accord as something individualised in individualisation” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 143). The mood of authenticity does also not disclose the world as a certain kind of world (for example, being potentially threatening or full of things that may be

discovered), but as the nothingness, the emptiness, out of which a particular way of being of the entities in that world may emerge.

But, apart from this detachment from things, where “being affected” emotionally (in terms of a mood) is a possibility but not yet actual, we also find that anxiety involves a new kind of openness to oneself and things in the world. As Heidegger puts it in *What is Metaphysics?*, “All things and we ourselves sink into indifference. This, however, not in the sense of mere disappearance. Rather, in their very receding, things turn towards us” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88). Thus we have a combination of detachment and “things turning towards us”. Michael Zimmerman describes this new-found openness to things as one which “allows things and other humans to manifest themselves in more complex, complete, and novel ways, rather than as mere objects or instruments for our ends” (Zimmerman, 1993, p. 245). Thus we have a mood that is characterised by detachment as well as by a closeness to things, an openness to what the things are in themselves.

When we return to some of the concepts that in Heidegger’s later philosophy stand for “the prevailing affective disposition of Dasein’s authentic existing” (Capobianco, 2007, p. 1), we find the same dual movement of detachment and openness. In the 1955 lectures *What is Philosophy?*, Heidegger uses the word astonishment: “In astonishment, we hold ourselves back (*être en arrêt*). We step back, as it were, from beings, [astonished] that they are rather than are not [where this stepping back] is at the same time enraptured by and, as it were, held fast by that from which it steps back” (Heidegger, 1958, p. 85, cited in Capobianco 2007). And again, writing about awe, in his *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry* of 1943, Heidegger writes about “holding oneself back” and a nearness: “As this primordially firm holding oneself back (*Ansichhalten*) before what is awesome, awe has at the same time the most intimate affection for it. . . . Awe is that reserved, patient, astonished remembrance of that which abides near in a nearness that consists solely in keeping what is distant in its fullness distant, and thereby keeping it ready for its willing-up emergence from its source” (Heidegger, 2000, p. 153, cited in Capobianco 2007).

When we look at the notion of authentic attunement as one where Dasein has been individualized and experiences the entities it encounters in the world in this mood of detachment and nearness, we can easily see how this would be the case in relation to practical and theoretical entities: as Dasein no longer projects an understanding of being onto these entities (because it experiences itself in terms of itself and no longer out of the entities it encounters in the world) these entities appear both detached (they are no longer understood from out of Dasein's self-understanding) and near (they are no longer mediated by *das Man*). We can, indeed, see how this mood of authenticity would be a constituent part of having "a sense for the being of entities" we said earlier was one of the outcomes of the process of becoming authentic.

This is all well and good, but a problem does, it seems, arise when Dasein encounters another Dasein. As this other Dasein is not understood from out of Dasein's self-understanding or mediated by *das Man*, it will appear as it is in itself. But, as we will see in Chapter 6, the other Dasein that is encountered by Dasein is not disconnected from this Dasein. The basic faculty of being-with entails that the communal (any group which Dasein is part of) as well as the interpersonal (the other Dasein that is encountered) are co-constitutive of this Dasein. It is, therefore, possibly incoherent to talk about the mood of authenticity disclosing *everything* as detached. Practical and theoretical entities may well appear thus, but how their being is understood is, as we saw in Chapter 4, dependent on Dasein's projection of an understanding of being. This is not the case with another Dasein, who, as we will also see in the next chapter, appears, to authentic Dasein as existing for its own sake, in terms of itself, and, therefore, not in terms of an understanding of being that is projected by another Dasein.

There is another way of putting it, which is to say that authentic attunement would be a much impoverished one, if the feelings and emotions it brought were restricted to things such as awe and wonder. One would expect and hope for more human emotions, at least in relation to other Daseins. In the next chapter I will attempt to rectify this shortcoming in Heidegger's account, by establishing what affective dispositions could be part of authentic being-with, and, as such, appropriate ones to appear as part of authentic attunement.

Bearing this promissory note in mind, with the characterisation of “the prevailing affective disposition of Dasein’s authentic existence” as *detachment and nearness* we have returned in many ways to the idea that Dasein has the possibility of the individual being directly affected by something coming from outside of it, without it being mediated through *das Man* and without it being assimilated into what the individual already knows. In the basic mood of authenticity, of anxiety, astonishment or awe, Dasein experiences itself as transcendence, where this transcendence means that Dasein finds itself in a world that predates it and with a personality that is not of its own making and where its understanding of the things in the world is one it itself projects and which can be authentic in terms of its own existential death. Authentic Dasein does not feel connected to itself or things in the world in a way that is based on an established connection (from out of *das Man*). Rather, as we have seen, “things turn towards” it, it is “enraptured by” and “held fast by” these things. These things are “near” to Dasein in their distance. Dasein is “ready for [their] welling-up emergence from [their] source”. And they do so as arising within the transcendence of being-in-the-world, where Dasein is experienced as individualized (and in an, as yet, unspecified way connected with other Dasein’s) and the entities that it encounters in the world are experienced as arising in the nothingness of the world.

#### **5.4 The process of attunement learning to be authentic**

##### ***5.4.1 Learning to be authentic happens at the level of non-reflective self-awareness***

The nature of the process that leads to the above described mode of authentic attunement is one that happens at the level of *non-reflective self-awareness*. Contrary to other terms used in our discussion of the mood of authenticity, this notion of *non-reflective self-awareness* is not one Heidegger himself used, but it is helpful in constructing an account of attunement learning to be authentic.

Such a non-reflective awareness is akin to kinaesthetic or proprioceptive awareness in that there is no reflective sense-perception of oneself as such, as from a distance, but rather an awareness of oneself from the inside, as when, in

kinaesthesia, the sensory nerves in the muscles themselves are aware of the movement one makes when one moves. But, whereas kinaesthetic awareness is located firmly within the individual's body, the non-reflective self-awareness that comes with the mood of the individual spans being-in-the-world as a whole, because, as we saw earlier, one's mood discloses both *oneself* and *the world* in a particular way. Thus, Dan Zahavi writes, in relation to a discussion of Heidegger's notion of attunement, that "Heidegger did, in fact, operate with a form of self-acquaintance that precedes reflection", where "no self-acquaintance can occur independently of, or prior to, our world-disclosure" just as "this world-disclosure ... cannot occur independently of or prior to a disclosure of self" (Zahavi, 2005, pp. 84-85).

Note how these remarks pertain to the whole of the being-in-the-world, i.e. also to being-with and understanding. Indeed, we already saw in the previous chapter that the transparency that goes with authentic understanding is a kind of non-reflective awareness of oneself as a being that understands by way of projection. And a similar kind of non-reflective self-awareness applies to attunement, where the non-reflective self-awareness of authentic attunement is, as we said earlier, more akin to proprioceptive or kinaesthetic awareness than to the kind of "sight" that characterizes transparency.

That authentic attunement involves a kind of non-reflective self-awareness is in itself not surprising, if we consider that emotions are generally experienced in such a non-reflective way. The way we experience emotions is primarily not by taking a third-person perspective on them, but by simply feeling them. Just as we said earlier that we do not have to "take a step back from ourselves" to know what we are doing (reading or fixing a door), so too, we do not have to envisage ourselves getting red in the face to know that we feel embarrassment (though sometimes a physical sign may alert us to an emotion we have been having without noticing it). The link between emotions and kinaesthetic is very clear, and, indeed, emotions are often experienced as physical, as when a feeling of anger may be located in the stomach or love in the heart. So, if we are looking for a process that leads to Dasein experiencing itself as having the possibility of being attuned in a way (of having a certain mood) and we want to

conceive of that process in terms of attunement itself, we are, in effect, looking for a process that happens at the level of non-reflective awareness.

Inauthentic Dasein is absorbed in *das Man* and, as such, not aware of the primordial *non-reflective self-awareness* that lies at the basis of its moods, because it is absorbed in a mood that colours both it and the entities it encounters in the world. This brings us back to the notion, discussed in Chapter 3, of the process of becoming authentic as one of “becoming who one already is”, in that becoming authentic consists of beginning to experience oneself as being *non-reflectively self-aware* and to live accordingly. As we saw earlier, Dasein, as it has given up its absorption in the things in the world, finds itself in the mood of wonder (anxiety, awe or astonishment). Thus we are looking for a change in Dasein’s mood from one that constitutes its non-reflective self-awareness *as based in the mood that gives it both itself and the world* to one that constitutes its non-reflective self-awareness *of itself as based in itself*, as it is both detached from and open (by way of possibility) to being affected by the things in the world.

In sum, what needs to be brought into view in the process of attunement learning to be authentic is that of a change *away from* the individual being in a mood that connects him or her with the world (in that it mood discloses the world as a certain kind of world and the individual as a certain kind of individual) *into the direction of* the individual being in a mood that is characterised by both a sense of detachment and of openness towards things in the world, where the things are “let be” and the self is disclosed in terms of itself only.

#### ***5.4.2 The authentic response to established affective associations***

Normally the question of learning to have a certain affective disposition is conceived of as a process of association. Matthew Ratcliffe writes the following about this: “There are primary emotions [which are not learned], which are innate, hard-wired connections between body states and types of perceptual objects/situations, such as snakes or small, dark spaces. However, in the case of creatures such as ourselves, equipped with the ability to learn a vast myriad of new things, secondary emotions [which are learned] are in the majority.

These are learned associations between types of environment or perceptual object and bodily states. For example, one is not born with a fear of the dentist but one often learns it” (Ratcliffe, 2002, p. 298).

However, the notion of learning to be in a particular mood through association does not fit with the notion of getting into the mood of authenticity as a process of “bringing oneself back from lostness in ‘the they’”, as this process is per definition one that occurs without any kind of association, association being based on continuation (of the association between two elements) rather than the radical interruption that is characteristic of the process of becoming authentic. To put it differently, if, as I said earlier, anxiety “makes manifest the nothing” (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 88), this *nothing* cannot come as a result of an association with *something* without ceasing to be nothing. However, before I go into the question of the process leading to authentic attunement, I will consider what it means to respond in an authentic way, if and when such an associative link between a situation or an entity and a particular emotion has been created.

Such a consideration of an authentic affective response to an association that has been established is called for, if only, because much of education, of both parenting and schooling, involves creating associative connections between certain situations or entities and certain emotions. Everything that can be called conditioning involves what, in Section 2.2.1, I called “valence”, which I said consisted of “emotional force or significance” (SOED, 2007), especially in terms of things like pleasure and pain. Thus there are two kinds of affective association that get established, one where certain ways of acting and perceiving become associated with pleasure or pain, another where, as I said earlier, certain situations or entities become associated with certain emotions.

Regarding the first, much of education is premised on the idea that the educator needs to decide on what ways of acting and perceiving are the right ones for the child and that the way to get the child to act and perceive in the desired way is to create associations between ways of acting and perceiving and pleasure or pain. What is salient in the context of learning to be authentic is not which actions and ways of perceiving should become associated with

pleasure and which with pain. Rather, it is a question of how to respond to such associations that come into being anyway, outside the control of the educator.

In so far as certain actions and ways of perceiving become associated with pleasure or pain, as a result of the child's engagement with the natural world, the task of authentic education seems to be purely that of teaching the child to retain only those associations that it needs to remember (as when a child burns his or her hand in a kettle), to "get over" associations that have become irrational (as when an unfortunate encounter with a dog turns into a phobia), and to "come to terms with" dramatic events at a personal level, such as an experience of loss or long-term illness. All of these consist in initially letting go of the mood that has formed in association with the situation or entity involved and reconnecting with it in a way that is characterized by detachment and nearness. Properly understood, this means that the kettle is not touched again when hot, not because the child has become afraid but because it "knows", and dogs that are encountered are understood to be potentially dangerous, but this results in a fearless caution that is open to sensing that a dog the child encounters may be friendly.

In the case of a personal loss the challenge is greater, as a period of grieving and an abiding sense of loss may well be inevitable, indeed, one could say, right and proper. Consequently, the detachment and nearness of authenticity is experienced in relation to the emotion itself, in that the inauthentic<sup>28</sup> emotion is allowed to exist within a wider authentic one. Emotions such as grief and loss, which are a natural part of life, are not to be replaced in authentic attunement, but are to be given (perhaps after the individual has, initially, been quite overwhelmed by them) a place within the wider non-reflective self-awareness of authentic attunement. The resulting absence of the individual being absorbed in this mood of grief or loss is usually experienced by others as the individual being dignified in their grief, where their dignity consists in them not *reducing* their world to the emotion they experience, even though

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<sup>28</sup> Note that the word inauthentic has lost any normative connotation and refers purely to the mode of being which is not characterized by detachment and openness.

they may well feel that the whole of their world is filled with the emotion: it is the experience of one's world (and especially the nothingness surrounding that world) existing prior to the sense of grief or loss that fills every corner of it that maintains the individual in the wakeful dignity of authentic attunement.

In so far as the experience of pleasure or pain is associated with the actions of others, we can distinguish between two extremes, viz. those associations that are created by the other intentionally and those that are not. Those that are not created intentionally, such as when a young child refuses to play with another child, because they keep ruining their game, are similar to the natural associations I mentioned earlier, in that they are taken in an authentic way when the child learns to not spoil the game anymore, but does so without retaining fear of being excluded or not being liked. But such unintentionally created associations quickly become blurred into intentional ones, as even relatively young children quickly learn that they can influence others by rewarding or punishing them for their behaviour.

If we take the issue of a child being punished or rewarded for a certain way of behaving, we are faced with a combination of, on the one hand, an association being created for them between certain ways of behaving and pleasure or pain (of which I indicated above how to approach it authentically) and, on the other hand, the fact itself that another individual, who the child is related to through being-with, takes it upon themselves to inflict pain or provide pleasure. As we will see and discuss further in Chapter 6, the stance one takes in case one rewards or punishes the other person is inauthentic, as one takes the other person as a practical entity. The affective impact this has on the person who is being rewarded is primarily that of having been reduced to a practical entity, which is a sense of being a thing and, as such, disconnected from the other, as the relationship with the other is no longer one of genuine being-with but that between an agent (the other punishing or rewarding) and an object – thus feelings of loneliness at having been disconnected and sadness at having been reduced may accompany both being rewarded and being punished.

The authentic response at the level of attunement to such being reduced to an object (regardless whether it is pleasurable or painful) is to appeal to the other

in their authentic being-with (see Chapter 6) and to “die towards” any actual connections one may have with the person so that only the authentic connection which exists prior to any actual (inauthentic) connection remains. What such an authentic affective response to having been reduced may be will become clear in Section 6.4.2, when I consider the authentic affective disposition of being-with. At a minimum such an authentic response to being reduced to an object involves facing up to the disconnection that is being imposed by the other, to abide with the nothingness that accompanies it and to remain open towards the other person, to retain the immediacy of the mood of authenticity.

The second inauthentic kind of learning at the emotional level occurs when certain situations or entities (including persons) become associated with certain emotions. Here too the authentic response is that of letting go of any established connections and to return to the affective disposition that is prior to any actual way of responding affectively, when the entity or the situation appears as both detached (one has not identified with it) and near to one (one does not allow a way of responding to it derived from *das Man* to interfere), where “having been brought back from absorption in *das Man*” means that what is left, after such a “dying towards” an existing inauthentic connection, is that one can be affected in a way that is unmediated by previous encounters with similar entities or situations, or by ways of feeling about oneself one wishes to uphold, or by ways of responding that are coloured by the culture one is part of.

Such an affective response to a situation or an entity is still possible, even after all associative connections have dissolved. First, there are the innate emotional responses that would remain, such as the examples I mentioned at the beginning of this section<sup>29</sup>. Second, there is the affective response based in being-with, where the connection between different individuals is co-constitutive of these individuals. This being-with makes empathy and

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<sup>29</sup> Note that even innate responses are, neurologically speaking, associative, but that phenomenologically speaking they are not, because it is not the case that one responds because two kinds of *experiences* are associated with each other, rather there is a link between an experience and a hard-wired response.

compassion possible, for example, when one feels sorrow at the plight of the dispossessed or joy at the sight of a happy child. And, as we will see in Section 6.3.1.3, such authentic being affected can be expanded, to include us being affected by the natural world, where, for example, being touched by a beautiful sunset may be more than an innate response, but based in a genuine human connection with the universe in a way that is experienced emotionally as well as cognitively. Though such a possibility is probably controversial, it is not necessary to arbitrate on this point here, but merely to point out the possibility, in order to substantiate the point that emotional engagement with situations and entities is possible even after previously established associations have dissolved.

At this point we need to ask whether it is not desirable for an individual growing up to internalize some associations between situations or entities and certain emotions. Should a child not learn to be afraid of dangerous animals, to be happy at birthdays, to be respectful in the company of elders, to be sad at other people's misfortune, to be grateful at being granted a favour, and so on? It would take too long to explore this question fully, but my initial response is that the mechanisms I have described above of authentic attunement are all that is needed. Painful or pleasurable events can serve to teach the appropriate cognitive response (for example, to stay away from wasps) rather than needing that cognitive response to be grounded in a lingering emotional response. Appropriate responses to the plight of others (from birthdays to misfortune) are based in authentic being-with, as we will see in Chapter 6, and are likely to become sentimental and shallow if based in association. Appropriate responses to the position of others can be taught in terms of cognition (for example, you address your teachers in certain ways, which is different from the way you address your class mates), without them requiring an affective basis.

### ***5.4.3 The process of attunement learning to become authentic***

Now that we have seen that the process of attunement learning to be authentic is not one of association, we can turn to the process itself. Since one always finds oneself in some mood or other, the question of learning to be in the mood of authenticity becomes one of going from the mood one finds oneself in, say,

being driven to achieve, to the mood of detachment and nearness, of authenticity. This mood one already finds oneself in discloses oneself and the world in a certain way: in our example, one experiences oneself as badly needing to be fulfilled by some achievement and the world as a field of potential opportunities for achievement as well as for failure. We could say that going from such a mood of “needing to achieve” to one of authenticity is a matter of replacing the first with the latter, but, as we saw earlier, that would be a change at the level of what in Section 3.6 I called discovery rather than disclosure. In other words, as I have said that such a change cannot be based in either taking the new mood over from the society one lives in or retrieving the mood from memory (which would constitute a form of continuation), the new mood needs to be found in itself and of itself.

One possible solution lies in the fact that all moods share a level of *non-reflective awareness*. We are always to some extent aware of the mood we are in, in a non-reflective way, even if it is minimal and implicit. Earlier I said that the mood of authenticity is characterised by such *non-reflective self-awareness* to the extent that, because of the lack of absorption in both oneself and the world, it amounted to a *non-reflective self-awareness* of the capacity to get absorbed in oneself and in the world itself. So we can take this aspect of authentic attunement to be already there *potentially* among the other moods one may have, as the mood one would find oneself in, if one allowed what was inessential about the other moods to fall away. This could provide us with a path towards the mood of disconnection and openness.

Such a move from a *non-reflective awareness* of the inauthentic mood one was in to a *non-reflective self-awareness* of the capacity to get absorbed would involve allowing both the moods of authentic existence and the inauthentic moods to exist. One would become aware of one’s mood as mood, without getting absorbed in oneself or the things in the world that get co-disclosed in the mood. But this would not happen as a process of exclusion of awareness of oneself or the things in the world, but rather as a process of becoming aware of the mood as it discloses oneself and the world. That is, one becomes aware of the mood as mood, as disclosive, while at the same time the self and the world are left as they are given by the inauthentic mood.

That is, first, there is the non-reflective self-awareness a) of being focussed on something in such a mood, b) of responding to what one is focussed on as coloured through the mood, c) of the totality of this perceiving and acting internally. At this point one is still absorbed in *das Man*, in things in the world, but this state of absorption is becoming self-aware from the inside out, without, as yet, quite reaching a total self-awareness. Importantly, there is at this point no movement away from the mood one is in, there is a “staying with” the mood that is similar to the unconditional acceptance of “how one finds oneself” promoted in some humanistic psychotherapy as the first importance step in the therapeutic process.

Second, there is the feeling of the *totality* of the mood, which, at this point, co-discloses the emptiness around the mood (“the nothing”), even as the mood encompasses both the self and the world as disclosed by the mood. This emptiness can be experienced as empty, but also as mere space or possibility, and it is accompanied by feelings of longing and curiosity<sup>30</sup> for the otherness of the entities residing in the emptiness, and by feelings of urgency in the face of the possibility of falling back into a world and self-defining mood. That is, as the self-awareness spreads to the point of being self-aware of the totality of one’s being-in-the-world, it begins to co-disclose the emptiness around itself as emptiness in terms of mood, but, at the same time, as containing things that one can possibly be in contact with in a way that is more direct and revealing than the contact one may have with these entities through a mood that defines them in a certain way (as potentially threatening or discoverable, to take two earlier examples). To use terms I used earlier, one becomes aware of the possibility of nearness, of being “enraptured by” and “held fast by” these things.

Thus, this disclosure of emptiness co-discloses a longing and curiosity for immediate contact with these entities, which is a primal kind of longing, one that is not instrumental to fulfilling any other need than the contact with what

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<sup>30</sup> Note that the way curiosity is used here is different from the way Heidegger uses it in *Being and Time*, in relation to *das Man*. The way the word is used here lacks the negative connotations of Heidegger’s use of the word.

is other. This sense of longing and curiosity is like the “the essential *openness to values* and *primary love of meaning* of the personally existing being” (Heidegger, 2004, p. 250) we looked at earlier. There is, at this point, also a sense that it is “now or never” in terms of the possibility of establishing such contact, because the process of absorption, where world and self are experienced in terms of each other, is still there, co-given with the emptiness and the otherness of things. This longing and curiosity together with the sense of urgency provide a motivation for Dasein to remain in the space of the mood of authenticity. This is expressed in what I will call a “staying with” the beginnings of an authentic mood, which, as such, marks the beginning of the process of spreading and reciprocity that, as we will see below, characterises the process of coming to find oneself in a mood of authenticity.

Third, as one is “staying with” the inauthentic mood one is in, while the emptiness surrounding it is being disclosed and some of the entities hiding in this emptiness are beginning to emerge, there is the *letting go* of the mood one was in, in response to the feelings of urgency, longing and curiosity. As one’s non-reflective self-awareness discloses oneself and the world as consisting of the unity of being-in-the-world, as defined by the possibilities given by the mood one is in, and as the emptiness surrounding this being-in-the-world is co-disclosed, the longing for and curiosity about the entities that are beginning to emerge from within this emptiness serve to enhance one’s awareness of oneself as being-in-the-world and as part-defined by one’s mood. This is a reciprocal illuminating of, on the one hand, the emptiness with its emerging possibilities and, on the other hand, the mood as part-defining being-in-the-world. And this reciprocal illuminating of mood and emptiness eventually exposes the mood as finite, as based in *das Man* and continuity (previous experience), and one is drawn towards the emptiness, leaving the mood behind, as it were.

Finally, there is the experience of oneself in terms of oneself and the emergence of entities from out of this emptiness in terms of themselves. As one allows the mood one was in to dissolve, there is still the experience of oneself, but now one experiences oneself as *capable* of having a mood, of experiencing oneself and the world in terms of a mood, of having being-in-the-world

permeated by a mood. The possibility of having being-in-the-world permeated by an inauthentic mood, of connecting to the world through *das Man*, is always there, as it needs to be for one to be able to respond to situations that may require to be defined in terms of mood, but in the moment of disconnection and openness there is no such defining mood. Rather, there is the mood of detachment and nearness (anxiety, awe or astonishment), where one is experienced in terms of oneself rather than the world, and where things in the world are experienced as both detached (because they are other than oneself) and near (because they are experienced in an unmediated way through one's essential openness).

The movement of learning associated with this kind of awareness is one of spreading, where the non-reflective self-awareness that was always already part of one's inauthentic mood grows until it encompasses the whole of one's being-in-the-world. The movement is also one of reciprocation: the non-reflective self-awareness that is already there in any mood grows as a result of experiencing something that appears as in certain ways detached and near, which discloses some of the emptiness that surrounds things that are detached and near, which in turn discloses more of the mood in an enhanced self-awareness, which then co-discloses more of the emptiness around the mood, and so on. Note that at any point either a communicative element, in terms of authentic being-with, or an element of understanding, as we saw in the previous section, may affect these processes of reciprocation and spreading.

## **5.5 Educational considerations**

### ***5.5.1 The school atmosphere and learning to be authentic***

I will now consider the practical dimension of the process articulated above and ask, by way of example, how a group of teachers may bring about such a process of attunement becoming authentic in a school setting. That is, because we are dealing with a mood, an atmosphere, something that colours the whole of being-in-the-world (the subject, any intentional objects encountered by the subject, the world as it is experienced as a whole, other individuals, and the school community), the natural place to start is the collective of teachers, as the atmosphere of a school is most easily established by a collective of

individuals. Of course, not every teaching body will have the coherence, the opportunity, or, indeed, the wish to wittingly establish a certain atmosphere in their school (even if all do so in actual fact), but for the sake of this example I will assume that some do. Note that in real life such a teaching body would want to include the pupils, the support staff and the parents in the creation of this atmosphere, but for simplicity sake I will leave that dimension out of my description, as it does not affect the nature of an atmosphere that is conducive to the flourishing of the affective disposition of authenticity.

The pupil who enters the school already does so with a certain affective disposition, experiencing him or herself and the world in a certain way. This is always a specific way. I will take as our example a pupil who experiences herself as inferior to others, the world as unsafe, and others (notably adults) as judgemental. Part of this is that the pupil experiences herself as separate from the world, and is prone to withdrawing from certain things, so as not to expose herself to further judgement. At the same time she is prone to asserting herself in an over-confident way, so as to pre-empt any judgements that she expects will come her way. In this mode the pupil's relationship with things is one of absorption (in the things in the world) and definition (by a certain mood) and the teachers, understanding the importance of the process of attunement becoming authentic, will, first of all, want to be aware of the how pupil is absorbed by things. This corresponds with the notion of "staying with" the inauthentic mood I discussed in the previous section, where the existing inauthentic mood is allowed to exist as it is, where there is merely an increased awareness of that mood.

For example, in our example of the pupil who feels herself to be inferior, the teachers may observe how she understands herself in terms of (identifies with) the low grades she receives for poorly executed work and the "street cred" she gets for being defiant towards her teachers. Rather than trying to turn a "negative" understanding of herself in terms of the things she finds in the world into a "positive" one (telling her, for example, that doing her homework will make her feel good about herself and that the respect she earns from her peers is not going to be of much use to her in the long term), the teachers will seek to create an atmosphere where both are allowed to first exist un-resisted

(the student “staying with” the mood) and then subside, so that the identification can make place for an understanding of herself “in terms of herself”.

Thus, there could be an atmosphere which did not compare the pupil to others in a way that entailed value judgment. Practically this could, for example, mean that grades are not given at all, but where the teacher simply indicates what is lacking in a student’s work relative to either their next level of development or, in the context of work going towards a set examination, relative to full marks. Such a simple “this is what you would need to do in order to get full marks”, when done in an atmosphere that is non-comparative and non-judgemental would allow for the self-understanding in terms of grades to exist un-resisted, but it would be brought into relief (it would meet the emptiness surrounding it) so that it became increasingly non-reflectively self-aware. There would, in the attitude of the teachers, be nothing that would prevent the student understanding herself in terms of her grades to subside, if and when the pupil herself was ready for that.

Similarly, a non-judgemental approach to the student culture giving kudos to obstreperous behaviour would be accompanied by a sense, on the part of the teachers, that pupils and teachers were not separated at the essential level of their humanity, even if this would not entail the teachers becoming immature (for example, in depending on their sense of self-worth on pupil approval) or failing in their responsibilities as adults “in a position of trust” (for example, in colluding with immature student behaviour). This is an atmosphere where adults and children are *one* in their most basic humanity, but where, at a functional and developmental level, it is accepted that they have different responsibilities and needs, such as the student need to be among their peers from time to time or the need to explore (and, therefore, be set) boundaries (they are then held to). Such a limiting of the separation between student and teacher groups to a functional level would do much to create an atmosphere where the pupil could be herself “in terms of herself”, rather than as a member of a group.

At the same time, there would be an atmosphere that appealed to the pupils' authentic views and opinions to be voiced and heard. When the pupil is "taking seriously" in this way, it would not only encourage them to understand themselves in terms of themselves, in terms of their giving voice to what really concerns them, but would also challenge them to be real and not to get stuck in a stereotypical way of being themselves, for example, because it earns them approval from their peers or teachers, or because it represents a way of looking at themselves they have internalised on the basis of past experience. As such, the pupil is allowed to be "other" and challenged to reveal what is genuine about themselves. In terms of emotion and feeling this would manifest as an emotionally secure atmosphere, where the security is not brought about by way of belonging to an in-group (of pupils, teachers or the school as a whole), but where the security is extended to all (including visitors, newcomers and "outsiders"). This can only be done if there is a great deal of genuine care for individuals, the buildings, the surrounding area, any plants and animals that are there, and, at least in intention, the wider community.

But this atmosphere of security needs to be combined with one where the authentic person is appealed to, where there is a challenge for all to step out of their comfort zone and to step out into the open (See Chapter 6 on authentic public exposure). Such a stepping out of one's comfort zone is, indeed, necessary if the care and security of everyone is to be made possible in the first place, because, in remaining in one's comfort zone, one inevitably excludes someone else (for example, by creating an in-group which inevitably leaves some out, or by seeking comfort in food or drink, which allows one to avoid facing up to things others can possibly not ignore), which undermines the atmosphere of security for all, which I said was necessary for authentic attunement. This, therefore, entails an appeal to the responsibility individuals have for each other to enable the possibility for all to be authentic, where this responsibility is neither ready-to-hand (expressed in being held accountable) nor present-at-hand (expressed in judgments concerning whether one is meeting one's responsibilities, or in being made to feel guilty or proud of oneself), but based in authentic being-with, which is experienced as affection, communion or even love (see again Chapter 6). The teachers wishing to create

an atmosphere that promotes learning to be authentic will, therefore, need to create one where these emotions circulate freely among all involved.

This stepping out of one's comfort zone is also necessary, if one is to become aware of the whole of one's being-in-the-world (of oneself as transcendence), because, again, remaining in the comfort zone hides certain aspects of oneself and of the world from view. This is the stage of the individual "staying with" the *non-reflective self-awareness* which is already to some extent there. Thus, the girl in our example would, by stepping out of her comfort zone - which she was encouraged to do by way of an atmosphere of security, responsibility and affection - come face to face with the inauthentic, "defining" mood (a mood that "defines", that makes one experiences oneself and the world in a specific affective way) she finds herself in. And, as I said, in her case this defining mood is, put simply, one of herself as inferior and the world as judgmental. For her to "stay with" this mood the result would be that the *non-reflective self-awareness* that is always already part of a mood spreads until it encompasses the whole of her being-in-the-world.

With regard to emotions and feelings, the kind of atmosphere that would encourage such "stepping out of one's comfort zone" and such a "staying with", would be one of intense watchfulness and wakefulness - where the individual is not watched as a ready-to-hand entity (as when one watches for what to correct or reinforce, what to punish or reward) or a present-at-hand entity (as when one watches for signs and symptoms that indicate certain characteristics, on the basis of which one would then judge the person); rather, the individual would be watched as openness and possibility, where there is no judgment (apart from instances where laws and school rules are at stake) and no attempt is made to interfere with the pupil's way of being (unless certain boundaries are being crossed, such as when harm is being done to themselves or others). I will say more about this issue, which is that of rules and boundaries, in the next section.

What is being watched is the individual *as* openness and possibility, where the way in which they are at any point in time is taken as one of the possible way of being they have rather than how they "actually" are. And they will not be

expected to repeat this way of being, so, where they have been difficult or unpleasant (unless it has become a full-blown disciplinary issue), things won't be held against them for long. Similarly they won't be reminded of the "good" pupil they may have been in the past, in an attempt to elicit a repeat performance. Rather than linking the way of being that manifests (the defining mood the pupil is in) with collective norms or past or future ways of being, this way of being is taken as arising within the openness of authentic existence. That is, apart from the encouragement to stay with (though not "hang on to") the defining mood that manifests, there is also the encouragement for the pupil to stay with the nothingness that is already in some ways there in this mood. This nothingness is experienced as limitation (the pupil experiences herself as existing in the mood of inferiority but at the same time experiences that mood as limited), as emptiness (the pupil experiences a probably quite benevolent and reinvigorating emptiness around her mood of inferiority), as possibility (she experiences that many possibilities exist outside the one defining mood she is staying with), as silence (the pupil experiences a calming silence around the mood, which allows her to not get absorbed in it again immediately).

This awareness of the nothingness surrounding her defining mood may be something she simply notices, or it may be something she discovers as she tries to understand her defining mood, or that comes to her attention because it is pointed out to her. Whichever may be the case, as she becomes aware of the emptiness that is part of her being-in-the-world, she becomes more open towards the entities that may emerge from within this emptiness. As the defining mood which discloses herself as inferior and the world as judgmental stands out more and more against the emptiness of being-in-the-world, and is thus exposed as limited, a sense of curiosity about what does not manifest within this defining mood is awakened. This is accompanied by a sense of longing for contact with what has been excluded as a result of remaining in the defining mood, as well as a sense of urgency with regard to the possibility of an unmediated engagement with these entities, as the opportunity do have this engagement is understood to be one that could be lost again.

At this point the push towards authenticity can easily be levelled off with the individual opting for a watered-down version of it. As she becomes aware of

the limiting nature of her defining mood of inferiority, the pupil may well take the emerging curiosity as a sign to start experimenting with other ways of being-in-the-world, by slipping into another defining mood which is neither a like-for-like substitution of the previous defining mood, nor an authentic mood, but one that represents a kind of “enlightened compromise” (for example one of being self-determining, saying, as it were, “the mood of inferiority does not suit me, I want to be able to feel different moods at different times”). Though this mood has certain elements of authenticity, such as its responsiveness to the situation, and may well represent a real improvement for the individual involved, it falls short of genuine authenticity. But because it is experienced as a liberation from the confines of the defining mood, having got there may well dampen the longing for true contact with the entities that emerge in the emptiness and a lessening of the sense of urgency to let go of all of the defining mood.

What is needed in order not to remain at the level of this initial letting go of one’s defining mood, as a result of having “stayed with” it, is for a process of reciprocation to be kept going. This is the process where, as we have seen, the *non-reflective self-awareness* that is already there in any mood exposes some of the emptiness that is part of being-in-the-world, which in turn awakens the individual’s curiosity, longing and sense of urgency to come into contact with the entities that are beginning to emerge within this emptiness. If at this point the curiosity, longing and sense of urgency are satisfied in a way that involves renewed absorption (for example, the pupil in our example finds herself to be more confident and not judged as much as she had previously thought), the process comes to a halt. If, however, the individual, at this point, experiences something that appears as in certain ways “detached and near”, this experience in turn discloses more of the emptiness that surrounds things, where this emptiness in turn discloses more of the mood in an enhanced self-awareness, and so on.

Such an experience of things that appear detached and near, of things as they appear in the affective disposition of authentic existence, is one that, though it cannot be stage-managed, may be made more likely. That is, having made the initial step of opening herself up towards the world around her (leaving

behind, however tentatively, the defining mood of inferiority), what the girl in our example meets next is crucial with respect to whether she will engage in the reciprocal process of sensing the openness that is her authentic being and the emptiness of the world. I will consider two examples how such experience of the “emptiness of the world” and openness of other living creatures may be encouraged.

### ***5.5.2 Teaching subjects and learning to be authentic***

The experience of the “emptiness of the world” may be encouraged by teaching the knowledge and skills that make any culturally transmitted disciplines, like Maths or History, in such a way that their most basic ontological and epistemological presuppositions become “transparent” (Section 4.3.1). That is, offering the pupil the experience of getting to know an entity in the full depth of its “construction” by the discipline, by taking the pupil through some of the important “decisions” that have been made regarding the nature of the entity that have led to it appearing as it does in the discipline, will give the pupil the opportunity to experience the entity from within the nothingness of the world. To take an example from Geography, explaining how we have taken a certain entity (let’s say a river) as one that we have access to by way of description, measurement and visual representation on a two-dimensional plane (a map) will expose the entity as a certain kind of entity, where other options can be taken (and have been taken in different cultures), for example, by taking the river as a living thing, a process rather than a substantive entity, a plurality rather than a singular, and so on. In other words, the teacher would present some of the main ontological and epistemological “decisions” that have been made with respect to an entity, with the result that we may now encounter the 100 mile long river in Geography as a five inch blue line on a map. This can be done at all levels, but each level will have its own opportunities and limitations (the young ones not being capable of as much complexity and the older ones not being capable of as much benign ignorance). The key to this is to awaken the engagement, the contact with the entity in a way that is *prior to* either a practical or theoretical engagement with it.

The experience of the openness of other living creatures is the other area where an incipient awareness of the emptiness in being-in-the-world can be fostered. In terms of inter-personal and communal relationships, it is by being openness and possibility oneself that one exposes the other to the nature of human beings as openness and possibility. That is, the teachers in the school wishing to foster an atmosphere of authentic attunement cannot do better than being authentic in themselves, and this makes clear once again how the teacher is as much a learner in this area as the pupil. But it is also important that the openness and possibility that is there in other living creatures is brought to the attention of the pupil. Here we are in the domain of nature education, where nature should not be presented to the pupil only as ready-to-hand (as objects of use, as a help or a threat) or present-at-hand (as field of inquiry with its categories, its species and genera), but as self-arising, openness and possibility and, in many respects, end in itself. I will return to this issue in Chapter 6.

With respect to both human beings and nature, there is an added task related to the one set out in the paragraph before the previous one, that of taking the pupil through many of the decisions that have been made regarding their nature, for them to appear as they do in the discipline one is studying. The disciplines to do with the natural world, such as biology and environmental science, need to be taught against a backdrop of a contact with nature and great care should be taken in explicating how the various disciplines have approached this field that presents itself to experience first as openness and possibility, albeit in a limited fashion compared to the human being as a whole. Ethical issues to do with the use of natural resources and things like animal testing should not be left out, but it should be remembered that they are often presented in such a way that these ethical issues are themselves merely a different inauthentic<sup>31</sup> concern arising together with the inauthentic concern for the control of nature, and can, therefore, only be approached in the right way if authentic contact with nature has been established in advance.

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<sup>31</sup> Note, as was indicated earlier, the word inauthentic is used in a purely non-normative way. For a discussion of what an ethics based in Heidegger's philosophy might look like, see Raffoul (2012).

The disciplines studying human beings, from psychology and sociology to history and philosophy should also be taught against the backdrop of a contact with, an engagement with, an allowing the individual and the community to emerge, in terms of the openness and possibility that makes up authentic human nature. As with education concerning the natural world, establishing the relationship between authentic human nature and the way it is taken in these disciplines is extremely delicate and complex and requires that the teacher has a deep understanding of their discipline (though much of the latter difficulties may be offset by text books that made this relationship accessible). Similarly, lessons to do with food, physical exercise or sex education, fall in this category and demand an authentic understanding of both the human being as Dasein and the human body as part of the natural world, to set the scene for any subsequent inauthentic knowledge concerning them.

There is also a physical side to the creation of a school culture that is amenable to the pupil learning to be authentic at the affective level. Moods are sensitive to the physiological substratum out of which they appear, as is clear when we consider how depression may be induced by illness, anger by alcohol abuse, nervousness by caffeine, lethargy by lack of sleep, restlessness by sensitivity to certain food additives, and so on. It is, therefore, of great importance that the food, the physical surroundings, the health of the pupils and teachers are all given consideration. Outside elements that impose their own mood need to be clearly kept under control. Elements that absorb the individual, like things that are addictive psychologically or physically need to be minimized and exposed for what they are. There need to be moments of disengagement from activity and of silence. Space prohibits the full treatment of the issues involved in relation to the physical level, but that does not mean it is not of vital importance.

In general terms we can say that a clear hierarchy of experience presents itself in relation to how the disciplines may be taught in such a way that their study contributes to the pupil's opportunity to become authentic at the affective level. First there is the mode of being of the teacher, where the extent to which they are authentic is decisive, because the dynamics of human relationships are in many ways decisive (as we will see in Chapter 6). Second, there is the

material, the physical context of the buildings, the physical atmosphere, the pupil's health, wakefulness and freedom from addiction, the quiet and the space available for individuals to be. All of these are conducive to the emergence of the mood of authenticity in the educational setting. To the extent that the above are in place, there can be the engagement with, study of, human beings as they present themselves to experience before they have been taken as either practical or theoretical entities (as I put it earlier, before ontological or epistemological decisions have been made that alienate them from their nature as openness and possibility).

This is an area where actual classroom activities may come in: there could be moments where everybody is together in silence; there could be discussions to expose and leave behind inauthentic articulations of the human being; there could be games that do the same, and so on. Finally, there is the enculturation of the pupils into the discipline, which, if it is done in the context of the two previous points, will not be an absorption into the discipline in the sense that the discipline begins to dictate the atmosphere, the mood, but in such a way that the mood of the discipline (for example, one of objective analysis which leaves out emotions in psychology or one of attempting to gain a measure of control over people's behaviour in business studies) is always a limited sub-set of the mood of authenticity that envelops the inauthentic mood of the discipline and that prevails in the case of contradiction between the two (imagine, for example, investment bankers, who now appear absorbed in the mood of profit optimization that is inherent in their trade, working under such a prevailing mood of authenticity).

# 6 Authentic being-with

## 6.1 Authentic being-with

Being-with designates that the Dasein that is encountered by another Dasein “is there with them” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). Dasein is being-in-the-world (what in the previous chapter I called transcendence) and “the world is always the one that [Dasein] share[s] with others” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 155), which means that Dasein’s world is a “with-world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 155) and that “being-with is an existential constituent of being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 163). Being-with is, therefore, a constituent part of Dasein itself: “So far as Dasein is at all, it has being-with-one-another as its kind of being” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 163). Being-with is in many ways the educationally most important of Dasein’s three basic faculties, because it represents the interpersonal and communal dimension of human life, and it is in this dimension that education itself is rooted.

As we will see later in this chapter, Being-with is the basis of what Heidegger calls discourse (*Rede*). Indeed, Heidegger himself does usually take discourse rather than being-with as one of the basic faculties of Dasein (together with understanding and attunement): “*Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with [attunement] and understanding*” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204). The reason being-with rather than discourse is taken as the third basic faculty of Dasein is that in Dasein’s authentic mode discourse becomes “silent” and fails to be articulated in a coherent, positive way. This has to do with the lack of a convincing account of authentic being-with which I have commented on a

number of times already in this thesis. In this chapter I hope to construct such a positive account of authentic being-with, where I will look at three candidates: an elaboration of Heidegger's account of being-with in § 26 of *Being and Time*, his account of the authentic community in § 74 of *Being and Time*, and his account of the "call of conscience" in Division Two, Chapter II of *Being and Time*.

I will begin this chapter by looking at Heidegger's account of being-with in general. Then I will look at ways to conceive of authentic being-with and find that these tend to remain in some ways unsatisfactory. I will then look in detail at the notion of the "call of conscience". I will look at the process of "hearing the call of conscience" as it interrupts Dasein's absorption in *das Man*. What the call of conscience does is that it *shows* Dasein the possibility of authentic existence, *appeals* to Dasein to become authentic, *summons* it to being authentic and *calls it forward* into authentic existence. The characteristics Heidegger claims such a call needs to have, in order for it to be able to interrupt Dasein's listening away to *das Man*, are that it is impersonal, unwitting, unplanned for and silent, a *giving to understand* that comes from Dasein itself and stands out from all the other voices Dasein hears.

Having established a positive account of authentic being-with, I will attempt to construct an account of the actual learning involved in being-with becoming authentic. I will characterise this process of learning in terms of a change from experiencing others in terms of *separateness* and *actuality* to experiencing them in terms of *oneness* and *possibility*; I will characterise the process involved in this change as one of becoming silent; I will characterise the beginning of this process of spreading as "opening up" and "falling away". I will end this chapter by revisiting the notion of authentic being-with, to refine it with the help of what I have understood about the process of being-with learning to be authentic and will do so in the context of certain educational examples.

## 6.1.1 Heidegger's account of being-with

### 6.1.1.1 Being-with

As we saw in the chapter on Heidegger's notion of authenticity, being-with (*Mitsein*) is, according to Heidegger, one of the three basic faculties of Dasein, where Dasein as being-in-the-world "in every case maintains itself in some definite way of concerned Being-with-one-another" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204). What this means is that Dasein is not only the faculties of *understanding* and *attunement*, but also that of *being-with*, where it is always in the fundamental openness of Dasein that these three faculties manifest. Thus William McNeill writes that "my very being-in-the-world is, always and intrinsically, a being-with. In this perspective, the assertion 'I am', notes Heidegger, is incorrect: one should really say: 'I am one', in the sense of 'I am others, I am them'" (McNeill, 2006, p. 82). It is a bold claim, indeed, that Dasein, the individual human being, is not only him or herself (the way they understand things and the way they find themselves emotionally attuned in the world) but is also other people (other individuals as well as the collective).

Most of *Being and Time*, and indeed the writings of most commentators on Heidegger, has tended to focus on the ways in which this being-with is said to manifest in actuality, which are that of "discourse" (language and other discursive practices) and *das Man* (the ways in which things are done and perceived by the general culture and tradition the individual finds him or herself in). But what has had less attention is what it means for being-with itself to be authentic, and those accounts of authentic being-with that exists in Heidegger's early writings (that of the authentic community and of the voice of conscience) are, as we will see, in many ways unsatisfactory. In so far as authentic being-with has been conceived, it has been so in negative terms, as it involves Dasein "bringing itself back from lostness in *das Man*" as well as discourse becoming "silent" in the call of conscience (I will look at this in detail later in this chapter). And, though this negative approach is in line with Heidegger's general approach to authenticity, what is missing is a convincing positive account of authentic being-with that does justice to it, both in terms of

the interpersonal and of the communal aspect of it. I will first look at the communal aspect of being-with and then at the interpersonal one.

#### *6.1.1.2 Being-with as existing as part of a common world*

In discussion of the being-with faculty of Dasein, the emphasis has usually been on the communal, the collective dimension of being-with, rather than on the interpersonal one. As with all the basic faculties, Heidegger posits this faculty as prior to and as the basis of any actual manifestation of it. As William McNeill puts it, "Being-with gives rise to a common world and a common good" (McNeill, 2006, pp. 79-82). That is, rather than a common world giving rise to something like communal life, it is, according to Heidegger the basic faculty of being-with that makes possible for individuals to have anything like a common world.

We experience being-with in the transcendence of being-in-the-world. Just as every understanding has its attunement and every attunement has its understanding, every understanding and attunement also have their being-with. "Dasein-with is already essentially manifest in a co-attunement and a co-understanding" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 205). For example, with a particular understanding of something, there is a way of being attuned emotionally, as well as a way in which other Daseins are there "with" one in that understanding. In concrete terms, if one, for example, understands a bird as belonging to a certain species (i.e. theoretically), there belongs to this theoretical understanding a kind of detached, objectifying way of being emotionally attuned to the situation, and one is also there with others, for example with the authors of the textbook in which one first found the name of the species or with one's father who may have introduced one to the joys of bird watching.

So being-with gives rise to a common world (which, according to McNeill's reading, includes a common good, because the world we live in is always one of values as well), and this common world gives rise to language as well as deliberative practices. Heidegger calls this discourse. "That common world and common good give rise to discourse" (McNeill, 2006, pp. 79-82). Discourse gives one the ways of conceptualizing (through articulation) the world and the

entities within it, and thus allows one to decide in what ways to act in any given situation. “One’s deliberations derive from that communal dimension as they are discursive (and this is true for ethical deliberation and phronesis as well)” (McNeill, 2006, pp. 79-82). Taking something *as a certain kind of thing* and acting *in certain a kind of way* are, in so far as they are based in being-with, part of the discourse that articulates the common world.

As discourse being-with articulates the way in which things are understood as well as Dasein’s attunement. Articulation refers to the way in which some things are taken as belonging together and some things as belonging apart. As “the articulation of the intelligibility of the ‘there’, [discourse] is a primordial existentials of disclosedness” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204), which is to say that it is one of the basic faculties with which Dasein discloses the world and the entities it finds in the world. Discourse is the foundation of language as well as the discursive practices that exist in cultures and traditions, as these articulate the world and the entities in it. “The intelligibility of being-in-the-world – an intelligibility which goes with [attunement] – expresses itself as discourse [*spricht sich als Rede aus*]. This totality-of-significations of intelligibility is put into words” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204). In other words, language and cultural practices have their basis in being-with.

Because we often act out of deliberations, and because deliberations are discursive and, as such, based in the common world which is itself based in the with-world of being-with, our deliberations are themselves collective in origin. The terms I have used for the collective ways of conceiving of and acting in relation to things is *das Man*. “Thus one’s deliberations take the form of ‘one does ...’”. (McNeill, 2006, pp. 79-82). “This ‘one’ [*das Man*], properly understood, is the ‘how’ of everydayness, of our average, concrete being-with-one-another; from it arise the ways in which human beings ‘at first and for the most part’ see and are affected by and address the world” (McNeill, 2006, p. 82).

Here we encounter a clear link with educational practice. On the basis of the above we can say that some perspectives on things (taking them as certain kinds of things and acting in relation to them in certain ways) that are

collective in origin are actualized as concrete perspectives in the individual Dasein. Another way of saying this would be that some perspectives from the collective are “internalized”, which is a common way of explaining how a person ends up looking at things in a way that is similar to the way others, especially those close to them during their formative years, looked at them.

The Heideggerian way to describe such “internalization” is, first, to reject the internal/external dichotomy: Dasein is transcendence and other people are there with them in the world that shows up in the transcendence. What happens during “internalization” is that, as a result of the individuals concerned being turned towards the same entities in the world and in the same way, this way of being turned towards these entities sticks (a process that can be explained by the conventional accounts of learning I discussed in Chapter 2). The reason we then observe that one individual (e.g., the child) has adopted the ways of being of the other (e.g., the culture they grow up in or the parent) is that what they were turned towards had previously not been articulated (i.e. taking some things as belonging together and some as belonging apart) in as coherent, persuasive or committed a way by the child as it had been by the culture of the parent. And it is this articulation that does the work in “internalization”, where the process, from the perspective of the child is one of partaking in the articulation. Thus the process of enculturation is another apt way of putting the process of internalization, or, as Heidegger would say, entering into *das Man*.

With this we have an account of the collective dimension of *das Man*, including the way in which the individual is “enculturated” into it. But, as it has been put several times in this thesis, becoming authentic involves “bringing oneself back from lostness in *das Man*”. We, therefore, need an account of the basic faculty of being-with as it exists for the Dasein that has extracted itself from *das Man*, while retaining what is essential to being-with. But before we can do so, we need to look at the interpersonal dimension of being-with, at the way two individual Daseins encounter each other. This is an aspect of being-with, but it has received much less attention than the communal aspect in Heidegger’s writings.

### *6.1.1.3 Being-with in terms of interpersonal relationships*

Heidegger points out how we encounter the other Dasein through our engagement with practical (ready-to-hand) entities. “The structure of the world’s worldhood is such that others are not proximally present-at-hand as free-floating subjects along with other things, but show themselves in the world in their special environmental being, and do so in terms of what is ready-to-hand in that world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). We encounter the things in the world as things that other Daseins are also involved in. For example, “along with the equipment to be found when one is at work, those others for whom the ‘work’ is destined are ‘encountered’ too”. Or when “we walk along the edge of a field [...] the field shows itself as belonging to such-and-such a person” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 153). And we could add that, if, for example, we walked carelessly across the field, we would be shown to ourselves, from the perspective of the farmer, as someone trespassing or trampling their crops.

This is a rather limited account of how we encounter other individuals, in that it is via the entities we encounter in the world and not, as it were, face to face. Sarah Sorial, in her PhD Thesis about Heidegger’s notion of being-with, discusses how “the other” (the individual one comes face to face with) fails to become truly another person in Heidegger’s analysis. This other person becomes somehow strangely impersonal, like a flat character in a play. “The specificity of the other, that unknowable and evasive aspect of the other expressed in her face and by her speech is something that Heidegger bypasses in his pursuit of Being” (Sorial, 2005, p. 144). That is, “Heideggerian ontology, effaces the alterity of the other by reducing her to the anonymous categories of Being” (Sorial, 2005, p. 144). What this means is that Heidegger loses sight of the “ontic [actual and concrete] differences and multiplicity that exists in concrete relations between Daseins” (Sorial, 2005, p. 144). In other words, Heidegger fails to bring out what is specific about the experience of encountering “another person”, their specific individuality, their specificity and their particularity. We saw examples of this at the beginning of this chapter when I quoted from Heidegger’s descriptions of how we encounter the other

person, which, in his writings is, almost always, indirectly, like when we make something for them or walk along their field.

Another indication of Heidegger's neglect in this area is the lack of discussions of the most important interpersonal events in people's lives, such as love and friendship. The word "love", for example, occurs only once in the whole of *Being and Time*, and even then only as a mention in a footnote about anxiety (Heidegger, 1962, p. 492). Similarly, the word "friend" only occurs twice, but never as part of a discussion of friendship itself (Heidegger, 1962, p. 206 & 294). What is more, this friend "has no distinguishing attributes [he or she] appears to have no face, no figure, no sex, no name. It is not man or woman, nor is it an 'I,' a subject or a person. Rather, it is another Dasein that each Dasein carries with it, in the form of a voice it hears *in* itself" (Sorial, 2005, p. 103). Contrast this with a concept like truth, which appears dozens of times, and it becomes clear that it was not Heidegger's priority to specify different possibilities with regard to interpersonal relationships.

Given the limitations of Heidegger's account of interpersonal relationships, I will attempt to construct one, using his claim that, from the perspective of being-with, Dasein is "for the sake of others" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). We already saw in Chapter 4 that Dasein is properly understood in terms of itself only. So, when an individual Dasein meets another Dasein, how is it to take this other Dasein? If this Dasein (Dasein 1) was to understand the other Dasein (Dasein 2) like it understands ready-to-hand or present-at-hand objects (i.e. in terms of Dasein 1's world, the totality of references Dasein 1 has), then it would not understand this Dasein 2 in an authentic way (in accordance with the being of Dasein 2). This is because Dasein 2 has its own world from out of which it understands itself as well as the entities it encounters. This Dasein 2 understands itself from out of its own world, and this self-understanding from out of its own world is the most fundamental way in which Dasein 2 can be understood (more fundamental than any theoretical or instrumental way). As Heidegger puts it: "Dasein's being [is] that being *for the sake of which* Dasein itself is as it is" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). This reasoning lies at the heart of Heidegger's argument that each individual Dasein can only be understood in an authentic way if it is understood in terms of its own experience of the

world, as its own *for the sake of which*, its own end as well as totality of references.

But in the context of being-with Heidegger brings in another factor, namely, the notion that, when we encounter another Dasein, because that Dasein has its own world, its own *for the sake of*, we also encounter ourselves as existing *for the sake of* (*in terms of* the world of) that other Dasein: “as being-with, Dasein ‘is’ essentially for the sake of others” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). Such an existing *for the sake of* others does not mean that one exists for the benefit of others, as subordinate to their wishes and needs. Nor does it simply imply that one *means* something to the other person in terms of the other person’s world, though that is undoubtedly the case as well. Rather, it means that in oneself, as part of one’s own perspective, one exists *as* for the sake of the other person. That is, one is always also who one is in terms of the world of the other person, where this *being in terms of the world of the other person* is fundamental to one’s being. There is no self that is more basic than the one that exists *in terms of* the other person (though the communal dimension of being-with as well as other parts of the self - attunement and understanding - are co-original with it). One could say that, *from one’s own perspective*, one exists *from the perspective* of the other person as well. Or to use Heidegger’s phrase, one becomes disclosed in one’s Dasein in “being-with, as the existential ‘for the sake of’ of others” (Heidegger 1962).

Importantly, this phenomenon of existing *from the perspective* of others is always the case ontologically (at the level of possibility), but only the case in certain ways ontically (in actual, concrete situations). That is, it is, for example, not the case that one necessarily exists *for oneself in terms of the world of* the neurotic person that works in the office canteen. Such an existing in terms of the world of the other person is there always in principle (at the level of possibility), but the actual perspectives of the individuals one is in contact with do not all get actualized in oneself (which in the case of the above example would involve actualizing a neurotic perspective on oneself, which could be quite disturbing). That is, though the phenomenon of existing from the perspective of the other is always there in the form of possibility, not all the perspectives become actualized as concrete (factual) perspectives one has

on oneself (To repeat what has been stated several times before, for Heidegger possibility constitutes the primordial nature of Dasein and is, therefore, not only that which makes the actual possible, but also, and more importantly, that which constitutes authentic Dasein).

So we can say that the faculty of being-with implies that an individual exists as *from the perspective of* the other individual. Such existing as *from the perspective of* the other is there first as possibility, where some of the possibilities become actualized, notably those perspectives that are held by those close to the individual (parents, for example, but also the language and culture the individual grows up in). These perspectives themselves consist of articulation, of taking some things as belonging together and some as belonging apart, which manifest as ways of being turned towards entities in the world. And we already saw in the discussion of being-with as existing as part of a community how the perspectives others have on the things one finds in the world can become “internalized” by the individual Dasein. To this I can now add that the perspectives others may have on the individual Dasein get internalized by that Dasein.

Now that we have a sense of the dimension of being-with, we can consider what authentic being-with is like. As we have seen in the analyses of authentic understanding and authentic mood, the authentic mode of Dasein is one where Dasein exists as possibility rather than any of the actual ways of being that lie in that possibility. Thus in authentic understanding Dasein existed as the possibility to have an understanding of being, prior to adopting any actual understanding of being. Likewise, in authentic mood, Dasein existed as the possibility of being affected by the entities it finds in the world, prior to being affected in any actual way. So when we now seek to establish what the mode of authentic being-with is like, we need to look in the direction of Dasein existing as the possibility of existing for itself from the perspective of the other (prior to entering into any such perspective in actuality), as well as existing in a common world (prior to entering into any actual articulation of that world in *das Man*).

## 6.1.2 *The poverty of Heidegger's account authentic being-with*

### 6.1.2.1 *Authenticity is expressed mostly as individuality*

One difficulty in finding a description of authentic being-with in *Being and Time* is that the authentic mode is portrayed as one where Dasein becomes “individualized”. For example, in the authentic state of “anxiety” (the mood of being both “detached from” and “near to” the entities one finds in the world) “[t]he ‘world’ can offer nothing more, and *neither can the Dasein-with of others*” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 232, emphasis added). Or, “anxiety discloses Dasein as [...] something individualized in individualization” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 232), where the German, “*vereinzelt in der Vereinzelung*”, is actually stronger than the translation, “individualized in individualization”, suggests, because it can also be translated as “isolated in isolation” or “separated in separation”. Likewise, in the context of authentic understanding, Heidegger writes that “all being-with others, will fail us when our ownmost potentiality-for-Being [the authentic facing of death] is the issue.” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 307). It, therefore, seems as if Heidegger claims that in its authentic mode Dasein becomes individualized, to the point where the faculty of being-with either disappears altogether or becomes irrelevant.

We find this kind of critique back in Lambert Zuidervaart’s charge that Heidegger “turns the truth of Dasein into a denial of mediation” (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 94), because for Heidegger “[t]he most primordial truth is an anticipatory resoluteness [i.e. authenticity] whereby Dasein secures its own ‘freedom towards death’ in disentanglement from the entities, including others, to which Dasein necessarily stands in relation” (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 91). But now that we have looked in more detail at the notion of being-with, we can see that Zuidervaart’s notion of intersubjectivity keeps looking for a connection between separate individuals, where what we need is an account of authenticity that does justice to the fundamental nature of being-with, which goes beyond that of a connection between separate individuals.

One possible solution to the difficulty of reconciling the individuality associated with authenticity with the fundamental character of being-with is suggested by Sorial, who argues that it is the very individuality (note that she

mainly uses Nancy's concept of "singularity") that is shared in being-with. "While we are all different in the sense that we have different faces and bodies, mannerisms and gestures, while we have different possibilities and will pursue different projects, there remains a commonality about our experiences. Our bodies are all capable of feeling pain when hurt, we all fall in love and desire, weep and grieve and we all share the experience of being-toward-death. What is shared here is our singularity ..." (Sorial, 2005, pp. 89-90). Thus our individuality (singularity) not only divides us but also unites us. "This sharing of singularities are what constitute the 'we.' Singularity refers to both the uniting and dividing phenomenon of being-with; uniting because it is what we all share, but also what divides us because there remains something unique and untransferable about our singularity" (Sorial, 2005, pp. 89-90).

But Sorial's proposal fails to do justice to the nature of being-with. It understands the relationships between individuals in present-at-hand terms, in terms analogous to us being divided because, for example, all of us are wearing a different cap, but united because every cap has the quality of being different. This translates into saying that each Dasein is individual, because it is its own "for the sake of which", but all Daseins are united because they all have this "for the sake of which". Thus she writes that "[d]eath is both a singular and shared experience, in the sense that finitude and mortality is something that we share, but that we also have to assume individually. The experience of death, my death, or the death of the other demonstrates to me that the only thing I can recognise in the death of the other is that there is nothing recognisable" (Sorial, 2005, p. 93).

What is missing here is the incorporation of the idea I considered earlier, namely, that "as being-with, Dasein 'is' essentially for the sake of others" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 160). That is, all Daseins do not only share the fact that they all have their own individualized perspective on the world, but also the fact that for each Dasein their own perspective exists as existing in terms of the perspectives of other Daseins. It is, therefore, not so much a sharing of present-at-hand qualities or characteristics, but a sense of being constituted *by* the other, while retaining one's inalienable individuality, which I am after.

### 6.1.2.2 *Authentic interpersonal relationships*

One place where Heidegger does write something about authentic interpersonal relationships is where he writes that authentic Dasein has the possibility to “let the others who are with it ‘be’ their ownmost potentiality-for-being, and so co-disclose this potentiality in the solicitude which leaps forth and liberates” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 344). That is, authentic Dasein can show other Daseins that they have the possibility to be authentic as well. And it can, according to this citation, be done in a solicitude (*Fuersorge*, the kind of care human beings have for each other) that “leaps forth and liberates”. This particular authentic care is one that is contrasted with inauthentic care, which consists of “taking care of or caring for the other in her place, to spare her from the troubles of care” (Nancy, 2008, pp. 6,7). Such inauthentic care “relieves the other of her own care” (Nancy, 2008, pp. 6,7) and can be seen along the lines of a kind of care that takes the other’s responsibility away, but with that also, in some way, their dignity. In contrast, authentic care, by showing the other the possibility of authentic existence, “hands them” the possibility of taking such responsibility for themselves.

Jean-Luc Nancy believes that this notion of authentic care is not fully intelligible, as he asks how we can “leap ahead of the decision and the opening of the other [...] so as to ‘hand it over’ to her? This is not clearly established” (Nancy, 2008, pp. 6,7). As Nancy is well-aware, it is not about the “handing over” between two present-at-hand entities that exist external to each other but rather one of co-constituting the transcendence that each individual Dasein is. As Heidegger puts it, “Dasein-with [being-with] is already essentially manifest in a co-state-of-mind and a co-understanding” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 205). So we could say that such authentic care for the other does justice to the individuality (singularity) of each Dasein (in that responsibility is left with, or even handed back to, the Dasein that is being shown authentic care), while the very possibility of such authentic interpersonal care is based in the shared nature of being-with. So the question of how such “handing over” is possible is, given that the notion of being-with we have got from Heidegger entails this possibility, secondary to the question of what this notion of authentic being-with is.

The other place where we find Heidegger write about authentic interpersonal relationships is when he writes about working together. Jean-Luc Nancy objects that it is not clear how authentic working together can happen. The contrast is one between inauthentic working together where “we find a common occupation by virtue of an exterior task” and authentic working together where “we find an engagement for the same affair [Sache] in common” (Nancy, 2008, p. 7). Nancy writes that in the case of authentic working together “there must be a common thing or cause” (Nancy, 2008, p. 7). When we look closely at what it says in *Being and Time*, we find that Heidegger writes that people working together authentically are engaged with the same thing, in the sense of being wholeheartedly involved in it (*sich gemeinsam einsetzen fuer dieselbe Sache*), in a way that is determined by, driven by the engagement that each individual (*eigens*) Dasein has (Heidegger, 1962, p. 159). In other words, the cooperation is not external (as in the inauthentic way of working together on the same external task where, for example, for one the task *means* an opportunity for making money, while for the other it *means* a way to get personal satisfaction) but consists of those involved being truly engaged in the same thing, where they have each appropriated the task for themselves (including the reasons for doing it, which are probably, though this is not made clear, internal to the task) in such a way that they can be said to have a common world with a common good. But, again the shortcoming in Heidegger’s account seems to be that we cannot determine what such authentic working together would mean, because we lack, as yet, a concept of authentic being-with.

So, just as we saw in the discussion of authentic care for the other person, there is a combination of having a shared understanding and attunement (a co-understanding and a co-attunement based in being-with) while retaining the individuality of each Dasein. And again the shortcoming in Heidegger’s account appears to be in characterizing authentic being-with. However, now we find, in Heidegger’s description of inauthentic working together, that he associates this with “distance and reserve” as well as “mistrust” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 159), which points towards the likelihood that authentic working together would be associated with their opposites. However, a correct working

out of such opposites still requires an understanding of authentic being with, because authenticity is not simply the opposite of inauthenticity but that which makes the inauthentic mode possible in the first place, and, therefore, it cannot be simply inferred from the inauthentic state what the authentic one would be like.

### 6.1.2.3 *The authentic community*

Jean-Luc Nancy also critiques Heidegger's notion of authentic being-with as it manifests as the authentic community. According to Nancy, Heidegger falls into the trap of privileging the collective in his notion of the people as authentic being-with. First he notes that "Heidegger does everything to affirm the essentiality of the with" (Nancy, 2008, p. 3), where this "with" is not "the simple external 'with' of things which are only put together, only contiguous to one another" (Nancy, 2008, p. 3). But, though being-with is not simply the being together of externally related Daseins, Nancy also rejects the interpretation of the "with" which we may call the *internal* "with", the one that supposes "a single communal Dasein beyond the singulars" (Nancy, 2008, p. 4). In the case of an internal "with" the individual Dasein is but an expression of the collective, and as such subordinate to it. Between these two extremes the right understanding of being-with would, according to Nancy, "require that the openings [that constitute the individual Daseins] intersect each other in some way, that they cross, mix or let their properties interfere with one another, but without merging into a unique Dasein (or else the *mit* [the with] would be lost)?" (Nancy, 2008, p. 4). As we saw in the discussion of authentic being-with in terms of interpersonal relationships, what we need is an account of being-with that does justice to, on the one hand, the notions of co-understanding and co-attunement and, on the other hand, the individuality (singularity) of Dasein.

In his account of the authentic community Heidegger, according to Nancy, puts so much emphasis on the collective dimension that the individual becomes subordinate to the collective. We encounter much the same objection, when Lambert Zuidervaart notes that there was a problem with Heidegger's notion of authenticity as implying that "participation in an exclusive community is the

proper path to authentic truth" (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 87): while authenticity may in itself not be verifiable in a public way, Heidegger does nominate *das Volk*, the people of a specific nationality, as the authentic community. That is, Heidegger argues that a people (*das Volk*) is the site where authentic being-with manifests. Thus Zuidervaart writes that Heidegger's notion of authenticity comes to imply that "participation in an exclusive community is the proper path to authentic truth" (Zuidervaart, 2007, p. 87). This would be so, because, on the one hand, authenticity is the one measure of truth, but is in itself not verifiable in a public way, while, on the other hand, a certain kind of community (*das Volk*, the people of a specific nationality) becomes Heidegger's expression of the authentic community, as based in Dasein's being-with. Thus, given Heidegger's involvement with Nazism, Zuidervaart writes that "Adorno had good reason to attack the 'jargon of authenticity' as a 'German ideology'" (Zuidervaart, 2007, pp. 86-87).

Returning to Nancy, as a result of this privileging of *das Volk* the individual becomes, according to Nancy, subordinate to the collective, thus giving up the individuality that is necessary for authentic being-with: "the community that becomes a *single* thing (body, mind, fatherland, leader ...) necessarily loses the *in* of being-*in*-common. Or, it loses the *with* or the *together* that defines it" (Cited in Sorial, 2005, pp. 90-91). According to Nancy, Heidegger ascribes "to community a *common being*, whereas community is a matter of something quite different, namely, of existence inasmuch as it is *in* common, but without letting itself be absorbed into a common substance" (Cited in Sorial, 2005, pp. 90-91). "It is precisely because we are singular beings that the project of fusion or communion is problematic for Nancy" (Sorial, 2005, pp. 90-91).

Benjamin Crowe takes a more positive view of Heidegger's notion of the authentic community. As we saw when we looked at authentic interpersonal relationships in terms of working together, "authentic individuals participate in one way or another in the resolution of common problems or in the realization of common goals" (Crowe, 2006, p. 203). This is expanded in Heidegger's notion of the "generation", where individuals growing up in the same culture, as part of the same generation, share certain ways of looking at things (for example, the inter-war generation in Germany that all had to come

to terms with what they considered an unfair defeat in the First World War) as well as challenges (for example, restoring Germany's sense of dignity). Thus, Crowe writes, "an authentic individual inevitably incorporates shared ideals and projects into her overall pattern of vocational commitment, simply by virtue of belonging to a 'generation'" (Crowe, 2006, p. 203). This is the fateful philosophical move that, one could argue, eventually led Heidegger to ally himself politically with the Nazis.

Thus Heidegger writes in § 74 of *Being and Time* how the moment of authentic understanding is one that always occurs as a collective event as well as an individual one: "if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with others, its historizing [*Geschehen*, similar to what earlier we called *seizing the moment*] is a co-historizing [*Mitgeschehen*], and is determinative for it as *destiny* (*Geschick*)" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 436). That is, the event of "historizing", the authentic seizing of the moment, happens in the context of a collective phenomenon, the generation. Thus Heidegger writes about "the historizing of the community, of a people" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 436) and that "Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its 'generation' goes to make up the full authentic historizing of Dasein" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 436). This, as we saw earlier, is where Nancy charges that Heidegger makes the individual subordinate to the collective.

Though it is true that Heidegger does, at certain points, emphasize how the individual Daseins become authentic in a way that is in some ways inalienably collective, it goes, I think, too far to say that he subordinates the individual to the collective in any systematic way. It is true that he writes, for example, that "[o]ur fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being-with-one-another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 436), but that does not mean that we can find in *Being and Time* anything like a systematic subordination of the individual to the collective. Indeed, the criticism I discussed earlier, that the collective dimension tends to be lost in his account of authenticity, is easier to defend, simply on the basis of the weight of the textual evidence, and it is hard to see how the two can be true at the same time.

It seems to me that the difficulty again stems from the fact that Heidegger has not worked out the concept of authentic being-with in a way that can accommodate the different demands such a concept raises: the preservation of both the individual and the collective dimensions of Dasein as well as the notion that Dasein exists “for the sake of” the other Dasein as well as for its own sake. Benjamin Crowe comes closer to a satisfactory, if also limited, account of authentic being-with, drawing on Heidegger’s writings that precede *Being and Time* and that draw more explicitly on religious sources. Crowe combines the notions of sharing membership of a generation with the interpersonal commitment to authentic individuality: “we find Heidegger elaborating the idea of a generational ‘community of struggle’ [Kampfgemeinschaft]. Here individuals are united not only through a common culture or a shared historical situation, but also through a commitment on the part of each person to the value of an authentic way of life” (Crowe, 2006, p. 203).

Importantly, the collective dimension of the authentic community as Crowe finds it in Heidegger’s early writings is a far cry from the kinds notion of subordinating individuals to the collective. “This commitment seems to entail the rejection of paternalistic relationships of a sort that ultimately subjugate other people by encouraging the innate drive of self-abdication. In place of this, Heidegger envisions the possibility of a community in which each individual exemplifies what it means to be authentic in his or her own unique way” (Crowe, 2006, p. 203). Crowe does not elaborate on this notion of the authentic community in enough detail for it to yield the kind of notion of authentic being-with that I require, but he does point in a direction that can be taken up to construct a notion of authentic being-with that allows for both an authentic community and authentic interpersonal relationships.

## **6.2 The call of conscience**

We saw in the previous section that Heidegger’s account of authenticity requires an account of authentic being-with and that such an account will have to do justice to both Dasein’s individuality and to the ways in which the communal as well as the interpersonal are co-constitutive of this Dasein. The

elements of authentic being-with that I have been able to glean from Heidegger's writings are that of a care for the other person which shows the other the possibility of authentic existence and "hands them" the possibility of taking responsibility for themselves; a working together from out of a common world and a common good; and a generation which shares a common culture or a shared historical situation, but also a commitment on the part of each individual to the value of an authentic way of life. I will now attempt to bring these together in a coherent concept of authentic being-with, with the help of Heidegger's notion of the "call of conscience", which is, as a form of discourse, part of being-with, and which plays an important part in Heidegger's account of the process of becoming authentic.

### ***6.2.1 The nature of the call of conscience***

#### *6.2.1.1 The nature of the call*

As we have seen, Heidegger writes that for Dasein to become authentic, it needs to be brought back from lostness in *das Man*. That is, "because Dasein is lost in *das Man*, it must first find itself. In order to find itself at all, it must be 'shown' to itself in its possible authenticity" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 313). In other words, because Dasein has tended to understand itself in terms of *das Man* it is not aware of its possibility of authentic existence, and as such it needs to have this possibility pointed out to it. What Dasein needs to be shown is that it is already authentic in potential: "[i]n terms of its possibility, Dasein is already a potentiality-for-being-its-self [for being authentic], but it needs to have this possibility attested<sup>32</sup>" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 313). This notion of "being shown what one already is" is very much in line with perfectionism, with "becoming who one is", as we saw in the chapter on Heidegger's notion of authenticity. And, Heidegger continues, "this potentiality [for-being-itself] is attested [*bezeugt*] by that which is familiar to us as the 'voice of conscience'" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 313). As such, the call of conscience is that which, more

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<sup>32</sup> The English attestation is the translation of the German *Bezeugung*, which also means testimony. To attest can be translated as to give testimony of, to confirm the truth of something by saying something about it; express one's respect, sympathy, mercy to someone. The root word in *Bezeugung* is *Zeuge*, which means witness, and which is etymologically related to the word *zeigen*, which means to show.

than anything else in *Being and Time*, can be said to *bring* Dasein back from lostness in *das Man*.

The call of conscience is itself a phenomenon with the nature of Dasein (i.e. it is not a practical or a theoretical entity), which is located both “in” oneself and somewhere “beyond” oneself. Thus Heidegger writes that “we must ... hold fast .... to the phenomenal finding that I receive the call as coming both from me and beyond me, but also to the implication that this phenomenon here is delineated ontologically as a phenomenon of Dasein” (Heidegger, 1962). Another way of putting it could be to say that the call is located in Dasein, but that at the level of the call Dasein is undifferentiated as to the individual and the collective. This is very much in line with the notion that authentic being-with has to be able to accommodate the individual as well as the interpersonal and the communal dimensions of human existence. That is, the voice of conscience is neither a voice that comes from outside the person (as in a literal “hearing” the call of conscience) nor is it an internal dialogue taking place in the individual – it is somehow prior to the separation of individuals.

Therefore, when Heidegger writes that “[i]n conscience Dasein calls itself” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 320), we have to take “Dasein” as a generic term. Thus, the call of conscience can come, for example, from another person or through the reading of poetry – just as we sometimes say that a poem speaks for the whole of humanity, we could say that the call speaks for the whole of humanity. This undifferentiated element of the call of conscience is further accentuated when Heidegger writes about the call that “It’ calls” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 320). This phrase, “it calls” [*es ruft*], has the grammatical structure, sometimes called the middle voice, which we find in phrases like “it rains” or “it sometimes happens that”. This “middle voice” indicates that there is no subject in the sense of an agent who or that does the “raining” or the “happening”. Another way of saying the same thing, contrived though this may sound in English, is that “there is a calling of the voice of conscience”.

What this means is that the call exists prior to there being a differentiated subject. This is similar to what I said about authentic understanding (4.2.3) which, I said, occurs prior to the separation of subject and object at the

moment when “Temporality [...] *temporalises* itself” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 376-377): prior to an engagement with entities in terms of action and perception where there is no separation between the subject and object moments in the intentional act. Similarly, prior to the differentiation between individuals or between the individual and the collective, there is no separation between the one call and the one hearing. But, importantly, there can still be calling and hearing, it’s just that now this process is best characterized with the phrase “it calls”, where this call comes from both the person hearing it and from beyond them.

As we saw in Chapter 5, the caller of the call is “Dasein in its uncanniness”, and that “[c]onscience is the call of care from the uncanniness of being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 335), where uncanniness literally means “not-at-home-ness” or being in a place that feels “uncomfortably strange or unfamiliar”. That is, the caller is experienced as “Dasein ... as the ‘not-at-home’ – the bare ‘that-it-is’ in the ‘nothing’ of the world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 321). But this Dasein is, in terms of attunement, authentic Dasein, who experiences the entities it encounters in the world in a way that it is at once disconnected from them and near to them. As such, this Dasein is fully individualized, because it has not identified with anything, but at the same time it is open to being affected by them. This is also the Dasein that is able to exist prior to a differentiation between subject and object, because it has not identified with anything in the world. And it is able to communicate with other Daseins, because it is near to them, open to them, the more so, because it has not become absorbed in the (practical and theoretical) entities it finds in the world.

We can, therefore, in the call of conscience arising from Dasein in the mood of authenticity, see the beginnings of a Dasein that can resolve in itself the ostensible contradiction of authentic being-with involving both Dasein’s individuality and the ways in which the communal as well as the interpersonal are co-constitutive of this Dasein. But, as was said in the chapter on authentic attunement, this characterization of authentic Dasein as “the bare ‘that-it-is’ in the ‘nothing’ of the world” lacks an affective disposition that is appropriate for authentic inter-human relationships: it may experience nearness and openness towards entities, but this is not quite the same as feeling the kinds of emotions

we associate with deep interpersonal connectedness. I will return to this later in the chapter.

Authentic Dasein is also the Dasein that has brought itself “back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313). As all language is part of *das Man*, there is, therefore, the implication that there can be some kind of communication that is prior to language. Such a communication that is not based in language is one that does not take things *as* certain things, either practically (when, for example, a pupil takes a window as a way of exiting the classroom) or theoretically (when, for example, the teacher takes the pupil’s behaviour as meriting a sticker with a disapproving face on their report card), because language articulates, and taking things *as* certain things is a form of articulation. The call of conscience does not take Dasein *as* anything, because Dasein can be understood in terms of itself only, having its own “for the sake of”. Yet it plays an important part in bringing Dasein “back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313), as we will see later, in that it *shows* Dasein that it has the possibility of authentic existence, *appeals* to Dasein to become authentic, *summons* it to being authentic, and *calls Dasein forward* into authentic existence.

#### *6.2.1.2 Characteristics of the call of conscience*

I am trying to come closer to an account of authentic being-with that does justice to Dasein’s individuality as well as to the ways in which the communal and the interpersonal are co-constitutive of this Dasein, where there is a concern for the other person’s authentic existence, where working together occurs from out of a common world and a common good, where the communal is combined with a commitment on the part of each individual to the value of an authentic way of life. With regard to the call of conscience, we see that the voice of conscience, as it calls Dasein back from lostness in *das Man*, originates in authentic Dasein in such a way that it is prior to a differentiation into someone calling and someone hearing, thus allowing for the co-existence of individuality and the interconnection that is part of being-with. What is more, the call shows Dasein its possibility for being authentic in such a way that it does not take Dasein as either something practical or theoretical. I will

elaborate on these characteristics by considering some of the further characterizations of the call of conscience we find in Heidegger's writings.

First, the call of conscience communicates in such a way that, though the message is communicated, there are no specifics about how this is done, that is, "the 'voice' is taken ... as a giving-to-understand" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 316), where "giving to understand" (*zuverstehengeben*) is a very general expression saying that something is communicated without being at all specific about the means of communication. This is similar to saying, for example, that one's attention was drawn to something, without specifying how this is done, thus avoiding the need to take recourse to the language of *das Man*. Another way of putting it is to say that Dasein is made aware of something (of itself as an entity with the nature of Dasein), in such a way that the awareness is not mediated by anything to do with *das Man*.

Second, the call is reticent<sup>33</sup> in the sense of "being silent". "The call does not say anything, it remains silent, in its appeal to Dasein's authentic self to come to the fore" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318). That is, "[t]he call [of conscience] asserts nothing, gives no information about world events, has nothing to tell" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318). This is a claim Heidegger justifies phenomenologically, by writing that this reticent "giving to understand" is already there in our day-to-day understanding of the voice of conscience, for if "the everyday interpretation knows a 'voice' of conscience, then one is not so much thinking of an utterance (for this is something which factually one never comes across)" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 316). But the silence of the call of conscience also serves as a way of distancing it from anything like *das Man*, because all actual language, any kind of conventional sign, is of necessity part of *das Man*. Again the phrase "becoming aware of" is apt, as this too can occur in silence.

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<sup>33</sup> Reticence is the customary translation of the German *Schweigen* as it is used by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, but it should be noted that *Schweigen* can also be translated as remaining silent, and that it, importantly, does not allow for "saying little", as the English word reticence does, but insists on no words being said at all.

Third, Heidegger states that “[t]he call is indeed not, and can never be, planned, prepared for, or voluntarily enacted from ourselves” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 320). This is an essential part of any call that does not originate in *das Man*, as all planning, preparation or purposeful action would either require language or be based in previous experience, and would, as such, need to be in terms of *das Man*. What is more, planning and preparation involved a crucial continuity, one that, as we will see shortly, is antithetical to the interruption that characterizes the voice of conscience, which is essentially an interruption, a “turning away from the world” before a “turning back”.

Finally, as the voice of conscience is a voice which does not belong to all the other voices that come to us from *das Man*, it stands out. “[t]he caller is unfamiliar to the everyday they-self [the self of *das Man*]; it is something like an alien voice” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 321). This notion of “a different voice”, one that is unlike all the others (and is recognized as such), is not unfamiliar, for instance, in the world of art, where an artist may stand out because they are different from the others and where the different quality of their work may “interrupt” the way we tend to look at art. The same is true for other situations, such as “a different voice” in a discussion about an issue, a voice that seems to “come from a different place” and that makes us take a different stance towards the issue under discussion. Thus, the voice of conscience is unlike any voice that would come from *das Man*, and is, as such, capable of bringing something genuinely different to one’s attention.

Thus we see that the call of conscience is a silent, un-planned-for “giving to understand” that is different from any call that may come from *das Man*. This description allows the call to exist prior to any differentiation into a call and someone being called, while at the same time enabling it to affect Dasein, so that it can play its role in bringing Dasein “back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313). There is a communication (“the call”) that originates in authentic Dasein (“uncanniness”), arising (“it calls”) in a way that is prior to a differentiation between the caller and a listener (“the call as coming both from me and beyond me”), and that brings to Dasein’s awareness (“giving to understand”) in an unspecified (“silent”), yet unmistakable way (“alien voice”) what kind of entity it really (authentically) is and has the

potential to be (becoming “who one is”) and it brings this to Dasein’s awareness purely in terms of Dasein itself (“for the sake of”) and not in terms of anything else (there is neither a practical nor a theoretical “as”).

As such the call gives expression to the authentic being-with I am after, given that it does justice to Dasein’s individuality as well as its communal and the interpersonal aspects, that it shows the other the possibility of authentic existence and call them forth into taking responsibility for themselves. An account of authentic being-with in terms of the communal, collective, dimension is missing in this account, as the communal element that is present, *das Man*, still has only a negative function, in that it is what Dasein needs to be liberated from. It remains to be seen if I can pick up a positive characterization of the communal dimension of authentic being-with later in the chapter. Before that, I will press on with our search for an account of being-with learning to be authentic, both so as not to stray too far from the main task of constructing such an account and to see if an account of this learning process may shed more light on authentic being-with itself, including its communal dimension.

### 6.2.1.3 *What happens when “it calls”*

As we have seen, the call of conscience plays an important role in bringing Dasein back from lostness in *das Man*, as it shows Dasein the possibility of authentic existence. More precisely, the call of conscience *shows*, points out to, Dasein that it has the possibility of authentic existence, it *appeals* to Dasein to become authentic, it *summons* it to being authentic, and it *calls Dasein forward* into authentic existence. This is where the “silent”, “un-planned-for” “giving to understand” that is different from any call that may come from *das Man* brings Dasein “back from lostness in *das Man*” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 312-313). As Benjamin Crowe writes: “The ‘voice of conscience’ is a way of capturing the power of the unexpected to make possible a new future for an individual, a future that has been set free for the possibility of living one’s own life in one’s own unique [authentic] way” (Crowe, 2006, p. 187).

We could say that Dasein needs to be shown the structure in itself which is already there, but which it does not yet understand itself to have. However, for such a communication (which shows Dasein the potential it has for being

authentic) to *get through* to Dasein is difficult, as Dasein normally (in its inauthentic mode) hears everything through *das Man*, when Dasein understands itself as either as a practical entity (ready-to-hand) or as a theoretical entity (present-at-hand). Therefore, being “brought back from lostness in *das Man*” involves an interruption in this listening to, being absorbed in, *das Man*: Dasein’s “listening-away [to *das Man*] must get broken off” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 316). Only then can Dasein be shown the potential it has for being authentic.

But what must be interrupted is in this case not a certain kind of information but rather the *way in which* one understands things, it is not that new facts about oneself are called for but a radically different way of relating to oneself. Heidegger refers to this different way of relating to oneself as “another kind of hearing”, as he writes that “the possibility of another kind of hearing which will interrupt [the listening away to *das Man*] must be given by Dasein itself. The possibility of its thus getting broken off lies in its being appealed to without mediation [of *das Man*]” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 316).

The way this new kind of hearing is awakened is that “only the self of the they-self gets appealed [*anrufen*<sup>32</sup>] to and brought to listen” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 317). That is, Dasein is *appealed to* in its authentic self, Dasein is being *called on* to be its authentic self, “it has been summoned [*aufgerufen*] to itself – that is, to its ownmost potentiality-for-being [i.e. being authentic] (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318). In other words, the call summons Dasein to be authentic. What Heidegger does here is take the ability of language to “get someone to be in a certain way”, by reminding them of who they are and pointing out the implications of that, as, for example, one would by appealing to someone’s goodness and calling forth the good person in them. That is, the voice “calls Dasein forth (and ‘forward’) [*nachvornrufen*] into its ownmost possibilities, as a summons to its ownmost potentiality-for-being-its-self” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318).

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<sup>32</sup> Note that Heidegger’s play on the common root *rufen* (to call) in the words “appeal”, “summon”, and “call forward” is lost in translation.

This appealing, summoning, and calling forward does, as we have seen, happen in a way that does not involve *das Man*. Because the call of conscience is in every way unlike a call coming from *das Man*, “[t]he sort of Dasein which is understood after the manner of the world [*das Man*] ... gets passed over ...; this is something of which the call to the self takes not the slightest cognizance” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 317). That is, the call *appeals to* (*anrufen*) something in Dasein that is not shaped by *das Man*. “Precisely in passing over *das Man* [...] the call pushes it into insignificance” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 317).

As the call gets through, as it by-passes *das Man*, it affects Dasein in its authentic mode. This is a shaking up, as part of the awakening I mentioned in Section 3.6.1. Heidegger writes, “[i]n the tendency to disclosure which belongs to the call, lies the momentum of a push – of an abrupt arousal” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 316). Here the call, having by-passed *das Man*, having appealed to authentic Dasein, summons Dasein to itself, which involves having a different kind of hearing and a different kind of understanding itself.

With a slightly confusing dual use of the word “self”, Heidegger explains this moment of Dasein having found a different kind of hearing, and understanding itself not in terms of *das Man*, as one where Dasein’s “self” is being addressed, but this “self” is different from the “they self<sup>35</sup>” [the self of *das Man*] which has been by-passed and pushed into insignificance. This we could say is the moment of Dasein, as we saw in the chapter on Heidegger’s notion of authenticity, “giving itself up”, where the self that is given up is the self of the “they self” [*das Man*]. Thus he writes that “because only the self of the they-self gets appealed [*anrufen*] to and brought to listen, the ‘they’ collapses” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 317).

Then, after the initial awakening and the subsequent “giving up” of the “they self” [*das Man*], there is the moment of Dasein finding its authentic self. As the “they” is “passed over”, “pushed into insignificance” and caused to “collapse”, “the [authentic] self, which the appeal has robbed of its lodgement and hiding-place [in *das Man*], gets brought to itself by the call” (Heidegger,

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<sup>35</sup> Note that “the they” is one of the ways *das Man* has been translated into English.

1962, p. 317). Here we find a description of something akin to a rebirth in which the self is robbed of its hiding place, where the word hiding place implies that for Dasein understanding itself in terms of *das Man* is a kind of escape, of hiding away from its true self. And Dasein is brought to itself, because the call of conscience makes it understand itself as “in its ownmost potentiality for being itself”.

By seeing it does have this potentiality-for-being-its-self (and seeing how it tends to constantly take itself to be something it is not – i.e. understanding itself out of *das Man*) Dasein drops its inauthentic way of being and begins to live according to this potentiality-for-being-its-self, that is, according to its own true nature. That is, because part of the structure of Dasein is such that it *is* what it *takes* itself to be, a change in the way it *takes* itself signifies a change in the way it actually *is*. This is based in the notion that when a person understands themselves suddenly as very different from how they had seen themselves before, this will affect how they act, and that if a person sees and does things very differently, we could say that they are a different person.

In sum, the call appeals to Dasein’s authentic self, “passing over” the self of *das Man*, where this involves interrupting the way Dasein usually listens (interrupting Dasein’s listening away to *das Man*), in order to awakening another kind of hearing (one that does not listen through *das Man*), so that the call can reach Dasein’s authentic self and summon it to being its own authentic self (without mediation). In this the call passes over *das Man*, so that *das Man* is pushed into significance and collapses, which exposes Dasein’s authentic self, which then sees itself as it really is, as a result of which it takes itself as it really is and becomes this authentic self, because it is what it takes itself to be.

As we can see there is circularity in the above sequence: Dasein only *hears* the call of conscience in so far as the call itself has awakened the kind of *hearing* that is receptive to the call. Or, in order for the call to be able to appeal to Dasein’s authentic self, it needs to pass over the self of *das Man*, which it can only do in so far as it manages to appeal to Dasein’s authentic self in a way that is unmediated by *das Man*. This would constitute a real problem for an account of the process of becoming authentic, if this process was conceived in

terms of the kind of communication that occurs between entities that are externally related, because then it would be analogous to saying that the only way to enter a particular empty house is through a door that can be opened only from the inside. In the case of the process of becoming authentic, however, this presents not so much a problem as something that requires explication, as the process does not occur between entities that are externally related, but at the level of the a priori. What is more, as we will see in the next section, the characteristic of being-with of allowing for both individuality and the other as well as the collective being co-constitutive of the individual Dasein means that the purported circularity may actually evolve into a benevolent cycle of increasing authenticity.

### **6.3 Being-with learning to be authentic**

#### ***6.3.1 From inauthentic to authentic being-with***

As my focus for the process of being-with becoming authentic I will take the way the other Dasein is experienced in the context of communication. I will begin by characterising the difference between the experience of the other Dasein inauthentically and authentically. This experiential difference gives us the “before” and “after” of the learning. I will then characterise the nature of the process that is involved in going from this “before” to the “after”.

Authentic being-with is a way of being related to other Daseins, where this relationship is experienced not in terms of understanding (how the other is perceived or how one acts in relation to them) or attunement (the way in which one is oneself - as well as the world and the other Dasein - given to experience emotionally) but in terms of communication. Such a way of being related communicatively needs, to recap from the previous sections, to allow for Dasein’s individuality as well as for the ways in which the communal and the interpersonal are co-constitutive of this Dasein; it needs to express a concern for the other person’s authentic existence and “hand them” the possibility of taking responsibility for themselves; it needs to give rise to a working together from out of a common world and a common good, where individuals experience themselves as sharing a common culture or a historical situation, but also a commitment on the part of each individual to the value of an

authentic way of life. I will attempt to capture the move to such an authentic being-with in terms of a shift in communication from inauthentic to authentic.

Inauthentic being-with differentiates one Dasein from the other (for example, the speaker from the listener) and the individual from the collective. It, furthermore, articulates similarities and differences between individuals and between a given individual and a given collective. These similarities and differences are expressed in the form of propositions concerning individuals or collectives (articulating essence, properties and relations) or culturally or historically determined ways of behaving towards individuals or collectives (articulating norms and practices), thus taking the individual as either a theoretical or a practical entity. The prevailing structure of such communications is that of taking the individual or the collective *as* something, either practically (what Heidegger calls the hermeneutic “as”) or theoretically (what Heidegger calls the apophantic “as”). The relationships between individuals are, as a result, articulated and communicated in terms of similarities and differences between them. The relationship between a given individual and a given collective is, as a result, articulated and communicated in terms of wholes and parts: is the individual part of the collective whole or is the collective an aggregation of individual wholes?

Given the characteristic of Dasein that it tends to “internalize” the ways in which the culture they grow up in and those nearest to it communicate about it, we can see that inauthentic being-with is highly likely to convey to the individual Dasein an inauthentic way of being-with, in communicating to this Dasein that it is separate from other Daseins and the collective; that it is similar or different from other Daseins and stands in part-whole relationship to the collective; that it is a practical and theoretical entity. If we then add that the individual Dasein is likely to become what it takes itself to be, we can see how inauthentic being-with, in communicating to and about this Dasein, is likely to add to its propensity to be inauthentic in terms of being-with. What is more, the other Dasein or the collective will also be approached in the spirit of such an inauthentic being-with. Such communications are then likely to appeal to inauthentic being-with in the other, to the other as a separate person, and be characterized by comparison (identifying similarities and differences) and

inclusion in or exclusion from a given collective (identifying wholes and parts). The way individuals will be related to is then in terms of their theoretical characteristics (essence, properties and relations) and their practical characteristics (instrumentally).

A clear example of such inauthentic being-with is bullying in schools (on the part of both staff and students), where individuals are judged (theoretically) in terms of being different (from the bully) and similar (to other “lesser” individuals), as a result of which they are not admitted as part of the in-group and are delegated to the out-group with whom they are said to share characteristics (part and whole), on the basis of which they merit being treated (practically) in certain ways. Similarly, the disaffected youth (perhaps himself a bully) who has internalized being labelled by teachers (theoretically) and who has been treated as a troublesome youngster (practically), classified as belonging to a certain group of students (as part of a whole), and compared with studious students (similarities and differences). This youth is likely to begin to experience themselves as meriting being labelled and consequently treated as a member of a certain kind of group, thus internalizing being taken as a theoretical and practical entity, which is inauthentic. That is, the inauthentic way of being-with will have been internalized, even if the youth in question decides they are going to make an effort to attract another label and earn a different kind of treatment or if they object to “their group” being labelled and treated in certain ways, as when they challenge, for example, being labelled and treated as lazy as a result of coming from a certain ethnic background.

Turning now to authentic being-with, we can see that it communicates in such a way that it is prior to a differentiation into someone calling and someone hearing, thus allowing for the co-existence of, on the one hand, individuality and, on the other hand, the interconnection between individuals (interpersonally or collectively). This kind of communication is itself not based in (reducible to) either propositional language or culturally determined ways of behaving towards individuals or collectives, even if such communication does also take place. It does not take the other Dasein *as* a certain thing, either practically or theoretically, but takes Dasein in terms of itself only, as having

its own “for the sake of”, and as such, as “possibility”. It is concerned with showing the other person (or the collective) the possibility of existence outside the realm of articulation in terms of similarity and difference, wholes and parts. In this it leaves it to the other (individual or collective) to come to their own understanding of themselves and to take the step of taking themselves *in terms of* themselves only.

#### *6.3.1.1 From inauthentic to authentic personal relationships*

If we try to envisage what such a way of being related would look like, we could say that the person taking the other person in the spirit of authentic being-with communicates with them in such a way that they do not distance themselves from the other person, but talk to them in a way that expresses a shared humanity, even as they accept the other person as an independent person in their own right. The real meaning of their communication would be at a level that is pre-linguistic, as this meaning would not lie in the theoretical or practical meaning of their words or deeds as part of the public discourse of a shared culture, but in the silent awareness of a shared potentiality for being authentic that is communicated through, but not reducible to, the actual words and deeds. The other person would be communicated with completely in their own right, as “possibility”, and not as a certain kind of person who falls in a certain category or merits a certain way of behaving towards because of falling in that category. It would, therefore, not be predictable for either party what the actual nature of the communication would be. The individual who is being addressed would, however, have the unmistakable sense of being spoken to in the depth of their “real self”. And the one speaking would disclose, for themselves as well as the other, what it is to be an authentic human being, where this disclosure is new and unanticipated every time it occurs.

To return to our example of the disaffected youth, let’s say in conversation with a teacher, they would be approached as a fellow human-being, an equal in value, without labelling or categorizing them as being a member of a category of individual. What is more, the individual would not be approached as having certain (fixed) characteristics (properties and relations) or a fixed essence (being this or that kind of person). On the contrary, the individual would be

approached as “possibility”, as open to being in many possible ways, and it would be left up to them to appropriate the actual possibility of being such a person who does not “come under” a certain fixed category of person. The communication would itself be characterized by open-endedness, where it is not decided in advance what will be communicated, giving space for both the individuals involved (youth and teacher alike) to “become who they are” in this particular situation.

There will, indeed, be a “shared historical situation”. For example, the youth’s misconduct has raised the possibility of expulsion, which will, if it is appropriated jointly and authentically, give rise to a common world (both youth and teacher understanding what is at stake: the issue of authentic being as well as the threat of expulsion) with a common good (a shared understanding of the value of authentic being and of staying in school – if the latter is, indeed, the preferred option). This “shared historical situation” would transcend the conflicting discourses of the inauthentic teacher (representing, for example, middle-class culture and government policy) and the inauthentic youth (representing, say, working-class culture and a conceptualization of schooling as alienating and repressive) and, though the actual vocabulary of each may still be rooted in their different historical background, the *spirit* of their communication would reflect the “shared historical situation” of authentic being-with.

In terms of what happens to the person being communicated to, the ways they have built up of understanding things and feeling about things will not immediately raise themselves up in relation to what is being communicated: in terms of the call of conscience, “the call” needs to get through. In terms of our example, the youth will need to suspend listening in terms of the way in which their world has been articulated (e.g. teachers will never fully understand my world), and will need to do so “all the way down”, in the sense that a mere suspending of one’s prejudices is not good enough (i.e. it may be good enough for reaching an accommodation with the teacher but not for authentic being-with). This means that they will need to listen without taking anything that is being communicated *as* articulating either an understanding of themselves or an emotional colouring of their world.

Such a way of listening may resemble a detached theoretical one, in that it means that they do not allow themselves to identify with the person who is being addressed or to identify emotionally by the way their predicament is looking, but this is not quite accurate. Rather, it is a listening without articulation of their own self or their affective world *in terms of actuality* (with the authentic mood of disconnection and nearness and the authentic understanding of oneself as possibility or temporality), which allows for their own self and the affective world they find themselves in to exist in terms of themselves only, which is *in terms of possibility*. With this comes a kind of objectivity (“yes, what is being said is about me, but it does not mean that I either accept or reject what is being said, because I have understood myself to be possibility and openness rather than a fixed entity”) and calm (“yes, there may be all kinds of emotions that arise, but these are allowed to come and go, because I experience myself as inescapably tied to a past that makes me react to events in certain ways”). This is not to say that the factual content of the communication will be missed, just that the listener, the youth, does not get lost in the factual content, but remains open to being addressed as authentic Dasein throughout.

This openness on the part of the youth will be either because what is being communicated takes them by surprise (a teacher who approaches them in a way which is unlike anything they had encountered before), thus circumventing the habitual ways of being received. Or it is because there is something in what is being said that makes these habitual ways fall into abeyance (their initial stance dissolves gradually as the youth is persistently being addressed in their authentic self). Or it is because the youth has already, from out of themselves, connected with some of what is being communicated and recognising it as something they need to approach without these habitual ways of receiving it (as when they have been waiting for a teacher to address them as they know themselves to be in their real self, and latch on to any hint of being addressed in this way, thus reinforcing any tendency there may be in the teacher to address them in their authentic self).

Once this initial connection has been made, and provided the habitual ways of receiving the communication are not reactivated, the recipient of the

communication will increasingly listen in a way that does not take what is being communicated in terms of anything they already know, feel, believe, like or dislike. Here the youth (and the teacher, as it, per definition, takes two to move into new territory *together*) has moved out of the world as it had hitherto been articulated and is ready to disclose both the world (in attunement) and themselves (in understanding) in new and different ways. That is, the world is ready to take on a new colour, a different mood, and the self is ready to be experienced as a new kind of entity (as process rather than substance, as transcendence rather than immanence, as possibility rather than actuality). This is experienced as an awakening, an expansion of awareness and a silencing of the inner voices that would normally articulate what was being communicated in terms of a known world and a familiar self. By taking what is being communicated purely on its own terms, they begin to experience themselves *in terms of themselves* only, and do so out of the same silence and expanded awareness. Finally, they may inwardly be transformed in such a way that the way they experience their own being and that of the world (prior to any action or any particular conception) is changed, in that they experience themselves as authentic and have become able to act, perceive, feel and communicate from out of this newly-found, authentic mode of being.

Importantly, the above process of one individual communicating with another individual or a collective being met with an appropriate reception of that communication carries in it another, equally important possibility. Rather than one Dasein showing another one the possibility of authentic existence, it may be the interaction between them that provides an impetus for change for both interlocutors, where this interactive movement for change is greater than the sum of the parts. Provided they each have something to start with, something that makes them realize the possibility of authentic existence (a sense of deep connection with the other, a sudden insight into themselves, an abiding sense of what is possible, a new-found openness due to having let go of many convictions and identification, to name a few), the individuals involved may well enter into a collective dynamic that goes beyond what any of the individuals involved may have come to on their own. It is this possibility of “synergy” that can be exploited in organizations - paradigmatically in schools.

### *6.3.1.2 From inauthentic to authentic community*

This brings us to the communal dimension of authentic being-with. As an example of the process of going from inauthentic to authentic communal existence, I will look at how this communal existence is expressed in the culture of a school. The culture of a school can be taken as the articulation of the ways things are conceptualized and of the way things “are done” in the school community and it can be taken as involving the atmosphere, the prevalent moods that exist in the organization. In the context of the current discussion of being-with the emphasis will be on the way communication takes place at the communal level.

In the inauthentic community the part-whole differentiation will mean that communication articulates differences between the part and the whole. Thus, there will be a boundary between those individuals who are part of the community and those who are not, there will be an articulation of the individual as a (subordinate) part of the whole or of the whole as being made up of individual wholes. Neither of the two allow for communication to be framed simultaneously in terms of the individual being a whole and of the communal and the interpersonal being co-constitutive of this individual, because in terms of theoretical and practical entities this would be internally contradictory. This means that if the individual is articulated as subordinate to the whole (as Heidegger himself can be said to have done in his discussion of “the people” as the site of authentic being-with – Section 6.1.2.3), there is no authentic concern for the flourishing of the individual. Similarly, if the concern is with the individual, without acknowledging how the communal is co-original of this individual and, as a result, looking at the collective as a mere collection of individuals, there will be no authentic concern for the flourishing of the communal dimension. As a result, the individual, being articulated in terms of an individual essence with certain properties and relations, will not be given the possibility of the kinds of articulations that allow for their individuality being thought of as inseparable from the collective.

For example, a pupil who, in the basis of their experience of life, may have a sense of being connected with other human beings will have certain avenues

articulated to give expression to such a sense of being connected, such as that of doing community service or being involved in charity work, both of which depend on the articulation of the individual who acts in relation to a collective whole which they articulate as separate from themselves (even if they subsequently discover that the people they are helping “are just like themselves”). But this relation to the communal is itself only one part of their life (for instance, once a week on a Friday afternoon), because their life is mostly articulated in terms of themselves as individual (being assessed individually for their school work, being told to worry about their own future, and so on) who stands in certain relationships to certain communal wholes (where the relationship to the family may even be one of the subordination of the individual to the family, in the case of, for example, clan-like families). Therefore, though the experience of communal involvement will go some way to answering the pupil’s inner-felt connection with the collective, this very connection will be articulated in a way that is inauthentic.

What is more, in such an inauthentic articulation of the relationship between the individual and the collective, there will be not only a continual tension between the individual and the collective, but also a tension between who is considered inside and outside of a given collective, where the relation to those outside the collective is framed in terms of separation and differentiation (articulating similarities and differences). This is seen as highly problematic in the case of, for example, gangs, where the family, the school, or the state all object to the individual subordinating their individuality to membership of the gang, but in essence sacrificing, for example, one’s sense of self-worth for the sake of domestic peace (when, for example, placating an aggressive parent), sacrificing one’s independence of mind for the sake of one’s school (when, for example, inwardly going along with the world-view that holds together life at one’s school) or the sacrificing one’s life for one’s country are all just as much inauthentic as is having one’s head tattooed, and just as much conducive to the separation between groups.

What tends to happen in the context of such a separatist and differentiating articulation of the relationship of one collective to another is that, in order to regain some sense of equilibrium, there are initiatives of *reaching out* to other

groups. Inter-faith conferences, coalition governments, the United Nations, inter-cultural exchanges of various kinds, and so on, are all examples of such inauthentic attempts to bring together what has first been articulated as apart. In the context of a school inauthentic attempts to bring into contact collectives that have previously been articulated as separate happen between the school as a whole and other schools (for example when a privileged school gets involved with a neighbouring under-privileged one), between staff and students (at certain social occasions) and between different groups of students within the school. Note that such meetings of collectives may in certain cases actually be done authentically, when collectives get together that have been separated on practical grounds (age, geographical location, function, and so on). There is, however, a case to be made that certain kinds of collectives are not formed on practical grounds and it is, therefore, much harder to see how they could get together in an authentic way, without relinquishing their collective identity first, such as in the case of groups based on belief systems and vested interests. In the following example of a school community becoming authentic, I assume that the differentiation in groups is mostly practical.

To see how an authentic school community comes into being we need to look at both the whole and the individual within it. In the discussion of autonomy (Section 3.5) it was suggested that there could be such a thing as the education of the social relationship itself. It is in the process of the school community becoming authentic that we get closest to such a phenomenon, though the interaction between two individuals caring in an authentic way for each other, which I discussed in the previous section is also, in certain ways, an instance of a shared entity (the sum of the two interlocutors) becoming authentic in a way that is not reducible to the individuals involved. In the case of the community becoming authentic I am looking for a change from the community being articulated in terms of a tension between the individual and the collective to one where there is a listening as well as a voicing of the communal and the individual which lies beyond the communal-individual differentiation. Similarly, I am looking for a change from the community being articulated as separate and differentiated from other communities, as including and excluding

certain individuals, to one where there is a listening and a voicing of that which lies beyond such differentiations.

The way this process is experienced is as the manifestation of a presence, of an atmosphere, which has an energy that is felt to originate both from within the group and from out of the energy's own source. It is experienced as something that is both open to those not present and protective of those who are present. It is experienced as facilitating the flowering of the individual in their individuality, while at the same time being indifferent to the actual, concrete, manifestation of an individual's individuality, in so far as this particular individuality does not impede the manifestation of the atmosphere of authentic community. That is, the individual can and needs to be open to both individual others and the collective without the defences of status, knowledge, position, strength, cleverness, and so on, keeping up a persona in terms of a theoretical or practical entity. This means that the individual, though their individuality manifests, is appealed to in the nothing, the emptiness of the core of their being – where this empty core is co-constituted by the possibility of communication and thus experienced by the individual in question as a deep and rich connectedness to the others. The moment of remaining in the possibility of communication (prior to any actual communication) as the empty core of Dasein connected with the whole of the community can be called communion.

The process from abiding in the part/whole and inside/outside tensions to abiding in the possibility of communication from out of emptiness is one of a falling silent of articulation, an expanded awareness of the beings one is connected with, and a "being touched by", "filled by", "hearing of" the presence, the energy, the atmosphere that manifests as both coming from and belonging beyond the actual group of individuals present and as existing as a manifestation of that group itself, where the energy touches the individual (is experienced by the individual as touching them) and affects the dynamic of the group (where individuals notice how the dynamic in the group changes, even if they cannot construct a clear causal account of the change) in a way that makes the group both amenable to individual flourishing and to communal coherence

in the form of mutual affection, solidarity, concern for the other person's authenticity and so on.

I can illustrate the above process with an example of how a school leadership may go about affecting the culture of a school, so as to facilitate it becoming authentic (something they cannot *cause* but for which they can create favourable conditions). If, for example, the existing discourse in the school is one that conceives of the communal as the aggregate of individuals (manifesting, for example, in a lack of care for communal spaces and indifference to those who are experiencing difficulties inside or, indeed, outside the school), the leadership may question the assumptions that underlie the discourse in an open-minded way (*questioning* being one of the ways most suitable to turn people's attention to a certain region of existence with as little advanced articulation as possible). This would be done in a genuine spirit of inquiry among equals, so that the leadership do not separate themselves off as having either a special status (even though in the eyes of the governors and the school inspectorate they do indeed have this special status) or a separate and set ideological position, both of which would lead to a performative contradiction between this separate status and position and the intention to facilitate the emergence of an atmosphere of individual flourishing and communal coherence.

But, even when it is done in the right spirit, such an inquiry into the discourse of individuality is likely to be *taken as* coming from a separate group of people (the leadership) and representing an ideological position (one that would most likely be taken in a way that was "levelled off" and in terms of known positions, for example, as a woolly kind of communitariansism). The leadership would, therefore, need to ensure that the way the inquiry was framed was done in such a way that the automatic defences of the discourse they wanted to question did not become activated immediately, because the communication itself was taken as containing an articulation of the relationship between the individual and the collective, rather than as a bringing to one's awareness of the way this relationship was being articulated.

On the basis of my personal experience as a director at a secondary boarding school, this is very difficult to do, because even the very act of open questioning can easily be taken as articulating that which is being questioned. (It seems that very few individuals above a certain age are still unsuspecting of communications that come to them, and most will assume that the field of inquiry has been articulated and will suspect that what is being presented as open does, in fact, contain a hidden agenda, for example in the form of leading questions or other rhetorical strategies that are designed to lead to a certain conclusion.) It is also difficult, because it is all too easy to fool oneself into believing the questioning is open, where really one does have a vested interest in a certain outcome. What is more, every linguistic expression of such a bringing to one's awareness will contain, if not a fully-fledged articulation, then, at least a propensity to articulating the issue in a certain way.

A leadership who are serious about bringing up the question of articulating the relationship between the individual and the communal in a way that is prior to any such articulation will, therefore, need to be extremely vigilant (aware) of the way in which they raise the question. They would ensure that all voices are allowed to speak, while at the same time exposing those voices that are exclusive in relation to other voices *as* violating those voices, and interfering where such exclusive voices are not open to being corrected by exposure (which combines self-awareness with being brought to the awareness of the community). But this can only be done against a backdrop of a way of listening that lets the voices of individuals stand out as individual voices. For this it is necessary that those involved can remain silent when others speak, where this silence goes beyond a mere absence of vocalization and includes an awareness and allowing to fall silent of any inner voices reacting to what is being said.

Much of this can be simply brought to people's attention by pointing out to them how our "inner voices" tend to react to what is being said in terms of the way we have articulated the world. It can also be facilitated by preparing the ground for a communal inquiry by way of interpersonal encounters that are driven by a concern for the authenticity of the other and which thus begin to point out the mechanisms of reaction to the communications of the other in terms of our own articulation of the world. It can also be facilitated by

establishing an atmosphere of actual physical silence in the school at certain times, so that the individual can become aware of the voices that go on in their own heads as well as get a sense of the presence of others while not actually interacting with them verbally or in any other communicative way. Perhaps most importantly, there has to be an emotional atmosphere of safety and trust, so that the individual can let their guard down, be open to the gaze of others even as they themselves are discovering how they articulate the relationship between individual and community.

In such an inquiry the voices of individuals will be brought to the awareness of the congregated individuals and exposed (in a non-judgemental way) at a communal level. Some of these voices will be in the process of discovering the way they articulate the world (in our example, the relationship between the individual and the school collective), some will be exposed as being exclusive of the voices of others (exposed for the benefit of their own awareness and that of others at the same time, where it is not shame – which requires a, now absent, judgemental articulation – but affection, perhaps laced with humour, and an appeal to their responsibility that turns the individual around, if, indeed, they allow themselves to be turned). And there is the bringing to awareness of the voice of the community as a whole which begins to manifest as the atmosphere, the energy, that allows for the individual to flourish and the collective to be sheltering, and expressive of solidarity in the way I mentioned earlier, where this energy, this atmosphere does have the two characteristics we found earlier of the authentic community: that of giving rise to a working together from out of a common world and a common good, where individuals experience themselves as sharing a common culture or a historical situation, but also a commitment on the part of each individual to the value of an authentic way of life.

### *6.3.1.3 Nature and the animal world*

There is a special case of authentic being-with that I have not mentioned up till this point, but which I can briefly mention, now that the contours of authentic being-with, both in terms of interpersonal and of communal relationships, are beginning to take shape. It is the relationship which

humanity, both as individuals and as a collective, has with the natural world and with animals. I do not have the space to do justice to so vast and important a topic here, but I can perhaps indicate how a process of being-with learning to be authentic may be the very process that will enable us to have a relationship with animals and the natural world (plants, rivers, landscapes, and so on) that is authentic. That is, rather than prescribing what an authentic relationship with nature is like, I will consider a process that may lead to such a relationship. For the sake of brevity, I will take the relationship of the individual with animals and the natural world rather than that of humanity as a collective, but a similar case can be constructed around the latter relationship.

What was said in the previous two sections is that authentic being-with, conceived of in terms of communication, is a movement away from articulation (taking certain things as belonging together and other things as belonging apart) towards an experience of being-with (which we saw below refers to the individual existing “for its own sake” even as their interpersonal relationships and the collective are co-constitutive of this individual) which is not articulated but merely brought to one’s awareness.

The question of the individual’s relationship with animals and the natural world involves asking after the extent to which their being-with is not only being-with other Daseins but also being-with animals and the natural world: to what extent are the individual’s relationship with animals and the natural world co-constitutive of this individual, and to what extent are the whole of the animal kingdom and the natural world co-constitutive of this individual. It seems safe to say that the answer to both these questions is neither “totally” nor “not at all”: the basic faculty of being-with extends beyond Dasein’s but, where it does, the relationship is weaker than with other Dasein’s. Our relationships with nature and animals are co-constitutive of our individuality, but to a lesser extent than our relationships with other human beings (which is not to say that our relationship with other Daseins does not necessarily occur on the basis of a substratum that consists of the natural world: cells, neurons, minerals, and the like) and we exist as part of the animal kingdom and the natural world but more fully as part of the human world (which is not to say

that we are at a physical level not a part of the natural world, but this is a different level from the communicative being-with dimension I am considering here). We can therefore say that being-with signifies not only the faculty of being-with (related to and part of) the human world but also animals and the natural world, even if the latter form is less complete.

But, just as it was argued that authentic being-with in relation to other Daseins (individually and collectively) requires a suspension of the articulation of that relationship (especially in so far as this is in terms of differentiation and separation, part and whole), we can say that authentic being-with animals and the natural world requires a similar suspension of articulation. This means that we do not need to articulate in advance the character of our being-with nature and animals, but need to be able to suspend such an articulation until after an authentic being-with has been established in much the same way as that happens for being-with in relation to other Daseins.

And, indeed, a description of authentic being-with in relation to the natural world and animals yields a rather familiar picture. I will take as an example the experience an individual may have when walking through the forest. There needs to be an initial connection that is made with the natural surroundings, perhaps the individual comes with an openness to the forest, perhaps something (a sudden silence when the wind drops) interrupts the individual's ability to articulate the things they experience, perhaps a prolonged stay wears away some of the initial ways of articulating the experience of being in the forest. Then the individual will increasingly look and listen in ways that do not take what they experience in terms of anything they already know, feel, believe, like or dislike. This enables them to disclose both the world around them and themselves in new and different ways: the forest takes on a new colour, a different mood, and the self is experienced in new ways. This is like an awakening, an expansion of awareness and a silencing of the inner voices that would normally articulate what was being experienced in terms of a known world and a familiar self.

We could say that in this experience the forest begins to come alive, it is beginning to be experienced as a live entity, something that exists "for its own

sake”, that senses and communicates. Though this is not the full sense of being-with we may find in relation to other human beings (provided we experience them in an authentic way), it is safe to say that we experience Dasein-like elements in nature (in a forest, but all the more so in animals). This process of being-with learning to be authentic in relation to the forest is experienced as, to use a phrase that was used earlier in connection with authentic community, a falling silent of articulation, an expanded awareness of the beings one is connected with, and a ‘being touched by’, ‘filled by’, ‘hearing of’ the presence, the energy, the atmosphere that manifests in the forest.

The result is, more often than not (provided the forest does not suddenly become a threatening place, for example, if one gets lost when night falls and it is cold) that one feels one’s authentic self is being given the space to flourish, even as there is an indifference on the part of the forest to one’s position in the world in terms of, to repeat again from before, status, knowledge, position, strength, guile, and so on. The individual needs to be open to the forest without keeping up a persona, which means that the individual can be appealed to in the emptiness at the core of their being, which enables a deep and rich connectedness to the forest, one that merits being designated as communion with nature.

Note that such an experience of being-with becoming authentic in relation to nature, one that may result in the experience of communion with nature, is, as an authentic experience, one which happens at the level of the a priori, which means that it does not happen at the level of actual communication (as when one encourages a sapling to grow into a certain direction or an animal to behave in a certain way), or at the level of actual a practical or theoretical understanding of the natural world, or at the level of an actual emotional reaction to the natural world (even though some sentimental accounts of communion with nature would want to make one believe so). It is, therefore, not in contradiction to the fact that much of the time we may engage with the natural world in practical (building a log cabin) and theoretical (counting plant species) ways and have emotional reactions to it (being afraid of a thunder storm or moved by the sight of a duck and its ducklings).

What the authentic mode of being-with in relation to animals and the natural world does is allow us to understand our relationship with them in an authentic way, where the authentic relationship is that which originally enabled the inauthentic one (we can, for example, tame animals, because we share a large measure of being-with with them), and where the “right” kind of relationship is the one that does not “forget” the authentic relationship but where the authentic relationship occurs in parallel with the inauthentic one, with the authentic relationship having temporal priority in the sense that the “right” kind of inauthentic relationship needs to have been preceded by or transformed by an authentic one. This “right” kind of relationship is ultimately a matter of ethics, and it is implied in the above account that the ethical relationship to other human beings as well as the natural world and animals is one that is based in authentic being-with (a full justification of this claim is beyond the scope of this thesis). What is more, given that the authentic relationship is one that in actual reality (Heidegger would say “factually”) needs to be arrived at through a process of learning to be authentic, it is this process of learning to be authentic that has the actual priority.

### *6.3.2 The process of being-with learning to be authentic*

I will again try to further characterize the process of being-with learning to be authentic in contrast with the process of learning as we encountered it in the main theories of learning I looked at in Chapter 2. There we saw that learning is typically understood as a process of growth, increased integration and differentiation, which tends towards increased rigidity, where learning is always a modification the existing way of being of the learner, and where learning involves an intentional object.

As with the processes of understanding and attunement becoming authentic, we have seen that the process of being-with becoming authentic is not one of growth. On the contrary, it is a process where an existing articulation of the world (of oneself and one’s relationships with other individuals and the collective) “dissolves”. This aspect of the process is often experienced as a falling silent, where a network of discursive articulation falls away. As Heidegger puts it in relation to hearing the call of conscience, “Dasein which

[the call] summons is called back into the stillness of itself, and called back as something that is to become still. ... It takes the words away from the common-sense idle talk of *das Man*" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 343). That is, rather than the increased integration and differentiation we associate with the individual's articulation of more and more of the world (if only by way of a growing vocabulary and linguistic sophistication), the process of being-with becoming authentic dissolves any articulation that has been arrived at.

The increased rigidity associated with growing integration and differentiation is also not part of authentic being-with. It is the ability to relate authentically to entities as based in the openness of Dasein that is liberated by the dissolution of the articulation, where, as we saw in Chapter 3, the openness of Dasein has to be understood as an openness towards the being of the entity encountered rather than the actual ready-to-hand or present-at-hand entity. Importantly, this openness understands the Dasein it encounters in being-with as process, and the process of being-with becoming authentic can, therefore, be further characterized as one of letting go of a fixed, actual, articulation to an experience of a process which contains only possible articulations. This part of the process may well be experienced as a coming alive of the other person, the community and oneself as being-in-the-world, where this coming alive is a continuous movement. That is, rather than one's articulation of the being of the other person, the community, oneself or nature becoming more and more rigid, they are all experienced as processal in nature and, as such, being "alive".

With regard to the notion that learning is always a modification of and, therefore, based in the existing way of being of the learner, we can say that being-with learning to be authentic is rather *based in* the relationship between the individuals, between the individual and the collective and, if we want to include animals and the natural world in our definition, between the individual and nature. That is, the location where the process of learning originates is the relationship itself, rather than the individual as it stands in relationship to something or other. Consequently, it needs to be said that it is the relationship (which I have characterized as one of co-constitution) that is the locus of the learning process. Seen from this perspective, one could say that the relationship that learns "contains" an individuality which exists "for its own

sake". This is another way of saying that, for this relationship-learning to happen in the right way, it needs to allow for the individuality "contained" in it to become itself in terms of itself. Or, any collective processes of learning are required to accommodate processes of individuals becoming truly individual in their own terms, where the individual learning process is based in the learning relationship.

With regard to the idea that learning always includes an intentional object, we are, in the case of being-with learning to be authentic, dealing with a process that is essentially prior to any separation between subject and object. Even so, we can say that being-with learning to be authentic is a learning that occurs in relation to other Daseins, the collective and the natural world and animals. These are, however, not the intentional objects of learning in the sense that the learning involved would be *about* them. Dasein does not learn *about* the other person, the communal or nature, even if its being changes as a result of the process. The other person, the communal and nature do not appear as different (ready-to-hand or present-at-hand) entities as a result of the learning, rather the structure of Dasein's experience has changed and, as a result, the world as a whole appears different in a way that means that Dasein experiences the other person, the communal and nature in a different way, even as they appear in more or less the same ready-to-hand and present-at-hand way in that experience. That is to say, the notion of an intentional object only makes sense in the context of the ready-to-hand or present-at-hand but not in the context of authentic being-with. This is not to say that, as a result of authentic being-with, Dasein's practical and theoretical engagement will not change, because, as such engagement will be rooted in authentic being-with, it will, for example, not lightly subordinate the other person, the communal or nature to practical instrumentality or theoretical categorization without being highly mindful to preserve their way of being for its own sake.

#### **6.4 Authentic being-with revisited**

At several points in this thesis it has been remarked that Heidegger's notion of being-with displays a number of shortcomings. Some of these shortcomings were addressed, when we looked at authentic interpersonal relationships and

the authentic community, but some remain, and I will turn to them now. In Section 3.6 it was suggested that, while it is not incoherent for Heidegger to argue that the verification and justification of authenticity is not a public or interpersonal affair, more can be said about the intersubjective dimension where the individuals involved are concerned with the possibility of authentic existence. Then, in Chapter 5 it was suggested that Dasein's authentic affective disposition lacked depth and coherence when taken in relation to other Daseins. I will now revisit these issues and attempt to shed light on them, so that a fuller and more coherent picture of authentic being-with may arise.

#### *6.4.1 The intersubjective validation of authentic being-with*

In Section 3.6, I looked at Lambert Zuidervaart's objection that Heidegger's account of authenticity does not do justice to the intersubjective dimension of his own notion of Dasein as a being who is partly constituted by being-with. But we saw that Zuidervaart's claim that authenticity should be publicly verifiable and justifiable could not be upheld, in the face of Heidegger's religiously tinted understanding of the notion of authenticity. However, the idea that public verifiability and justification are not necessary for a coherent notion of authenticity does not necessarily entail that Heidegger's account of authentic being-with is satisfactory in terms of how we deal with the question of the veracity of what is being put forward as authentic being-with. In other words, the claim that the ultimate assessment of the veracity of an authentic experience does not lie in the public domain does not mean that the intersubjective dimension of authentic being may not play a part, serve as a guide, in raising the right kind of question with regard to authentic being and making some tentative assessment of its authenticity and in suggesting a response to any perceived inauthenticity – all informed by a concern for the possibility of authentic existence rather than a wish to pass judgment.

That is, it was suggested in Section 6.3.1.2 that questioning is one of the ways that is most suitable for turning people's attention to a particular region of existence, because it does not need to presuppose more than a minimum of advanced articulation of the region. There are other ways in which to simply draw attention to something, such as a simple "pointing out" that there is

something to consider in a particular region of experience, but I will take questioning as our example. I will, therefore, say that questioning may play an important role in the intersubjective assessment of authenticity. In terms of the criteria for assessing whether the authenticity of something needs to be questioned, we could say that this is best done by considering the coherence of what is said and done at the collective and individual levels. In other words, the authenticity of one aspect of being-with can be considered more likely (though not ascertained with certainty), in so far as is accompanied by and coherent with the other characteristics of authentic being-with I have identified. This is so, because a coherence approach to the veracity of something does not depend on establishing a foundation from which to argue the veracity of the issue in question, and, as Zuidervaart has pointed out, the experience of authenticity is one that denies establishing such a foundation – at least by a third person. Finally, the response to such a questioning in terms of coherence of any claims to authenticity is not primarily one of judgment but of furthering the cause of authenticity. One's response to uncovering possible inauthenticity on the part of someone is that of suggesting, embodying, disclosing, pointing out genuine ways of authentic being.

I will take as our example the claim made by an individual, say a teacher who is trying to question certain aspects of the way the pupils in his class relate to each other, that the discussion she initiated concerning those aspects of the class's culture was characterized by authentic being-with. This could be a discussion we sat in on as a colleague, as part of a continuing professional development programme in our school – where, for the sake of the example, in this particular school it had become part of the teacher culture to look at learning in terms of authenticity, for instance, after having had a talk about it by a philosopher of education. Let's say we were discussing the session afterwards with the teacher, asking her how she felt things went, questioning and sharing our own observations with her, where relevant. In this our concern would be with the authenticity of the teacher, the pupils, and ourselves (note that this classroom observation would not have been part of a formal assessment, in which case the authenticity of the discussion should not be what

the teacher was assessed on). As stated above, the concern would not be one of arriving at a judgment, but of allowing authentic being-with to manifest.

Something that would perhaps be one of our main concerns would be that there was a tangible “falling silent” in the group as a result of existing articulations dissolving, which involved an increased openness towards the other. Though we may have observed a certain attentive hush coming over the group and encouragement of individuals to give voice to their ways of seeing things, we would not necessarily take these things at face value, given that silence and openness may be affected. So we would look out for indications that the observed phenomena may not cohere with other aspects of authentic being-with. For example, an absence of individuals and the group “coming alive” (when, say, the atmosphere becomes dull and individuals begin to merely repeat the positions they have assumed rather than publicly explore them) would be grounds for raising questions about the authenticity of the being-with of the group or of certain individuals.

But mere liveliness would not clinch it either, because, if it turned out that the liveliness of the group and individuals was very much the result of one individual bringing it about (as when pupils appear to have become dependent on a charismatic teacher to set their discussions alight), one would need to question the authenticity of it. That is, what one is looking for is the origin of this process of “coming alive” to lie in the relationships (of co-constitution) themselves (in the sense that “it” arises) rather than in any one or two individuals (who may, incidentally, be pupils as well as teachers). Simply asking the teacher to what extent she felt it was her presence that livened up the discussion would open up the issue, but only if we, as the outsider, were “with” her and were not approaching her as a practical object (steering her, shaping her, taking up a position relative to her – superior or inferior) or a theoretical object (identifying her as a certain type, who is responsive to a certain type of approach), but as openness and possibility.

Then, one may, for example, have noticed that certain individuals appeared “alienated” from themselves; one has noticed that a certain pupil was trying very hard to be in a way that seemed to be based on what they think is

expected of them rather than coming about naturally. This would be a potentially important issue, on the grounds that the process of being-with becoming authentic allows for the individual who is “contained” in the relationship or the community to become themselves “for their own sake”, something that is highly unlikely to be accompanied by the individual straining to be in a certain way. Any such observation may, for instance, lead to a more general discussion with the teacher of how pupils are forced into certain ways of being and how we, as adults, are perhaps in the same boat, still trying to live up to expectations we believe others have of us, or even sub-consciously conveying such a way of being to the pupil. Here the discussion may become quite personal and, as before, it is important that one is “with” the teacher in this discussion, which may involve not only disclosing, however briefly, some of one’s own struggles in this area, but also allowing for the teacher’s uniquely personal way of being to come out and be “visible”, without being judged in terms of what is and what is not desirable.

If, for example, it has been mutually established that to some extent many pupils as well as the teacher seemed to be approaching the question of the class’s culture at too superficial a level, one may raise the question whether the pupils and the teacher have not learned over time to approach themselves and each other as practical and theoretical entities, rather than as creatures with Dasein as their nature. This could then lead to a discussion about, for example, how schooling and education in general sees a fair bit of manipulation and exploitation of individuals (for example, where they are made to do things by way of reward and punishment, so as to become the kinds of citizens government aims to create) or a categorization of them that goes beyond the functional level (such functional categorizations could, for example, occur when there are separate male and female sanitary facilities) but includes emotional and psychological aspects (for example, where there is a typification of individuals, in combination with value judgments).

Importantly, this kind of exploration should not become politicized, as when those “responsible” for the manipulation and categorization, let’s say the government or the management with its targets, are made into a common enemy. Rather, they too need to be included in the “with” and the concern in

relation to them also needs to be with their authenticity – however impersonal such a concern becomes with remote politicians and faceless civil servants. The aim is to get a genuine understanding of the issue, rather than drawing up a plan of action, where the process towards this understanding is that of learning to be authentic. Any concrete actions or conceptualizations should be left to arise on their own after there has been a “falling silent”, where existing articulations dissolve and an openness to the being of all involved, including managers and pupils, manifests (which is not to say that urgent practical issues, such as disruptions of the class or lack of necessary facilities are not dealt with in accordance with their “being” as authentic practical issues).

Much of the way the discussion with the teacher is presented above may seem to be no more than good practice as it is set out in numerous manuals of coaching and classroom observation: one does not judge, listens with genuine interest, does not put oneself above the teacher, does not demonize others, allows for personal issues to come up where relevant, and so on. And this is correct, but the essence of authenticity lies in the spirit in which the communication takes place and not in the actual, concrete things one does or even in the way the situation is conceptualized. There is an inalienably intangible dimension to authenticity, which is due, as has been said before, to the fact that the process of becoming authentic occurs at the level of the *a priori*. And yet, it is said that, when there is an authentic being-with, something happens that is not like the mere implementation of good practice. The way to find out whether this is true is by trying it out for oneself.

If we wanted to propose a positive alternative to Zuidervaart’s charge that claims to authenticity should be publicly verifiable and justifiable, we could, perhaps, speak of a “validating consideration” that would draw attention to, point out, and question aspects of the claim to authenticity with reference to its coherence. We could use the word “validation” (in the sense of “making strong, healthy, effective and having value”) instead of verification and justification. That is, the act of “validating” would have as its aim that of furthering the cause of authenticity, where there would be a “consideration” of the coherence of what is said and done by the individual claiming the authenticity, which was expressed through drawing attention to things,

pointing things out, and questioning, where the coherence appears to be lacking. But, of course, with such a validating consideration of claim to authenticity would come a certain affective disposition, which is what I will turn to next.

#### *6.4.2 The affective disposition of authentic being-with*

In Chapter 5, in the context of the moods of authenticity, it was said that Heidegger's description of Dasein having been individualized and experiencing the entities it encounters in the world in a mood of disconnection and nearness makes sense in relation to theoretical and practical entities but not necessarily in relation to other Daseins and creatures with some degree of the nature of Dasein, such as animals and the natural world. Now that we have looked in detail at the process of being-with becoming authentic, we can ask what kind of "affective disposition" would correspond with such a process. The question raised in Chapter 5 is what an individual feels, what he or she experiences at an emotional level, when participating in authentic being-with. But, because I have now constructed an account of the *process* that leads to such authentic being-with and because I am primarily interested in this process, I will attempt to further our understanding of the process of becoming authentic by considering the process of being-with becoming authentic in terms of the individual's affective disposition.

As was suggested earlier in this chapter, authentic being-with is to be thought of not only in terms of the relationship between individuals but also in terms of a communal being together. What is more, it was said that being-with should probably be extended to include the relationship between human beings and animals and the natural world. In this section I will focus on the relationship between two individuals, which I earlier referred to as interpersonal or personal relationships. This is for convenience only and examples of communal relationships or relationships with nature could have equally been given. If that had been done, the outcome would have been similar in spirit but different in some of the details. For considerations of space, it is not possible to work out exactly what the affective disposition of authentic being-with would be like for all three, and the reader is, therefore, asked to accept that examples for the

remaining two would be similar enough, so as not to affect the main thrust of the argument. I will take as our example a mother listening to what her six-year-old daughter has to say, as they are standing next to a river, having come to see if there are any ducks.

Let us say that the mother has been having some problems with discipline at home (bed-time, tidiness - the usual), but the mother has also noticed that her daughter has become less cheerful recently and is wondering whether the pressures she is being put under at school, combined with the daily struggles at home, are beginning to dull the spark of enthusiasm and originality she has known her daughter to have always had. That is, the mother is concerned for the authenticity of her daughter, concerned that she should be able to be “who she really is” as well as flourish, grow into “who she can possibly be”. And in this the mother is not taking herself out of the picture, as she is leaving open the possibility that her own ways of dealing with the discipline issues at home may be contributing to her daughter’s increasing sombreness.

While they are both turned towards the river, waiting to see if any ducks will appear, the girl begins to talk about what is on her mind. She is not directly addressing her mother, more thinking aloud, and begins to talk about school, her teacher, some of her class mates, and about herself. The mother senses that she is hearing some of the voices in her daughter that do not normally come out. As the mother listens, there is an increasing, a spreading, of her attention. This is experienced as a gradual spreading of silence, to the point where it “envelops” both the girl and the mother herself, even as there is talking going on. That is, with the spreading of this listening, which is also a spreading of the experience of silence, the separation between the mother and her daughter seems to disappear. “The mother is listening” becomes a “there is listening”, which is the event of listening before there is a listener who articulates what is being said by the other person. At this level of listening the mother experiences “being one” with her daughter, which is really a feeling of unity, of her and her daughter co-constituting each other. But this oneness is not of two separate entities being welded together, which might feel comforting and secure, but also restricting and suffocating. Rather it is a feeling of being oneself in being one with the other, a feeling of freedom in being one.

Every now and then, while the girl is talking, the mother asks, in a few words only, some question, so as to encourage her daughter to keep talking. But even her own voice, asking her daughter to elaborate or continue, sounds different to her now, in that it too seems to come out of a silence and to never break that silence. Yet, at the same time that there is this feeling of unity, the very same silence brings out the “otherness” of the voice that is being heard. Less and less of what the mother hears is incorporated (assimilated and accommodated, to use constructivist terminology) into her existing ways of articulating things. She is listening to her daughter as if it is the first time she has ever heard her speak. More and more of what is unknown about her daughter is being disclosed, but it is not disclosed as facts pertaining to an actual being, but as possible ways of being which her daughter has and which manifest now, but which may well manifest very differently next time. It becomes clear to the mother (something which she experiences emotionally as a wish “to give” to the daughter), that what the girl needs, in order for her to be “who she really is” as well as “who she can possibly be”, is to be allowed to be “openness and possibility” rather than an “actual” person (one with fixed characteristics and predictable ways of behaving).

And the mother also understands that as “openness and possibility” her daughter will always be unknowable, unassimilable and essentially “other”. At this point the mother wonders whether she herself is not putting pressure on her daughter to be in a certain way, to become a person whose actuality makes her more predictable and easier to deal with. The silence the mother is experiencing appears to have affected her daughter too, who appears to become more thoughtful and articulate, even as her sentences become more fragmentary, some of them left unfinished. At this point a deep and at the same time completely transparent feeling comes over the mother: it is this “otherness”, this *being always unknown* (not because her actual nature has not yet been discovered, but because she is essentially “openness and possibility”, rather than a fixed actuality), that the mother wishes to give to her daughter. And this “wishing to give” is the emotion she feels: it is a “wishing to give” the other her “otherness as openness and possibility”. All through this simple conversation on the bank of the river neither the mother nor the daughter have

not lost contact with the river, and the mother feels the silence she has been experiencing is there in the trees as well and in the river itself. Then the girl's face lights up and she points towards the top end of the river: "look ducks!"

In general terms, what we see the mother go through is the double movement of a dying towards the world (her old articulation of the being of her daughter) and a turning back ("wishing to give" her daughter the otherness which she already is but which she needs to recover), where the moment of dying towards is a falling silent and the turning back is the coming alive of the living being from who one is not separate. The affective disposition of authentic being-with can, therefore, be described (but, as was said in Section 1.4, the description here is no more than a gesture in the direction of a possibility that becomes meaningful only in its appropriation) as a feeling of oneness in silence (which is a feeling of attentive calm that is experienced as enveloping both the speaker and the listener and which takes away the separation between them), of "wishing to give the other their otherness" (which is reaching out to the other person in a way that one forgets one's own concerns and interests in order for the other one to be able to "be", where this "being" is felt to be all the other needs to do in order to be worthy of existence), of the other person as openness and possibility (which is a feeling of veneration, of humility in the face of the unknowability of the other and their sacred nature).

If we wanted to reduce the above description of the affective disposition of authentic being-with to a few terms, we could consider Jean-Luc Nancy's suggestion that the answer is to be found in Heidegger's correspondence with Hannah Arendt in the years 1925–28, where, according to Nancy, the notion of love is the one that captures the affective disposition of authentic being-with: "In the correspondence, love is, indeed, qualified as the genuine space of a 'we' and of a world that can be 'ours,' and represents the genuine 'taking care' of the other" (Nancy, 2008, p. 14). As in the case of the mother and daughter in our example, this love entails being there with and for the other as they go through life as well as grasping, with them, what their possibilities are. "Thus, love is a *mitglauben*, a shared faith in the 'story of the other' and a *mitergreifen*, a shared grasp of the 'potential of the other'" (Nancy, 2008, p. 14).

But it is not our main concern to define the affective disposition of authentic being-with. Rather, it is our aim to bring to light the process which takes one from inauthentic to authentic existence. From this perspective the suggestion that the affective disposition of authentic Dasein centres on feelings of oneness, veneration, generosity, humility, concern, and so on, is less important than the characterization of the process itself, which I specified in Section 6.3.2.

# 7 Learning to be authentic and authentic learning

I have now constructed an account of the process of learning to be authentic. I will summarize what has been said about this process at different points above. Then I will make any generalizations about the process that present themselves.

With the main task of the thesis behind us, the remaining argument will take on a much more speculative tone. The assertions made will, from now on, lack the detailed exposition necessary for them to count as argued in a way that is cogent. Rather, what follows will be no more than a laying out of general directions in which the preceding chapters have steered us. It would require a disciplined follow up to validate the suggestions made in this chapter.

In the second part of this chapter I will consider what this means for the process of learning as it is conceived of in the main theories of learning we looked at in Chapter 2.

## 7.1 Authentic learning

### 7.1.1 *General first points*

In this Chapter I will attempt to outline what it means for *learning as modification and growth*, as it was presented in Chapter 2, to occur within the context of authentic existence. This will give us *authentic learning*. I will first consider the integration of *learning as modification and growth* with authentic

existence separately, as they occur in the three main areas of understanding, attunement and being-with. Then, in Section 7.2, I will indicate the way in which such an integration is similar in all three areas, to arrive at our most general characterization of *learning to be authentic* and *authentic learning*.

### ***7.1.2 Authentic learning to understand***

Understanding refers to the way in which Dasein is *directed* towards things, the way it gains *access* to things and the way its engagement with things is *guided*. It can be said to comprise both action and perception. The process of understanding learning to be authentic begins with inauthentic understanding, when Dasein understands itself non-reflectively from out of the entities it is engaged with and does so in terms of practical and/or theoretical entities. That is, the entity Dasein is engaged with “gives” it its self-understanding, just as Dasein “gives” the entity its being. Dasein has, of course, also a reflective, explicit, self-understanding, but this is, essentially, a theoretical self-understanding and, as such, not the starting point for the process of becoming authentic, but a special case of theoretical understanding.

The very beginning of the process of understanding becoming authentic involves a moment of “breaking through”, which can occur because understanding finds itself face-to-face with something it notices it cannot possibly resolve, because a certain affective disposition arises, or because of a communication by another Dasein. All these may awaken a sense of the limitations of Dasein’s current understanding (of itself and of the entities it finds in the world) as well as a sense that these limitations are self-imposed and, as such, may conceal possible other ways of understanding. This marks the beginning of the process where Dasein’s inauthentic understanding of itself becomes transparent, is awakened to itself.

In general terms, the process of understanding becoming authentic can be described as one of a mutually reinforcing process of understanding becoming non-reflectively aware of itself as projection and letting go of existing projections. This returns it to a point where understanding is itself understood as arising out of openness and any actual understanding is understood as possibility. At this point Dasein *is* openness and possibility. Within this

openness and possibility understanding may arise (quite impersonally) of another Dasein as one with the Dasein who engages with it and yet as an end in itself. Understanding of a practical or a theoretical entity may arise that is based in an openness towards that entity that is prior to any practical or theoretical concern, and that genuinely constitutes Dasein's own understanding rather than an understanding that originates in *das Man*.

What was at first experienced as the whole of understanding opens up (becomes non-reflectively self-aware) while this particular understanding quietens down (lets go of its projections), to the point where it becomes completely silent (experiencing a kind of existential death), at which point there is just openness and possibility, from which understanding may arise again (impersonally), but then as only a part of the whole of experience, always leaving some of the openness empty (so that communion with other Dasein's may occur), and always temporarily (being ready to take back and repeat), before quieting down again (so that Dasein may genuinely reconnect with the entity).

This process of understanding opening up and quieting down to become complete silence and openness, from which understanding may arise again (temporarily and leaving some of the openness empty), before quieting down again can be a seminal event, iterative and cumulative. It can be a seminal event in that the openness comes into being and stays with the individual. It can be iterative in that the process of understanding arising is followed by a quieting down. It can be cumulative in that the openness and silence may expand and grow in relation to the understanding emerging in it. In each of these cases the process is the same, but the meaning of it is somewhat different. The initial, seminal, event of the openness coming into being would (if it is not lost again completely, where the individual becomes once more fully absorbed by inauthentic understanding) allow for any subsequent understandings to occur from within this openness without ever losing the sense of openness, which, it turn, would allow for any subsequent growth and expansion of the openness.

We saw in Chapter 4 that the process of understanding becoming authentic differs from the process of learning as it is found in some of the main theories of learning: the process of understanding becoming authentic is not one of increased integration, differentiation and rigidity, but one of dissolving (quieting down of) what has been constituted; the process is essentially discontinuous, in that the end result (emptiness) cannot be said to be *based in* the initial state of there being a certain understanding of being; the process is prior to there being a subject or an object moment in the intentional act, in that it happens at a level that is prior to action and perception, in that the entity that is learning coincides with what it is learning about, in that this letting go of an understanding of being is experienced as discontinuity and as a falling away.

Though the two processes are not the same process, they can be said to be compatible and able to exist side by side. This is because the process of understanding opening up and quieting down is able to accommodate the process of learning as we have found it in some of the main theories of learning. The process of opening up and quieting down liberates, awakens a wider non-reflective self-awareness, *within which* the processes of integration and differentiation described by the theories of learning can occur. The process of letting go of an understanding can be thought of in terms of a dissolution of this understanding, where it remains possible to reconstitute the understanding on the basis of the notion that understanding does not consist of a representation but of an intentional act which is carried out in a specific way, where the act is built up again every time the understanding manifests. In the case of an understanding having dissolved completely, it could be said that the complete dissolution consisted in the understanding being open and remaining open to the *being* of the entity involved in the situation, and that, once it resolved on such a being, the attitudes, knowledge, ways of acting, and so on, would *re-constitute* themselves.

Though it is not possible in the space remaining in this thesis to do justice to this idea of an understanding being able to re-constitute itself after having quietened down, a few things can be said in defence of it. If, as was suggested in Chapter 2, association is the main mechanism driving learning as it is

envisaged in the main theories of learning (once events occur together – two events happening simultaneously or following each other chronologically – they are more likely to occur together again in the future), then a complex way of being may be built up out of many simple events occurring together. For example, when a sequence of movements (for example, drawing short lines on paper) constitutes one action (writing a word) that is made up out of those smaller movements, the larger action may be dropped, even forgotten, without preventing a future re-constitution of this action out of the smaller movements. What would happen in such a re-constitution would be that one small movement would call up, by way of association, another one, which would, in turn call up yet another movement, and so on. This would not only be a process that took place “internal” to the person, but would also take place in relation to the environment, in the sense that elements of the entity one was engaging with (for example, pen and paper) and the situation in which one found oneself (for example, a classroom) would also call up, by way of association, certain ways of acting.

With respect to the being of entities, which is the level at which the process of learning to be authentic happens, the issue would then be one of the act of taking something as having a certain kind of being initiating the process of the way of understanding the entity in question re-constituting itself. For example, a teacher could, on this account, allow her understanding of a certain pupil to dissolve, with the result of opening up towards the being of the pupil as an entity with the nature of Dasein. This would constitute the dissolution (letting go) of the act of being towards the pupil in a certain way, with the result that the pupil was understood as openness and possibility. If, a certain action was then called for (for example, a report about the pupil had to be written), the theoretical way of taking the pupil would re-constitute itself (the teacher would remember that certain forms needed filling in, that a certain kind of language needed to be used in that form, that certain events needed to be reported, and so on).

Importantly, such a theoretical or practical way of taking the pupil would occur within a wider field of openness (the non-reflective self-awareness that constitutes transparency) which would never be fully taken over by the actual

way of being towards the entity theoretically or practically. This would allow for the re-constitution of an understanding to take place within the openness, where the effect of the openness (the non-reflective self-awareness) was never absent. But, because such a process of re-constitution was subject to modification as found in the main theories of learning (the process perspective on understanding allows for that understanding to learn, be modified, as it re-constitutes itself), there could, indeed be such learning within the openness of authentic existence. This would mean that any subsequent learning (in the sense of the further construction of an actual way of being via the mechanism of, for example, association) could happen in a way that was “informed by” the openness or transparency. This would constitute authentic learning, a learning according to the mechanisms described in Chapter 2, but always informed by, in the spirit of, the openness that characterizes authentic existence.

For example, a pupil in a gardening project who had hitherto handled (which represents a practical understanding) plants much like tools or toys, like inanimate objects, may have learned to prune a climbing plant in the school yard. The skill involved was always displayed by this pupil in a way that, to the experienced gardener, lacked sensitivity: the boy did not have green fingers. Then the boy, perhaps because he was made aware by the teacher of his mechanical way of approaching the plant, has a moment in which his understanding of the plant as a practical object dissolves. There is a moment in which his movements fall silent and he just stands there and looks at the plant. Then, instead of cutting, he begins to feel the stems and the leaves, as if noticing the plant for the first time. At this moment the practical understanding of pruning he had acquired dissolves and he opens up towards the plant but also to his own being, the world around him, in a way that is non-reflective.

Though it may well look as though he is fully absorbed in the plant, because that is where his eyes and body are turned towards, he is, nevertheless, opening up towards the whole of life as his ways of engaging with the plant become transparent to him. He begins to get a sense for the plant as a being with, to some extent, the nature of Dasein. As he takes up the activity of pruning again, it re-constitutes itself again, but does so in a way that is

slightly different - for example, he still cuts in the same place, as he has been taught, but with more care and awareness of the plant. Then, as the teacher notices the boy's increased sensitivity, he decides to show the boy how to prune a rosebush, something with which he entrusts only the most careful pupils. Now the boy has to learn a new skill, even if it builds upon what he has learned in the context of pruning the climber. As he looks on as the teacher shows him how to prune the rosebush, his whole way of looking is informed by, occurs within, the openness he has found. The new skills involved (for example, how to hold a thorny stem) are developed in a way that is authentic and, as such, constitute authentic learning.

To recap, the full development of this learning would, as said, begin with a non-reflective awareness of the way in which the boy approached the climber. This awareness would spread and be accompanied by a letting go of the way he used to approach the plant, to the point where he was just open towards the being of the plant. Then, as his pruning skills re-constituted themselves in relation to the plant, they did so in a way that meant that the re-constituted way of handling it was affected by the openness towards the plant itself and that never absorbed him completely, with the result that some of the openness remained even as he once more applied himself to the task at hand. Indeed, this openness remained even as he turned towards the rosebush. Perhaps at this point all his understanding of pruning again dissolved, leaving him in complete openness towards the bush. At any rate, as he first observed his teacher prune and then applied the secateurs himself, the new skill remained "within" and informed by the openness towards the being of things. Indeed, as the afternoon progressed, the openness towards the being of things only grew and what started as the non-reflective awareness of his way of pruning expanded so as to become a field of transparency much greater than any of his ways of acting, and within this field ways of engaging with things (ways of understanding) would rise up and die down again.

I may be instructive to look once again at examples of educational approaches which could be said to be similar to the approach advocated here. In Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, to take an example of a critical pedagogy, there is a similar emphasis on the learner being liberated from the ways of

understanding he or she has acquired over time, which are inauthentic<sup>56</sup>. For Freire this means that the “consciousness” of the oppressor is internalised by the oppressed. So for the learner, the oppressed, the task is that of liberating him or herself from the alien consciousness imposed on him or her. What is more, as I do in this thesis, Freire emphasises the importance of understanding that the learners are active participants in the learning process, writing that “[a]ttempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building” (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 47). And, again, “political action on the side of the oppressed must be pedagogical action in the authentic sense of the word, and, therefore, action *with* the oppressed” (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 48). Additionally, this active participation is, according to Freire, achieved through dialogue: “The correct method lies in dialogue. The conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership” (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 49). So it’s easy to see that this process of liberation from the structures of domination which the oppressed have been subjected to and have, to a large extent, internalised, is similar to the learning to be authentic which is promoted in this thesis, in that it involves a process that occurs in the relationship - which is characterised by equality - between the learner and the educator.

But there is an important difference in the actual process of liberation itself, which is conceptualised in a different way. For Freire the process itself is one of “conscientization”. Cornel West describes conscientization as a process which “embraces a critical demystifying moment in which the structures of domination are laid bare and political engagement is imperative” (West, 1993). That is, the learner is to become aware of the structures which keep him or her prisoner. But when we look at the nature of the awareness (conscientization), this awareness is the result of a process of reflection. Thus Freire writes that liberation “can be done only by means of [...] reflection and action upon the

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<sup>56</sup> Note that Freire uses the term “authentic” in his writing, albeit in a different way from which it is used in this thesis (Freire, 1970/1996) – where Freire’s use of the term is as much Hegelian as Heideggerian. I will use the terms “inauthentic” and “authentic” here in the sense that they have been developed in this thesis, and refrain from commenting on Freire’s notion of authenticity, which I find to be internally incoherent.

world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 33). In this thesis *reflection* has been described as involving an object of learning which is taken as present at hand, as a theoretical entity. That is, the learner takes both him or herself and the society they live in as theoretical entities, and then acts in relation to these entities. Therefore, Freire’s approach puts the process of liberation at the ontic rather than the ontological level, the actual rather than the a priori level, yielding a qualitatively different process from the one described in this thesis (see, Section 3.6.1).

We find a similar emphasis on reflection (and, consequently, on understanding the learner and their social and biographical contexts in ontic rather than ontological terms) in the notion of the reflexive teacher (Moore, 2012, pp. 124-127). Reflexivity “aims to promote [...] understandings of experiences and events through, to an extent, their recontextualisation within their wider social and biographical contexts” (Moore, 2012, p. 124). Here too the understanding is “theoretical” in the sense it has been used in this thesis. The teacher takes him or her own self as a “theoretical object” and seeks to understand this object in relation to his or her own biography and the wider social context of the education they are involved in. This approach, while certainly worth-while, shares many of its characteristics with the notion of autonomy, as I discussed it in Section 3.5.4, and is, with its emphasis on *reflective* awareness, very different from the process of understanding becoming *non-reflectively* aware of itself as projection and letting go of existing projections, as it has been put forward as the process of understanding learning to be authentic.

But reflexivity does incorporate one aspect of Heidegger’s notion of practical understanding and uses it in a productive way. This is the idea that ultimately our practical actions need to be understood in terms of our self-understanding (Section 4.1.3). For the teacher this means that the way they understand the classroom situation and their role as teachers is ultimately based in their self-understanding. It follows that, if the teacher wants to understand his or her practice, they need to relate what they encounter in their practice to their self-understanding. But, for this understanding of practice to become truly authentic in the way it has been set out in this thesis, the nature of this

understanding would have to consist in a non-reflective letting go and opening up, rather than a reflection on actual, i.e. present-at-hand, elements.

### ***7.1.3 Authentic learning to be attuned***

We saw in Chapter 5 how the process of attunement learning to be authentic takes place, where attunement refers to the way moods and emotions disclose the world as a certain kind of world and Dasein as a certain kind of individual Dasein. Attunement learning to be authentic begins with Dasein being in a mood that connects it with the world, after which there is a moment of “staying with”, where one finds oneself in a world that predates one and with a personality that is not of one’s own making, and where one’s understanding of the things in the world is ultimately in terms of one’s own existential death. This involves a reciprocal movement of increased non-reflective self-awareness of oneself as individualized transcendence and the disclosure of the nothingness of the world from which the entities one encounters emerge. In response to the feelings of urgency, longing and curiosity that are awakened by the increasing contact with the things one is engaging with, one lets go of the mood one was in. As a result, one’s relationship with the things and people one encounters is that of “letting things be” and immediacy: practical and theoretical things in the world are experienced as detached and near, and one’s relationship with other individuals is one of oneness in silence, of “wishing to give the other their otherness”, of veneration and humility. This movement of learning is experienced as one of spreading, where the awareness one has of one’s mood grows until it encompasses the whole of one’s being-in-the-world.

This process of attunement becoming authentic differs from the process of learning as it is found in some of the main theories of learning: the process of attunement becoming authentic is not one of increased integration, differentiation and rigidity, but one of letting go of the mood one found oneself in; the process is essentially discontinuous, in that the end result (emptiness) cannot be said to be a modification of a previous way of being attuned emotionally; the process is prior to there being a subject or an object moment in the intentional act, in that it happens at a level that is prior there being a separation between the individual having certain feelings and that towards

which the individual has the feeling, in that attunement gives both the subject and the object as coloured by a certain emotional content, in that this letting go of a mood is experienced as discontinuity and as a letting go.

But, whereas we have an account of the process of attunement learning to be authentic, we do not yet have an account of the process of learning to be attuned in the same way as we have had detailed accounts of learning that are clearly relevant to the faculty of understanding. That this is so may well be due to a general lack of accounts of emotional learning that take emotion itself as that which learns, rather than postulating a self which has emotions and which learns to deal with them in an intelligent way. For example, *The Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology* defines emotional intelligence as the way in which “people attend to, process and utilize affect-laden information” and as “the ability to understand the emotions and mental states in one’s own self and in other people” (Davey, 2005). Paraphrasing from Daniel Goleman’s 1995 book *Emotional Intelligence*, we find that emotional intelligence involves learning to read one’s emotions and recognize their impact, to use gut feelings to guide decisions, to control one’s emotions and impulses, to adapt to changing circumstances, to sense, understand, and react to others’ emotions, to inspire and influence others.

What stands out in the above descriptions of emotional intelligence is that it is in many ways what I have been calling “understanding” that learns, rather than the faculty of attunement itself. That is, learning to read, recognize, control, sense, understand, and so on, are all processes that take the emotion as the object of learning and thus represent what I have been calling *understanding learning as modification and growth* in relation to one’s emotions. Though not all approaches to emotional intelligence may take such an exclusively “understanding” perspective (for example, by focussing on traits and the personality aspect of emotional intelligence), the examples above serve to show that an account of emotions learning is by no means easily found. What I will do is present in broad terms certain aspects of what could become a phenomenological account of emotional learning, so that I can then take this as a starting point to see how it can be integrated with the account of attunement learning to be authentic summarized at the beginning of this section. To

construct this account I will make use of the assumptions about learning shared by the main theories of *learning as modification and growth* I referred to in Chapter 2. It is, however, not claimed that the resulting account of emotional learning is comprehensive or, indeed, the only possible one, but rather that it has enough validity to serve as a starting point for a discussion of authentic learning to be attuned.

Taking emotion as a moving force that arises in the individual as transcendence (thus colouring both self and world), I can begin to suggest ways in which such a moving force itself may become more and more mature as a result of the right kind of experience (experience that actually leads to greater maturity). That is, I will take the process of emotion learning, as a process of emotional maturation, which gives us the “emotionally mature person” as a guiding concept with regard to the direction into which emotional learning needs to be seen to move<sup>37</sup>. I will take as my unit of analysis the individual who finds him or herself in a certain situation, where emotions arise “in” the individual, meaning that their sense of self and world is coloured emotionally in a certain way, and where this “arising” of the emotions is itself a movement on the part of the individual. I will take, as my examples, emotions that are directed at certain events, entities or situations, on the assumption that what holds true for these holds true *a fortiori* for moods and atmosphere. It will be taken as one of the basic characteristic of emotions that they communicate themselves by resonating in the person who “receives” the communication (for example, the sadness the pupil is feeling at having received a bad mark is experienced as sadness “in” the teacher by the teacher, even though the teacher is well aware that this is not her own but the pupil’s sadness, with the result that the teacher is experiencing the pupil as sad). Because of this last point and because of the general nature of our discussion, our following examples will not always distinguish between the emotion arising in a certain person and the same emotion being picked up by another person.

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<sup>37</sup> Note that the approach here is hermeneutic in the sense explained in Chapter 1.

In general terms, I am taking the notion of emotion as that which constitutes either the actual movement the individual makes (for example, raising their hands to protect their face against an approaching projectile or “shrinking” with fear) or as that in response to which the individual is moved to act in a certain way (for example, experiencing romantic attraction and subsequently deciding to approach the other person or feeling indignation at a television programme and subsequently writing a letter to the BBC). The experience of having an emotional feeling is, therefore, either an integral but secondary part of the emotional response (when the emotion itself is the action) or that in response to which one is moved to act (even if one does not act but allows the emotion to abate un-responded to). As with the distinction between the individual in whom the emotion arises and the one who picks up the emotion, the distinction between the emotion as in itself an act and the emotion as an inner experience (a feeling) that may move one to act will remain blurred in our examples, because both distinctions are thought to be secondary and not directly relevant in the context of the account of emotions themselves learning I am trying to bring to light.

The first aspect of emotions themselves learning is that of a movement towards the emotions being attuned to more and more different situations. This is a clearly cumulative aspect of such learning, where, as a result of the right kind of experience, one’s emotional responses have become attuned to more and more situations. This being attuned means that one is able to anticipate probable or possible ramifications of a situation at the level of emotion. For example, having told different parents over the years that their child will have to repeat a class may have attuned the teacher to that kind of situation, in that he or she has developed a sense for the emotions that are likely to come up for the parents. This will enable the teacher to not only follow what is happening for the parents in a way that appreciates the meaning of their emotions better (as similar experiences will have enriched their sense of the *possible* meaning the situation may have for the parents) but also to open up possibilities for these parents, for example by showing them ways to feel that they had not yet discovered for themselves (for example, that repeating a class is not necessarily a humiliation but can be an acknowledgement of a

developmental needs of the child). The ability to bridge different cultural experiences of the same event falls in this category.

This aspect of emotional learning has clear similarities with the notion of growth we encountered in Chapter 2, but, rather than the word growth, the word “depth” may be the more appropriate one. That is, this increased sense of the possible meaning of situations is not a kind of practical or theoretical knowledge but rather a “depth” of meaning that is experienced, where the possible meanings of the situation that may be anticipated or opened up are experienced as emotional depth. The emotion that is there at a given moment is able to resonate through the individual in ways that have been opened up as a result of previous experience (when there was a *temporal* unfolding of the emotional meaning of a similar situation), where this resonance is now experienced in more of a *spatial* sense, as the potential development of the given situation as it is experienced emotionally. This resonance is experienced as the potential emotional meaning of the situation and as an openness for the individuals involved to discover this meaning for themselves. One could say that the increased sense of the possible emotional meaning of a situation allows for the actual emotion to manifest that would otherwise perhaps remain hidden or be slow to spread out into possible emotional space.

It should be noted that it is not always the case that an individual who has experienced many different kinds of emotional situations is able to allow for emotions to manifest as they are. Indeed, the individual may have certain fears or dislikes, may find pleasure in the experience of certain emotions, may be committed to certain emotions in ways that distort what emotions can manifest and the depth at which they are allowed to be felt. This is not only a case of blocking certain emotions but also of imposing them. So we can say that the above description of an increase in the awareness of the possible emotional ramifications of a given situation as a result of experience does not automatically imply that emotions are, to return to a phrase I used in the context of authentic attunement, “let be”.

This then gives us the first element of authentic learning to be attuned, where the process of the increase in the depth of emotional experience can occur in a

way that is authentic, when the emotions arising are held with a sense of detachment and nearness, or in a way that is inauthentic, when emotions *themselves* emerge in an inauthentic mood (revealing these emotions as, for example, attractive or threatening, good or bad). As a result of inauthentic emotional learning the depth of emotional experience will resist and promote emotions in a way that is both sophisticated (for example, by ostensibly allowing a particular emotion to manifest but actually shielding oneself from it) and resilient, as these resistances and preferences will have been reinforced many times and in many different ways, leading to a web of responses that is not easy to circumvent. Authentic emotional depth, however, involves, as we saw in Chapter 5, a combination of openness to things as they present themselves and the ability to respond emotionally in a way that is commensurate with this entity involved.

The second aspect of emotions themselves learning is that of a movement away from emotions manifesting in a way that is “blatant”, when the emotion comes out fully, to one where emotions manifest in a way that is measured (proportionate and discriminating), in a way that is commensurate with the situation and with the cues that set it off. In its blatant form the emotion comes out in such a way that, once it has been triggered, the emotion loses its link with the situation and simply manifests fully. In its measured form the emotion, rather than taking the cue and becoming self-absorbed, comes out in a way that retains the relationship with the situation that triggered it. This is not to say that the measured emotional response is necessarily less intense, but it does mean that it is clearly directed (for example, it does not spread its anger indiscriminately to whoever happens to be at hand) and proportionate (for example, a pupil who has not done his homework does not elicit a fire and brimstone sermon from the teacher).

Though the description of a “measured response” may suggest that I am talking about control, this is not the case so long as it is authentic, as it is the emotion itself that responds in a way that is proportionate, by remaining in touch with the situation that triggered it. Similarly, the notion of discrimination may suggest that there is a self that directs the emotion towards its target, but, again, it is the emotion itself that remains in touch with

both itself (note that a minimum of non-reflective self-awareness is necessary here) and the situation that triggered it, so that, in case it began to spill over into other situations (for example, the teacher has been angry with one pupil and this anger is now threatening to be directed at another) the emotion itself will awaken to the fact that it is, as it were, “barking up the wrong tree”.

The inauthentic form of such measured emotional responses is one that is not the result of the emotion remaining itself open to the situation as it changes but, rather, the result of the response being controlled in a way that is reflective, where the faculty of understanding takes the emotion that is experienced and acts in a way that is calculating and measuring. This is a case of the kind of critical rationality I discussed in Section 3.5.4 seemingly taking the emotion under its control (for example, by deciding to vent one’s anger at the pupil who “deserves it” but present a smiling face to the one who has been good). Though the attempt to take control of one’s emotions is probably usually well-intentioned, it is deeply self-contradictory, as it is not really possible to take control of an emotion, because, as we saw in Chapter 5, the emotion is that which first gives us the possibility of the experience of the things we experience in the way we do; what can be controlled is one’s actions. To say that the attempt to control one’s emotions is inauthentic is not to suggest that people should not control their actions, for example, in the case of a teacher who gets angry and ready to lash out at a pupil. But it should be understood that the control of one’s actions in the face of an emotion is at best a temporary solution (however necessary), and that, if the emotion itself does not subside, it will frame future situations in such ways that the emotion will transpire in some way or other, purely as a function of its characteristic of colouring both the self and the world one finds oneself in.

The authentic version of the emotional response being measured (proportionate and discriminate) happens as a result of the individual having remained in contact with the situation, because the individual has not become absorbed in the emotion as it was first triggered, where this is not the result of the individual separating themselves from the emotion in such a way that the emotion becomes a practical or theoretical object. Rather, such a lack of absorption is there in the affective disposition of *detachment and nearness* we

already encountered in the previous point I made about authentic learning to be attuned. We thus have a mode of being in which the individual is non-reflectively self-aware of itself as capable of being emotionally attuned while there is an actual way of being emotionally attuned in operation.

What happens in this situation is that the active emotion is first allowed to simply be what it is, but that it is then likely to quieten down, especially in so far as it is experienced in relation to another person (as we saw in Section 6.4.2 the affective disposition of authentic being-with tends towards an openness in silence) and to “want to give the other their otherness”. The result of this will be that the other person is allowed to manifest as themselves anew, which means that the individual experiencing the emotion in relation to them will keep contact with them in the sense that the emotion is allowed to arise but also subside quickly again. Note that this is true of both unpleasant feelings (for example, getting angry with a pupil one is fond of) and pleasant ones (for example, being proud of the good grades one’s child has received at school).

The second aspect of emotions themselves learning is that of a movement away from emotions arising in response to clear cues to the arising in response to ever subtler cues, as the individual is being increasingly able to pick up emotionally salient information in a situation. It represents the sensitivity and subtlety that mature people may display where their less mature counterparts are only responsive to more overt cues. Again, this is not a function of the development of a more acute perceptual or cognitive apparatus, though one is unlikely to develop without the other, but a genuine maturation of the emotional faculty itself. The meaning of emotional cues (for example, a pupil is observed as they receive a bad mark) is picked up in a way that is more subtle, because they resonate, in the individual, with a more diversified (differentiated and integrated) inner experience. This ability to read subtle emotional cues is sometimes experienced as being able to read the whole of how another person is feeling from their face and posture. It is based in the basic characteristic of emotional communication, mentioned earlier, that emotions communicate themselves by resonating in the person who receives the communication. This ability becomes increasingly mature, to the extent that the emotion is allowed to resonate with ever deeper experience in a way that is proportionate to the

situation (for example, the pupil is sad, but it is not the end of the world for her) and discriminate (the pupil is sad, but the sadness seems to be about more than just the grade).

In the case of the emotion revealing the meaning of the situation, the emotion unfolds but the automatic (physical) actions that may have defined the emotions in the evolutionary past do not arise with the emotion unless this is what is called for (as when there is the projectile flying towards one and one ducks, or when the door in the burning house is stuck and one's anger gives one the strength to open it), where the ability to sense if and when an actual physical response is called for resides in the totality of the situation as it involves an understanding of the situation as well as a way of being connected with others through being-with (knowing when to act in response to what the other person is feeling).

But in either case (whether one needs to actually respond or not) the emotion one experiences needs to come out, manifest, less and less, and one can stay increasingly close to equanimity: one does not need to pick up the full force of despair the other person is feeling in order to know what to do, just a whiff of it is enough; one does not need to feel full-blown boredom, in order for one to know that it is time to switch off the television. This means that one does not "go through" the whole of the emotion, but is touched by it, enough for one to either act in response (instantly knowing the pupil is depressed and requires one to act by, for example, referring them to the school counsellor), allow the emotion to take one with it (as when the father needs but to see the look in the eyes of his son to be drawn into the emotion of celebrating in jubilant terms that his son has passed the exam), or simply take in the meaning of the situation without, as yet, doing anything (as when the way a parent sighs while they are explaining how the home situation of the pupil has recently changed is enough for the teacher to grasp its meaning).

That this ability to respond to increasingly subtle emotional cues develops does not mean that one begins to jump to conclusions, after all one may be wrong, but simply that the emotion itself does not need to manifest fully for it to do its work. This does, likewise, not lead to a flattened experience of life, as

it happens authentically within the emptiness of possible emotional experience, which is in itself much fuller than any actual emotional experience and which (as the experience of wonder in relation to practical or theoretical entities and the emotion of affection, solidarity and love in relation to living creatures) still has its own experience of being authentically attuned.

We now have three aspects of emotional learning as modification and growth. First, the individual will have more emotional depth, an enriched their sense of the possible meaning the situation may have, so that they can anticipate and open up these meanings, where this will occur in a way that is authentic, so long as the emotions arising themselves are held in a wider mood of detachment and nearness. Second, emotional response is increasingly measured (proportionate and directed) by retaining contact with the situation and the cues that triggered it. Third, the emotional meaning of a situation is picked up with increasing subtlety, leaving the individual ever closer to emotional equilibrium, even if they sometimes still respond with full emotion.

As a result of the above, associations between emotions, situations, events, people and practical or theoretical entities are increasingly experienced in terms of possibility. On the one hand, this manifests as tentativeness and represents an emotional tentativeness that corresponds with the understanding that the associations one has learned to make (for example, between school and the feeling of being repressed) may turn out invalid in a new situation (after having moved to a different school) or for different people (the other pupil may experience the same school as liberating). On the other hand, this very same tentativeness, so long as it is emotional and not merely based in understanding, also brings with it a clear decisiveness, as emotional cues that require a response will be taken as such and not be drowned out by a general noise of confused emotional responses that shoot off in all directions. This combination of tentativeness and decisiveness corresponds with the aspect of authentic attunement I mentioned in Chapter 5 of the individual having the potential to respond emotionally if necessary, but, doing so in a way that does not remain identified with that response, or that expends energy unnecessary, even if they act practically or theoretically.

What is more, the space which the emotions created for themselves when they arose but then abandoned remains (in a way that is similar to the way in which the possible ramification of emotional situations remained after their moment had passed) as openness and possibility. This openness and possibility strengthens one's ability to remain in contact with a situation even as an emotion arises. What is more, it increasingly allows the emotion to let go of itself, if it senses that it has become disproportionate or indiscriminate. What allows the emotion to subside is the emptiness that has built up around it, which is experienced by the individual as being "themselves" more authentically than the emotion itself, where otherwise the absorption in the emotion may have involved identification and an accompanying unwillingness to let go of it as itself. The fact that, as a result of authentic experience (which involves *letting be* as well as *letting go of* the emotion as it arises within the nothingness of self and world), the individual is increasingly able to respond in a way that is measured is, therefore, the result of a steady expansion of the openness of authentic attunement.

This expanding sense of inner space within which emotions come and go, but where the space is experienced as more genuinely oneself than the emotions, is a form of growth that is experiential and yet not represented in accounts of *learning as modification and growth*. The importance of the growth of this sense of inner space over the years is that it comes to anchor the sense of self that arises when the individual "turns back" to the world after having "turned away". This sense of self is then anchored ever more solidly in the emptiness left behind by the emotions that have come and gone. In this emptiness also lies the depth of emotional experience in the form of the possible meanings of the situation that may be anticipated or opened up. The self that grows over the years is then one of openness and possibility, where both gain in strength, as the growing openness can accommodate more and different emotions and the growing ramifications of possible emotions represent more possible ways of responding. The individual will, as a result, have inner strength and resourcefulness combined with genuine openness and humility, as well as the capacity to relate to other *living beings*, which require the individual to take them as openness and possibility.

#### 7.1.4 *Authentic learning to be-with*

In Chapter 6 we saw how the communal as well as the interpersonal are co-constitutive of Dasein. This faculty of being connected with other Daseins Heidegger calls being-with and, in the context of the question of authentic learning I have taken, being-with is expressed in the faculty of communication, which, as inauthentic, consists in the articulation of experience. That is, I will consider what it means for *learning as modification and growth* to happen in a way that is authentic, in so far as it leads to the articulation of experience. Being-with is itself the basis from which both language and culture spring, where Heidegger calls the state of “being lost” in the fruits of being-with (language and culture) “falling”, which he contrasts with being grounded in authentic being-with. But, as has been said before, after the movement of “turning away” from the world (from language and culture) there is a “turning back”. So the question I will address now is what such a “turning back” involves if and when it itself occurs in a way that is authentic.

As I argued in Chapter 6, the process of being-with becoming authentic begins with a communication, “a call” that originates in authentic Dasein. It is itself not a communication about practical or theoretical things, even if such communication may also take place. The call is directed at Dasein and appeals to Dasein to become authentic. It communicates in such a way that it is prior to a differentiation into someone calling and someone hearing. It is itself not based in (reducible to) either propositional language or culturally determined ways of behaving towards individuals or collectives. The call does not articulate, because articulation involves taking things *as* certain things, and Dasein can be understood in terms of itself only, having its own “for the sake of”. The call brings to Dasein’s awareness what kind of entity Dasein really is, that it has the potential to becoming “who it really is”, and it does this purely in terms of Dasein itself and not in terms of anything else (there is neither a practical nor a theoretical “as”). This kind of communication allows for the co-existence of individuality and the interconnection between individuals (interpersonally or collectively).

The process of being-with learning to be authentic is, therefore, one of Dasein going from hearing the call in terms of articulation (as indicating how certain things belong together and other things belong apart) to hearing it as a pure pointing out of the possibility of authentic existence as it is already there in Dasein itself. This is a reciprocal process of the call breaking through the hearing in terms of articulation and the awakening of a new kind of hearing (which does not hear in terms of articulation). One way of putting this is to say that the call, "passes over" the self of *das Man*, where this involves interrupting the way Dasein usually listens (so that the habitual ways of receiving the communication are not reactivated), which awakens another kind of listening (one that does not take what is being communicated in terms of anything they already know, feel, believe, like or dislike), so that the call can get through to Dasein's authentic self and appeal to it to be its own authentic self (without the appeal being mediated and distorted by *das Man*), with the result that *das Man* is pushed into significance and dissolves, exposing Dasein's authentic self, which then experiences itself and the other Dasein as they really are (individualized as well as one with the other and the collective), as a result of which it takes itself as it really is and becomes this authentic self. This process of being-with becoming authentic is experienced as an awakening, an expansion of awareness and a silencing of the inner voices that would normally articulate what was being communicated in terms of a known world and a familiar self.

The process of the individual learning to be-with in a way that is authentic is one where the individual learns to articulate experience in terms of language and cultural practices in a way that is informed by authentic being-with. This process of learning to articulate experience in terms of language and cultural practices is, both with regard to the inauthentic and the authentic mode, best described as one of growing participation or enculturation. This growing participation leads to an increasingly integrated and differentiated articulation of the experience one is participating in. If we put it in terms of the faculty of understanding, we would say that the individual has an increasingly detailed and generalizable understanding of the way things are perceived and done in a particular cultural setting and of how this understanding is expressed in way

that are appropriate. If we put it in terms of the faculty of attunement, we would say that the individual had an increasingly detailed sense for the affective significance of the different elements that made up the situation and of the situation as a whole, helping them respond in ways that are appropriate. Illuminating though these ways of putting it may be, we need to get the process in view in terms of being-with rather than understanding or attunement.

When I consider the process of authentic enculturation (growing participation) I will not distinguish between the novice (the one being enculturated) and the expert (the one structuring, modelling and bridging the practices the novice is being enculturated into), because the process is, for the purpose of this discussion, symmetrical. It begins with a moment where the other person (whether that be the novice or the expert) is simply there, where the focus is on the other person without taking that person as engaged in any kind of practice. Here the person is, to borrow from our discussion of attunement, “the bare ‘that it is’ in the nothing of the world”, the person is who they are in terms of themselves only. In terms of the experience of being-with, I said in Chapter 6 that this meant that the person was experienced as “other”, as existing in terms of him or herself only. At the same time, the person is experienced as “one with oneself”, as co-constituting oneself, or, again borrowing from attunement, with a sense of affection, solidarity and love. This is the moment at the beginning of enculturation, where two or more individuals may just take a moment to connect and acknowledge each other prior to any engagement with theoretical or practical entities.

Once the actual process of enculturation gets underway it will need to be guided by, articulated in line with, or done in an atmosphere that is attuned to authentic existence. This means that all throughout one takes every Dasein (oneself and the other individual, as well as outsiders and those creatures from the natural world which one takes as having the nature of Dasein) in the spirit of oneness and otherness first, even if at certain points this Dasein needs to become articulated linguistically or in terms of the cultural practice one is participating in. Here we again encounter the principle that the authentic way of engaging with an entity or a situation embeds the inauthentic one, in the

sense that the former is larger than the latter and guides it. This is true even in relation to theoretical or practical entities, in that the non-articulating contact with the entity embeds the process of increasingly detailed and generalizable articulation.

What this means is that, whenever one's engagement with a Dasein (including, in certain ways, creatures from the natural world) is being articulated (for example, when certain symptoms are linked with a certain neurotic tendency in the context of a psychology lesson) in terms of how to perceive, act in response to, and capture in language, there is "a call", a voice that discloses the Dasein in terms of itself only (that is, incapable of being captured in any articulation) and appeals to the authentic being in oneself to "hand" that Dasein its authenticity. This is true even if, as in our example, it concerns a lesson where there is no live neurotic Dasein who is being studied, but merely a depersonalized case study and a list of symptoms; in such a case it is still authentic Dasein who is the intentional object of the learning as modification and growth, even if it involves what in phenomenology is called "empty intending".

The result of this holding the inauthentic articulation as embedded in authentic being-with is that, to stay with our example, the diagnosis of neuroticism and the knowledge of how and when to apply the symptoms is held in a way that is highly tentative. At the same time this very tentativeness is the ground from which decisiveness can grow, because once the decision has been made as to what the being of the entity involved is, many of the dilemmas that would otherwise have to be dealt with are resolved. For example, if, after having been very tentative in one's theoretical and practical articulations of a certain pupil, once one decides that a situation involving the pupil has to be dealt with in a way that takes the pupil as a practical entity, questions as to whether one should, for example, first do a formal assessment disappear and one simply acts in accordance to the being of the entity, albeit in such a way that still keeps in mind the nature of the individual as a Dasein and that is open to revising itself, if it turns out that another approach is asked for.

The person cannot be articulated in a way that is commensurate with their nature, because they exist primarily as “other”, that is, in terms of themselves only. So, if it is done, it should be done tentatively in terms of possibility and in a way that only becomes actual, when the whole of one’s being understands, feels and is obliged by the circumstances to make a decisive leap into articulating the being of the other person. This may not be as dramatic as it sounds here, as, for example, when one learns to plan a public health campaign, which one understands requires large scale planning that is done in a way that deals with individuals statistically (for example, the aim is to save 10000 lives, where it is relatively unimportant whose lives they are within a given population) and that is done in the context of existing discourses, practices and institutions. The person or the community which is the intentional object in this learning is articulated in a way that is decisively theoretical, even if it is always understood that they are in themselves “other”.

Another aspect of authentic enculturation is that the other person and the community is taken as co-constitutive of oneself even if their being is articulated in a way that is inauthentic. Yet, at the same time one also exists for oneself as for the sake of other Daseins. This is a kind of co-constituency of one in terms of the other that loses its paradoxical nature only in the individual who no longer articulates him or herself in terms of the culture and language he or she is part of. That is, if one takes oneself in cultural and linguistic terms (articulates who one is) and the other is co-constitutive of one, this other becomes articulated in these same terms. Conversely, if one takes oneself as existing for the sake of the other Dasein and takes the other Dasein in terms of its cultural and linguistic terms, one becomes oneself articulated in the terms of the other. Because each articulation is particular, it is not possible for both to be articulated in terms of the other at the same time. Such a problem does, however, not arise if the articulation is left silent, because two silences can each be taken as being part of the other without this becoming a contradiction.

But a *learning as modification and growth* that occurs for an individual who is in themselves not articulated is possible only if the functional existence of that individual, their role, their profile as defined in terms of the language and

culture they are being enculturated into, is appropriated in a way that is wholly impersonal. What would happen, if the individual enters a situation where the role they have been enculturated into is called for, is that the voice that articulates the situation in line with the relevant language and cultural practices arises in the same impersonal way as does the voice that calls Dasein to its authentic existence. The place from which this voice originates is Dasein as openness, as possibility. The *learning as modification and growth* happens, as a result within a context of the nothingness of the individual, where there is no self that learns but rather a process of *learning as modification and growth* that creates a self at the same time as it creates the intentional object of that learning, where the self that is created is merely a functional self, a role and profile that exists within a larger absence of identity.

Here too we find a tentativeness, but now in relation to the very self that makes up one's identity within the cultural practices and language, where, again, there may be a decisive assumption of the role when that is called for, but in such a way that is not personal, merely functional. This is, in some ways, the very picture of the impartial practitioner or functionary. But in the case of having learned in an authentic way to fulfil the function, the functional identity is embedded in a larger, authentic silence which articulates neither the self of the individual, nor that of those he or she engages with, but engages with them in a way that expresses the authentic affective dispositions of oneness and otherness, of affection, solidarity and love.

The result of this learning being embedded in the silence of authentic being-with is that the articulations that are appropriated and later applied are informed by authentic being-with. Initially this will mean that there is considerable tension between the way the culture and language articulates experiences (entities, events and situations), because the culture and language reflect the extent to which the individuals and groups involved are inauthentic. For example, the individual may be articulated as a substance rather than a process and all learning may be articulated in terms of modification and growth. This tension will make it more difficult for the individual in their functional capacity to retain contact with their authentic understanding of the

situation, but the tentative nature of the way they articulate will make it possible, at least in principle.

What this tension highlights, though, is the importance of educational cultures, the local cultures in families and schools, in enabling the individual to establish their ways of articulating experience in such a way that such tensions between the actual articulation as constrained by culture and language and the way experience would be articulated in a world where all articulation occurred under the auspices of authentic awareness are kept to a minimum. A context where the practices individuals have appropriated are looked upon as arising in an impersonal way from within the silence of the authentic individual is very different from one where these practices are taken as constituting the whole individual.

Apart from the role of educational settings of enabling authentic being-with to take root in the individual, by minimizing the tension between authentic existence and the inauthentic articulation of experience, there is also a role in changing the culture and language itself. Such change is necessarily gradual and on-going, but nevertheless an important part of human existence. As individuals become firmly rooted in authentic existence, they will eventually be in a position to partake in a transformation of the cultural and linguistic practices of a community. As teachers, parents, colleagues, managers, academics, politicians, and so on, they will be able to reform one or two bits of the culture or language so that it may facilitate rather than obstruct individuals discovering authentic ways of being.

## **7.2 Learning to be authentic and authentic learning**

I will conclude the thesis by giving a general characterization of the process of *learning to be authentic* and *authentic learning*. I will do this by setting out what the formal characteristics are that these processes display in the three basic faculties of Dasein.

The process of *learning to be authentic* has a starting point: for understanding this is the moment one does not commit to a projection of the being of an entity; for attunement this is the moment one “stays with” the mood one is in

even as one is moved to act in response; for being-with this is an interruption in the way one has been listening to things by way of *das Man*.

This starting point then sets in motion a process that is reciprocal, where there is a mutual reinforcement of two different elements: for understanding there is an increase in the “transparency” of understanding coupled with an increase in Dasein’s projection of its understanding onto temporality; for attunement there is an increase in non-reflective self-awareness coupled with an increase in the way entities are encountered from within the nothing of the world; for being-with there is an increasing awareness of the “call of conscience” coming both from oneself and from beyond oneself, which is coupled with Dasein hearing this call increasingly in terms of itself and not in terms of *das Man*.

The result of this mutually reinforcing process is that Dasein *lets go* of some of the existing structures of its way of experiencing itself and the entities it encounters: it lets go of its existing understanding of the being of entities it is engaged with and, rather than understanding these entities in terms of its projections, understands them in terms of temporality, of the process that projects itself; it lets go of the moods that were defining both itself and the world in certain emotional terms and allows the entities to emerge from out of the nothing of the world in a way that is immediate; it lets go of the linguistic and cultural practices that were mediating its contact and communication with itself and the entities it encounters in the world and re-establishes such a direct contact through silence.

The outcome of this letting go is that Dasein becomes able to experience both itself and the entities it encounters in a way that it commensurate to their being. To use the phrase I used in the introduction, Dasein acquires “a sense for the being of the entities themselves”. With regard to itself, Dasein encounters itself increasingly as an end in itself: as a process of temporality, as transcendence, as existing both in terms of itself and in such a way that the other person and the communal are co-constitutive of it. Dasein also begins to experience the processes that constitute it as arising in a way that is prior to any division between subject and object: temporality temporalizes itself; any

mood or emotion arises in such a way that it colours both self and world; the call that appeals to Dasein to be authentic arises in a way that is impersonal. With regard to the entities it encounters in the world, Dasein is able to disclose these entities in terms of their possibilities: as theoretical or practical entities, or as entities with the nature of Dasein itself; in terms of a mood and emotions that are appropriate to the situation Dasein is in; in terms of the possibility of authentic existence for both Dasein itself and the other Dasein, including in certain ways creatures from the natural world.

In even more general terms, we can say that learning to be authentic is a process that begins when Dasein's inauthentic way of being is left as possibility (so that it is not committed to), as prior to either the subject or object pole of intentionality (so that it is not moved away from), and as open to the possibility of being affected from without it (so that it is ready to be appealed to). There is then a process of, on the one hand, a growing non-reflective self-awareness (transparency, non-reflective self-awareness of mood, and the voice of conscience calling) and, on the other hand, the awakening of another way of being (projecting the being of entities onto temporality, encountering entities from out of the nothing of the world, listening in a way that is not mediated by the cultural and linguistic practices of one's community). The result of which is a "dying towards" one's inauthentic way of being, a "turning away", a "letting go" of the existing structures of experience (of the projections of understanding so that things can be understood in terms of temporality; of one's defining moods, so that things can "let be"; of the linguistic and cultural practices, to make way for silence). This is then followed by a self-understanding that understands oneself in terms of oneself (as process, transcendence and being-with) and as existing prior to there being either a self or a world (as temporality, attunement and a voice, all of which are self-arising) and by an understanding of the entities one encounters in the world in terms of their being (theoretical, practical or with the nature of Dasein), in terms of an affective disposition that is appropriate to the situation, and as potentially authentic.

At this point, when the process of *learning to be authentic* has run its course and there is authentic existence, the process of *authentic learning* can begin. This is

a process of learning as modification and growth that is guided by, articulated in line with, or done in an atmosphere that is attuned by authentic existence. Its starting point is the moment after the existing structures of experience have been relinquished and there is an authentic engagement with both oneself and the entities one encounters in the world. That is, the entity which is the object of the learning is disclosed first in terms of temporality, in an atmosphere of detachment and nearness, in the silence of being connected in a way that is not mediated by *das Man*. The process that ensues is, like the process of *learning to be authentic*, a reciprocal, mutually reinforcing one: there is a spreading of the awareness that comes with transparency, while there is the growth, integration and differentiation of knowledge and skills; there is a growing sense of inner space, of the emptiness left behind by moods that have subsided, while there is an ever expanding sense of what the emotional meaning of different situations can be; there is the ever expanding silence of authentic being-with other creatures with remains non-articulated, while there is the increasingly detailed and generalized articulation of one's experience in terms of the linguistic and cultural practices of one's community.

The result of this is that the capacities that emerge as a result of this learning as modification and growth are embedded within a larger, authentic experience of oneself and of the events, entities and situations involved in that learning. What is learned in this way is held in a way that is at once tentative and capable of clear decision: the being of an entity as it is projected is understood as possible, and yet where necessary action will be resolute; the emotional meaning of situations may or may not apply, and yet where necessary one's response will be decisive; the ways of articulation that come with the role and function one has been enculturated into may or may not be the right one, but where needed one is able to articulate with clarity.

With this description of *learning to be authentic* and *authentic learning* we have arrived at a state of affairs where we can begin to address the challenge facing education in the present day, as set out in Chapter 1. Such learning would, I said, be able to do justice to the being of the entities we encountered in the life world, human beings, but also animals, the environment and life as a whole. I then said that "a sense for the being of the entities themselves" was what was

called for. And I said that this learning could not be fragmented, either inside the individual or as broken up into separate elements in the whole of a course of learning. We can now see more clearly why it is that this fragmentation poses a problem, beyond the practical problems it poses: *life and living beings* have wholeness as their very being, so that it cannot be understood in terms of anything other than itself, and it is itself only in so far as we understand that we are as much a part of it as it is a part of us, and this understanding is not a cognitive one but one that is felt as affection, solidarity and love, even as it communicates in silence.

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