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KIERKEGAARD, HEIDEGGER AND THE QUESTION OF METHOD BEHIND THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY

Introduction

There are four points to be noted from the very beginning in regards to the approach at hand. Firstly, the cause for such an approach rests in the notion of inseparability of one´s relation to others, which is also connected to a relation one has to oneself. Secondly, the article will focus mainly on understanding the problem of leveling from the individual´s point of view – i.e. from the ground up – which also applies to the path of the investigation. Thirdly, for the sake of conceptual clarity and due to Michael Theunissen´s interpretational approach, the term that will be partially used to designate Kierkegaard´s individual is going to be *Dasein*. And fourthly, the method, as suggested in the title, ought to be understood as a motion of thought[1]. I will first start by introducing an interpretational scheme of Kierkegaard's existential dialectics and then move on to Heidegger's hermeneutics of facticity. I intend to do both in regards to the process of becoming a Self, followed by a concluding explication of what is different and what is similar in their approaches. Our main objective in the following chapter is to focus

1 Or as a way, a path (ὁδός) that is after (μετά) something.

on this very problematic notion of Kierkegaard's thought as movement, before moving on to Heidegger´s hermeneutic method.

Kierkegaard's existential dialectic

The Self as a relation

"A human being is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation that relates itself to itself or is the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation; the self is not the relation but is the relation's relating itself to itself: A human being is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short, a synthesis. A synthesis is a relation between two. Considered in this way, a human being is still not a self."[2]

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The above cited quotation from *Sickness unto Death* represents one of – if not the – core edifices of Kierkegaard's philosophy, mainly because of its elusive middle term, the relation. It is unnerving to think of a Self in this way for many reasons, one of which is its implicit aspect of becoming. Thus a question arises: Why is it so hard to grasp? It is because it narrates us as readers to think of the Self in its progression that cannot be easily grasped within a static definition, for it is rather Kierkegaard's movement of thinking that deserves our attention. On the other hand there is also the possibility of simply ignoring it's problematic nature and continue on adding new definitions. However, in this case we would aloofly disregard Kierkegaard's seriousness which is one of his best qualities and risk to continue the tradition of approaching him as a lackey of theology as well as Hegelian philosophy. Albeit Kierkegaard regards faith a sacred matter, the way he approaches the progression of faith is not through firm definitions but description coupled with despair as its inherent counterpart. If we understand progression of faith through clods of resignation encountered in existence, then we're also required to understand the structural aspect of the problem within a philosophical spectrum, maintaining the notion

2 Ibid., p. 13.

that Kierkegaard's existential philosophy can provide a profound introspection of what is it to be human.

Kierkegaard's definition of a Self[3] as an established relation, which is in relation to itself, can be reduced to two basic premises: 1. a will not to be oneself, 2. a will to be oneself. According to Theunissen, these two premises form together a pre-given ontological-dialectic fundament of Kierkegaard's psychological experimentation with how to become a Self. The quote which was taken out of Kierkegaard's *Sickness unto Death* will therefore present an appropriate point of departure for understanding Theunissen's explication of Kierkegaard's negativistic method regarding the interrelation of the two wills. By outlining the two premises in his work on *Kierkegaard´s Concept of Despair*, Theunissen states that the Danish philosopher indeed considers both an ontological and an ontic stage of existence, regardless of Heidegger's critic of his disregard for the ontological difference. He continues stating that the crucial element that sets Kierkegaard's dialectic in motion is despair. It sets forth a negative self-relation which in its final stage becomes a negative self relation to God but only if this kind of despair assumes the quality of willing to be oneself. By doing so a self leaves behind all that it was and instead of transforming its individual pre-given existence, it makes it insist on itself, on the cost of disavowing the Creator. As a result of this motion, despair becomes a process which turns consciousness [*Bewusstsein*] into awareness [Bewusthei][4] of what it means to become a Self, consequently coupling the demonic defiance against God with an extreme state of awareness. Ultimately it falls back to the first premise, a willing not to be oneself, which again establishes an acknowledgment of one's weakness and thus discloses one's being towards divinity – i.e. the supreme Other.

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3 I would like to direct attention to Theunissen´s approach of separating Kierkegaard´s usage of the Self in ints infinite form from the self in its finite form by deignating it with capitol letters. Due to the ellusiveness of Kierkegaard´s terms connected to the individual, Theunissen also utilizes Heidegger´s term of *Dasein* as to secure a neutrality one could operate with.
4 See Theunissen*, M., Kierkegaard´s Concept of Despair* (2005), p. 17.

At this point we should retrace our steps in order to clarify just what elements are suggested in the notion of the negative Self implied by the first premise. Following Kierkegaard´s stream of thought, Theunissen lays before us a tripartite cluster of related aspects of the basic premise of 'not willing'. Hence we do not will: 1.What we are as a self 2. What we are in our being human and 3. What we are in our pre-given *Dasein* which is to be understood not only as what we find ourselves but also the situation in which we find ourselves. The first part refrains to the past, the second to the future while the third refrains to our situation in the present world. Theunissen stresses the importance of understanding the constellation of 'not willing' as not only historically based or factual but also as a negative relation to what we are in our individual determinateness, to "what usually inheres in the specific difference of the human species vis-à-vis all entities".[5] The facticity in Kierkegaard's case is herein the one in which we have to relate to ourselves in our historical particularity, as well as embracing the ambiguity of understanding determinateness as indeterminateness which is itself an additional particularity.

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Based on the ambiguity of being caught in between determinateness and indeterminateness, Theunissen introduces an interesting reformulation of the two premises, starting with a twofold division[6] of the first premise. On one hand we don't want to accept our pre-given Self, whereas on the other hand we want to get rid of ourselves or to put it more precisely, we want to get rid of the entanglement in the process of self-establishing. The reason why we want to get rid of ourselves as human beings in terms of motive differs from not accepting our pre-given Self, for it implies a "revulsion against the limitations of determinateness"[7], and not only fear of indeterminateness as fear of nothingness. This brings us to Theunissen's reformulation of authentic despair 1. We do not will to be what we are. 2. We will to be what we are not. The reformulation is based on the aforementioned argument that in order to obtain despair in a willing to be oneself, we need to include the negative premise as well, because what we will to be is a hypothetical, abstract Self,

5 Ibid., p. 7.
6 The second and third point of not willing to be oneself stated above.
7 Ibid., p. 8.

a constructed self which has nothing to do with our factual existence that ought to be understood, as mentioned above, in its particular, individual determinateness as well. The 'willing to be what we are not' incorporates the qualities of the previous two subdivisions of 'willing not to be oneself': 1. Not willing to be what we are 2. Willing to get rid of what we are. The willing to be ourselves as in 'willing to be what we are not' therefore alludes to the two aspects of the self, the pre-established Self and the mundane self. Theunissen explains his step in the following:

"The willfully expropriated existence can be degraded secondarily by surrendering oneself to the determinateness of another individual or can be exalted by its self-sacrifice for the indeterminateness of an abstraction. Then it becomes clear that in despairingly willing to be a self, we simply want to be what we are not. We want to be it in a perverted form of accepting, in an appropriation not of what is our own but what is of the other."[8]

Considering the mutual relation of the second premise to the two subdivisions of the first one, Theunissen's negative Self paradigm gives us means to understand the implicit method behind Kierkegaard's revolt against the Others, for in 'willing to be what we are not' one not only relates negatively to God but also to the determinateness of the other individual. As seen in the quotation, the inclination to lose ourselves in the other's determinateness is derived from a negative mundane relation, posited through self-surrendering or self-exclusion. Yet the real perversion of such an appropriative stance is fully realized in the notion of defiance. That is simply so because we reject that which, given the nature of willing to be what we are not, we latently want to become! What this shows to prove is that even defiance is reflected through the 'will to be what we are not' further down unto 'not willing to be what we are'. Consequently, defiance is divided into rebellious defiance – derived from 'willing the possible' as a lack of necessity and finitude – and defiance out of spite – derived from 'willing the impossible' as a lack of possibility and infinitude. Given that the rebellious kind is projected unto the one of rejection and therefore manifested within the mundane, it distinguishes itself from the latent revolt against God. The ambiguity of revolting against a heterogeneous

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8 Ibid., p. 11.

society accordingly incorporates this complex heterogeneous relation between a "factual" and an "imaginary *Dasein*"[9] while still maintaining their mutual inclusion and exclusion within social relations.

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A valid argument against the problematic notions of Theunissen's approach could be found in the fact that the presupposition of a pre-given Self he suggests doesn't fully explain the means for the manifestation of a defiant state. This is due to the fact that the pre-given Self Theunissen introduces is a dialectical one and is therefore in need of a basic premise which could then give rise to a defiant state of consciousness without a presupposed "true Self" towards which one could have an incorporated relation to from the very beginning. For the sake of contrast to his interpretation of the first premise as being the *Grundsatz* of Kierkegaard's existential dialectic method, Alistair Hannay tries to argue against this notion by stressing the second premise of willing to be a self as the leading one in understanding the structural meaning of defiance. In doing so he amplifies the theological predisposition of the pre-given Self as Christian Self. This he calls the notion of a "true Self" one would need in order to understand the form of authentic despair which comes out of willing to be oneself. Hannay argues that that Kierkegaard's main objective is to show how any form of willing to be oneself as a way of self-improvement is correspondingly a way of accepting specifications of a selfhood in the earthly that doesn't share any resemblance with the infinite one established by God. In Hannay's opinion this also applies well to understanding the question behind Kierkegaard's concept of inauthentic despair in which an individual doesn't have a concept of spirit and accordingly cannot fully grasp the magnitude of his despair – and yet he would, albeit unwillingly, still have an intrinsic inclination towards a paradigm of a true self he could then relate to even though it could

9 Ibid., p. 12.

be a fallacious one.[10]

According to Hannay, the transitional nature of Kierkegaard's thought represents a deconstruction of life and all terms within it so that the person could then affirmatively "grab hold of the opportunity provided by the idea of an infinite form of the self, still abstract and negative".[11] The result of such a deconstruction would enable its barer of appointing these mundane self-projects to the false selfhood whose main goal is to obscure one's weakness. He could then accordingly reevaluate his own existential situation. In this way the true self would appear on the horizon, enabling the individual to endure his human condition by accepting it anew. This also applies to the reason why Hannay opposes Theunissen's view on being aware of one's weakness or one's basic human condition by way of ´not wanting to be´, why in his opinion Theunissen's model of the negative Self would render the forward motion somewhat aimless, moreover, such a motion would risk falling back into Heidegger's *Das Man* if one would have nothing to relate to when choosing his or hers life's projects in particular and in general. The second difficulty about Theunissen´s model is closely related to the previous one as it concerns the question of happiness through virtue which doesn't come into perspective if one only refrains merely to negativity.

This is undoubtedly connected with the vagueness that surrounds the relation itself. It stems from the fact that the despair of willing to be oneself would be impossible without an establishment by God, understood in a theological sense of establishment. However, considering Kierkegaard´s approach to the problem of Self establishment through construing self-autonomy by way of the Socratic on one hand and a theological on the other,

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10 Kierkegaard's starting point can be found in his definition of "unconscious despair" where an individual unaware of his despair can only gain consciousness by a forward motion captured in the premise of willing to be oneself. By slowly willing forward and passing through different modes of despair one becomes more and more conscious of it. The counter movement of defiance follows this forward motion every step of the way, embodying different shapes of the structure of defiance such as unwillingness, reluctance, elusiveness etc. It is where progression of self-establishment begins, as well as the thwarting effect of resignation.

11 Hannay, A., "Basic Despair in The Sickness Unto Death", *Kierkegaard Studies* (1996), p. 24.

presupposing such a predisposition would deem the experimentation at hand dogmatic. This also corresponds well to Kierkegaard's ambivalence in ascertaining or rejecting any proof of God, leaving his rejection of any type of system ambivalent and informal as well – or dispersed in the esthetical. It is, as Theunissen notes, as if he secretly wanted prove such an existence of God by way of "existence of despair"[12] while still avoiding accountability. Be that as it may, the scope of this article is based on the transitional character of enduring through despair alone. It is where one should start investigating if one is to understand the "how" behind the process of becoming, even though Kierkegaard throughout his psychological experimentation enables every form of despair to stand on its own as a singular example. Grøn for instance articulates Kierkegaard´s experimentation as a qualification of spirit which passes through each individual figure. During its transition it makes the figure question it´s self-autonomy which ultimately collapses due to its ambiguous self-involvement. This goes to show that there are two aspects of Kierkegaard´s progression: on one hand we have the figures of consciousness, whereas on the other hand we have the position of the "diagnosticisian"[13] who attends the "interplay between what the figure says and means and ´what we see´"", which can also be understood as an awaken state of one´s consciousness. Hence, when speaking of relation, we speak of two relations: the negative self-relation

12 Ibid., p. 11.
13 See **Grøn, A.,** "*T*he Relation Between Part One and Part Two of The Sickness Unto Death", *Kierkegaard Studies* (1997), p. 48.

and an affirmative self-relation[14]. Both give us a different perspective of perceiving a discontinuous battle of contrariety[15] that goes hand in hand with Kierkegaard´s intentions, who – as Fichte before him – deemed it important to include the negative as a way of delineating human freedom in its positive sense. The created forth and back motion gives us the scope of understanding potentiality in its embodied state – as *kata dynamin*.

The model that I chose to follow in this article is leaning towards Theunissen´s negative Self, for I will try to argue that one can find a way out of falling back into *das Man* without necessarily having to rely on a positive Self but through

14 **In other words trying to reach selfhood by searching for it in the finite and** accordingly despairing over it, in Hannay's opinion, originates simply from the fact that one shouldn't search for selfhood in the earthly but in the eternal. His despair over the worldly is correspondingly also the despair over the eternal, whereas his weak human condition emerges as a residuum from a disoriented will. Relying on Kierkegaard's thoughts from *The Sickness unto Death* Hannay states that "one firstly becomes conscious of being something or other, though of course not the same thing – let us call it a self – distinct both from others and from the environing world." Once this state is established one becomes "conscious of oneself distinct from any other and from the world," which means that "it is impossible to be numerically another". In conclusion, "the project of getting rid of oneself by becoming another is therefore no longer possible, and indeed is seen to have been impossible all along". Based on Hannay´s interpretation, what leads a factual self in despair is, as opposed to Theunissen´s interpretation, a fear of indeterminateness caused by the impossibility of becoming another, i.e. escaping death. See Hannay, A., *"Basic Despair in The Sickness Unto Death"*, Kierkegaard Studies (1996), p. 26.

15 It brings us to the back and forth motion, captured in one of Kierkegaard's famous examples from *The Sickness Unto Death*, where he introduces the motto of a power hungry person, allegedly Caesar Borgia: "Either Caesar or nothing at all." If one were to adopt Thenussien´s view, the pre-given dialectical fundament enables the constellation in which Caesar doesn't want to be Caesar because he implicitly doesn't want to be what he is although it seems as though he does. He is in a way being held back from becoming Caesar by the negative self, which inherently deconstructs his every effort of trying to be himself as he's progressing in time and ultimately progressing towards his death. This gives us reason to conclude that the possibility of seeing one's human condition or situation is derived from a perverse act of defiance against the force that made this condition possible. Therefore the weakness of Caesar's human condition lies in the condition itself. On the other hand if we were to speak of a pre-given self as an established one an individual could relate to i.e. a Christian Self, then we also get a different model of defiance, where the reason behind Caesar's despair over himself and the reason why he's trying to get rid of it lies in the fact that he shouldn't have been attempting anything in the way of mundane projects at all.

a self-relation *via negativa,* given that our point of departure is particularly connected to a version of despair Kierkegaard firstly writes about in *The Present Age,* although he formulates it in *The Sickness unto Death* as the type of despair characteristic for *the petit bourgeois.* This type of despair is nor authentic nor inauthentic but a motionless state of spiritlessness, a form of indifference which betrays any form of activity and interest and "leads possibility around imprisoned in the cage of probability" that remains ignorant of any kind of selfhood. Kierkegaard defines it as a modern form of self-satisfaction because it thwarts the choice of either becoming or not becoming – or willing or not willing for that matter – and accordingly remains undifferentiated throughout. This form of indifference, alongside Heidegger's phenomenological understanding of the qualitatively similar point of indifference which he named "averageness" or *Durchschnittlichkeit,* will give an interesting approach to understanding social phenomena the individual encounters within the concept of *das Man.* Moreover, the comparison of the two will provide us means to understand the similarities and differences between the two approaches as well as attaining a scope of defining social relations. In order to do so we should firstly turn to the pages of *The Present Age.*

Kierkegaard's depiction of leveling in the *Present Age*

As we already outlined Kierkegaard´s method in the introduction, it is now time to denote just how it resonates in his depiction of leveling. According to Kierkegaard's introductory observations in regards to the contemporary social order of things, modernity lost its ethical posture as it knows only an imposed reflection void of inwardness, which he appropriately defined as a state of "moral ressentiment"[16]. As expected, Kierkegaard doesn't try to develop a grand scheme of human relations or a model of how they should be carried out but rather begins by emphasizing the importance of inwardness within inter-individual relations, starting with everyday discourse composed of

16 Ibid., p. 21.

oppositions. He warns his reader that inasmuch an individual doesn't obtain a certain ethical fortitude all discourse becomes a colorless cohesion of opposites, rendering any relation between opposites exchangeable with another relation. In this sense, if one were to generalize the effect of leveling then it would be more suitable to speak about a group of misguided individuals rather than a society, for lack of moral inwardness is what generates a loss of self-direction in its individual relation which passes on to relation to others. The individual whose passion no longer possesses the power of distinction therefore loses himself in a collective enthusiasm and ethical relativism empowered by gnawing reflection. As a consequence, "understanding" and "understanding", in the words of *Vigilus Haufniensis,* become two distinct things.[17]

A manifested discrepancy within understanding is also closely connected to the issue of reflection and communication in Kierkegaard, considering that there is a difference between primary reflection and a double reflection – or reduplication. Whereas primary reflection rests upon what is immediate, a double reflection occurs because of the instability of negation bestowed upon immediacy by primary reflection. In terms of communication, the first reflection will serve as a starting point for a direct communication within the public language: stating objective truths, asserting different issues within the public domain, using phrases everyone can relate to etc. while still failing to acknowledge the position of the communicator, our own as well as the one of the other. On the other hand, the second reflection is the one that reveals the communicators relation to the idea he or she represents[18]. The loss of a sense

17 **Whilst understanding inwardness means that one must be aware of how to** understand it, understanding by way of reasoning and reflection neglect the how. Thereby, to understand what you're saying is one thing but to understand yourself in the spoken word is something completely different. The more concrete "the content of consciousness is, the more concrete the understanding becomes, and when this understanding is absent to consciousness, we have a phenomenon of unfreedom that wants to close itself off against freedom." See Kierkegaard, S., *The Concept of Anxiety* (1980), p. 142.

18 However, a double reflection doesn't mean a formally inclined Hegelian double negation but a reflection of one's reflective state that's designated by a lack of coherence when negating something we're manifestly a part of and not a reflected lack that projects itself unto the other and then being drawn to the other as an attraction set foth by an ainitial repulsion.

of immediacy imposed by "gnawing reflection" thereby leads to an association of unreal individuals who function as a whole, yet without understanding what it means to be whole. This created abstraction thus generates a reality of its own, separating the individual from his concreteness and thereby paves the way to a superfluous servitude to a common ideal and a creation of the public, "a monstrous abstraction, an all-embracing something which is nothing, a mirage"[19]. In this sense it's made out of "individuals at the moments when they are nothing," thus "a public is kind of gigantic something, an abstract and deserted void which is everything and nothing"[20].

The call for inwardness appointed by Kierkegaard´s words leads us to the hidden motif of the essay itself. The given reciprocity, which at first glance appears as a populist narration of the designated reader, conceals a deeper sense of relation that could be conceivable by starting with the one between the individual and the Public. However, based on the suggested interpretation, we should also bear in mind the introductory scheme of the two basic premises that are closely connected to the problem of lost inwardness and the separation from society which represents a first step into regaining it. Starting with the motion of negativity produced by despair over something worldly in particular which is also known as despair of finitude, we can see that it passes onto despair over the worldly *in toto*, - in our case the world as the universal public domain. The second phase of despair of weakness then culminates into despair over the eternal. Given that there is a conversion between progression and resignation in becoming, one could argue for a hidden correlation between the factual and the eternal Self, meaning that the despaired will of wanting to be oneself in the eternal actually despairs over the worldly. If we follow Kierkegaard's perilous dialectic path, we realize that this could be the reason behind an individual's defiant state, for his selfhood is through self-revulsion in the mundane somehow deflected unto the rejection of its infinite form and then turning it back into the worldly. As a positive consequence of this odd conversion, the same nihilistic process can provide individuals with the possibility of gaining an authentic way of how they conduct themselves. In Kierkegaard's own words from *The Present Age* that he appoints to the youth, it can "become the starting

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19 Ibid., p. 23.
20 Ibid., p. 36.

point for the highest life – for them it will indeed be an education to live in the age of leveling",[21] for the leveling process is futile when it comes to eternal truth and a commitment to embrace oneself. One could interpret this possibility of a new beginning by stating that even though the Public presents a heterogeneous middle ground, the task consequently falls unto the individual to make himself concrete again starting with his own ambiguity and not to pass the burden of responsibility back unto the Public. Furthermore, in an act of defiance in its mundane aspect, caused by 'willing to be what we are not', we not only negate the other i.e. the other we do not become, and therefore gain awareness of ourselves, but consequently affirm the other in his or hers difference – or better yet, a difference in particular determinateness which, at the point where we gain awareness of our own ambiguous situation, becomes indeterminate as well. It is due to the fact that in order to defy, one needs to defy "something" or "someone", although this "something" or "someone" remains unknown to us an unknown oppressive force that only seems as determinate. Subsequently we once more gain awareness of ourselves in our indeterminateness. Yet this point can present a new beginning and not merely a trigger for further revulsion of oneself or even enclosing oneself to resignation. The given reciprocity also goes to show that even though it appears at first glance that the manifested defiance is an act of volition, a second look reveals that it is caused by self-surrender derived from our own revulsion of self-determinateness which then finds itself in an ambiguous relation to the other. In this double movement of self-revulsion and defiance, one is given an intriguing position within a social order where the quest for self-establishment is at its beginning; a beginning that, interestingly enough, is a new possibility of approaching the other and attempting to close the distance through being aware of it.

Defiance as rebellion is tightly interwoven with separation [*udsondringen*] of the individual from society which represents an initial differentiation from "the others" as well as an initial realization that one actually has a Self. The social phenomena Kierkegaard writes about in their vulgar sense, namely: talkativeness, formlessness, reasoning, superficiality, flirtation all have an inherent common denominator which is the lack of the ethical as in appropriating oneself in being with others. Appropriation understood in this

21 Ibid., p. 37.

way is a calling for consciousness that is ethical but in a sense that it goes beyond what we understand as ethics in a normative sense. It rather opens before us a question of second ethics that is not to be understood within a socially established system of values that need to be reflected and absorbed from the outer, because it has more to do with the position of the communicator and that which is inner. According to Grøn, reflection itself thereby represents a "diagnosis of the present age"[22] that needs attending to. In connection to immediacy, one could start considering the possibility of a second immediacy "which is not dissolved by reflection, but an immediacy after reflection and maybe an immediacy through reflection", given that the relation as such deems the understanding of immediacy as interrelated.[23] Communication understood as impartation therefore rest on the notion of how we take part in sharing what we know with others. And that is, as Kierkegaard himself admits, an enormous difficulty. In the *Postsrcipt,* Kierkegaard concisely formulates this difficulty, stating that understanding "extreme opposites together" is only a first difficulty, whereas "existing," in order "to understand oneself in them"[24] is where one finds true difficulty.

So far our main goal was to outline the stream of thought building up to what Kierkegaard appoints the term leveling and what can become of it. Seeing that we started with the notion of separation but did not venture further into the fine differences one can find in Kierkegaard´s definitions of the demonic,

22 **Grøn, A.,** "Mediated Immediacy? The Problem of a Second Immediacy*",* in *Immediacy and Reflection in: Kierkegaard's Thought,* (2003), p. 87.
23 **The point of departure for Kierkegaard's negativity is accordingly an ambiguous** existential constitution of man and the world which surrounds him in his historical situation. It sets forth a series of theses and antitheses which cause a state of *kenosis,* a cleansing of the mind and of its content, concepts and categories. In other words, following the dialectical motion of Kierkegaard's thought gives us the means to say no to that which we would normally say yes to. This reopens the possibility of qualitative distinction within the individual whose true virtues are then shown by the practices which embody them. One could argue that this is the very core of Kierkegaard's philosophical definition of the Self as a relation which needs to be diagnosed in order to obtain its inner nature. However, one should practice caution as not to fall into motionless cohesion or into antagonizing the other. Why both extremes represent a deviation from a relation that tries to posit the universal as the particular in a Kierkegaardian sense.
24 Ibid., p. 354.

we should rather try and widen the problem of separation and leveling by attending Heidegger's existential analysis of the world, while trying to confine our inquiry to its second definition from *Being and Time* as that in which a *Dasein* lives, namely in its *existentiell* or ontic meaning. In this way, we may gain an appropriate focal point from which we could accordingly compare his contribution to the problem introduced in the initial chapters.

Heidegger- Hermeneutics of Facticity

Before giving an answer about what exactly is meant by the concept "hermeneutics of facticity" in his lecture from 1923 titled *Ontology – The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, Heidegger lays out a summary of its previous meanings that all on their accord revolve around the relation between communicating and understanding through the act of interpretation [*hermeneuein*], bestowed upon man through the figure of *Hermes,* who represents a passageway between mortals and the gods. Starting with Plato´s *Sophist,* an interpreter is the one who "communicates, announces and makes known to someone what another means, or someone who in turn conveys, reactivates this communication, this announcement and making known".[25] An interpreter is therefore like a poet a herald of the gods as well as herald of heralds living amongst mortals. In *Theaetetus* the main characteristic of interpretation becomes the "expression of differences" or a making "explicit of differences in addition to and in relation to what is κοινόν (common)" making "known of the being of a being in its being in relation to … (me)".[26] In Aristotle Heidegger finds ἑρμηνεία as διάλεκτος, a "discussing the world as we go about dealings with it"[27], which serves as a way of facticaly actualizing λόγος, making beings accessible. Later in *Being and Time* Heidegger refrains to the Aristotelian understanding

25 Ibid., p. 7.
26 Ibid., p. 7.
27 Ibid., p. 7.

of *kategoreisthai* as assertion[28] or to be more exact a way of asserting being itself. Understood in this sense λόγος is regarded as a way of unveiling the possibility of truth – that which was previously concealed. With Augustine, hermeneutics became a way of comprehending the word of God through a vivacious reading of the Scripture, through piety and strong belief that served as a way of confronting the ambiguity of different occurrences that took place within it. Afterwards it evolved into a doctrine about the conditions, the means, alongside communicational and practical aspects of interpretation. In short, it became a technique of understanding which found its way into Schleiermacher and Dilthey both of which understood it as "the formulation of rules of understanding" a "technique of interpreting written records".[29]

All of the above occupied Heidegger's thought in one way or another as he struggled with Dilthey´s epistemological approach in particular. His intellectual struggle led him to seek refuge in Luther and especially Kierkegaard. If we now maintain the notion that the term hermeneutics represents a way of interpreting that which was written or that which was already there i.e. pre-given, then one could perhaps see why Heidegger's conceptualization "being-there" aspect of *Dasein* came to realization by a through reading of Kierkegaard's work *The Present Age,* even though the ages they're speaking of are separated by more than a century. One of the "sparks" Kierkegaard gave Heidegger in his development as a philosopher lies in understanding *Dasein* in its immediacy and historically funded "awhileness" through the notion of forehaving [*Vorhabene*] understood in our case as the pre-given. Moreover, in his lecture on *Hermeneutics* of *Facticity* Heidegger refers to Kierkegaard´s *Journal (4-15-1838),* arguing that "the forehaving is not something arbitrary and according to whim« and that »life can be interpreted only after it has been

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28 »The Greek *kategorein* meant 'to speak against *[kata-],* charge, accuse [someone with/of something]', originally in the 'assembly *[agora]*'; *kate-goria* means 'accusation, charge'. Aristotle used *kategorein* as 'to predicate, assert [something of something]', and *kategoria* for 'predicate', especially the most general predicates or categories.« See Inwood, M., *A Heidegger Dictionary.* (1999) p. 22.
29 Ibid., p. 11.

lived« maintaining Kierkegaard´s notion that »Christ did not begin to explain Scriptures and show how they taught of him until after he was resurrected«[30,]. What this provided Heidegger´s hermeneutics is an pre-interpretational scope that one could question *Dasein´s* entaglement in the ontic by attending the how of its anticipatory coming to itself. In its constitutive phenomenological sense the pre-given could therefore be understood as the pre-conceptual. As a result of this implementation of Kierkegaard´s thought Heidegger's ontology of hermeneutics engulfs the negativity of facticity understood as one's own "how" of being in correspondence to the "afactical" character of being. Heidegger

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30 Ibid., p. 13. However, Heidegger´s understanding of Kierkegaard implies a strong theological scope, whereas Kierkegaard, by way of existential dialectics, confronts the Christian tradition with the Greek paganistic thought and therein reopens it to questioning – specifically in *The Concept of Anxiety* and *The Sickness Unto Death*. Heidegger himself comes to similar abbreviations in his text on *Phenomenology* and *Theology*, by stating that the difference between a theological approach and a philosophical approach, is that theology reduces pre-Christian existence to a theological system while phenomenology includes it as something which is already there. In this sense, the pre-given is not only connected to the resurrection of Christ but also to that which was prior to it. He does this by stating that theology is because of its ontology, its positum, an autoreferential scientific approach that approves belief by submitting it to religion undersood as Christian ontology. In a theological perspective, it is only in this way that a *Dasein* is able to acknowledge his or hers historicity and individual existence i. e. by accepting Christian *ontology* and the belief in God that it presupposes. In Heidegger´s view, this makes theology a practical science and a historical science at the same time. He then proceeds with the notion that theology needs philosophy as a "corrective" in order to transcend pre-Christian existence, it needs a philosophical pillar to rely on, a terminological structure which includes the presence of pre-Christian existence. So regardless of the fact that theology functions only through Christian ontology it cannot exclude pre-Christian existence, the preontological, but is forced to include it.. The destruction of history of ontology in Heidegger´s case therfore inlcudes both worlds, the one of Greek cosmology which regards the subject as substance and the Christian world of the spirit, which is itself caught in between this world and the next. A synergy of both gave Heidegger a way of construing a *Dasein* which needs no presence of divinity, be it a paganistic or a metaphysical version of one. It needed only its innerworldly factual existence, later defined as *Dasein*. Given Kierkegaard´s similar critique of theology as a science from *The Concept of Anxiety*, one can only wonder why Heidegger confined Kierkegaard to theology alone. See Heidegger, M., »Fenomenologija in teologija«, *Phainomena III/9-10), Nova revija, Ljubljana (1994), p. 85.

thereby introduces the preontological as the pre-given, which he then inserts in the quest for the same immediacy, the facticity of "one's own", from which he initially departs. Heidegger´s hermeneutics is therefore »the task of making the *Dasein* which is in each case our own accessible to this *Dasein* itself with regard to the character of its being«. It is a way of »communicating *Dasein* to itself in this regard, hunting down the alienation from itself with which it is smitten«. Heidegger then concludes by writing that »in hermeneutics what is developed for *Dasein* is a possibility of its becoming and being for itself in the manner of an *understanding* of itself«[31]. The questionabillity of *Dasein´s* self-understanding is then transfered to the questionabillity of the world itself, which Heidegger captures in a trifold questionare that later endures through all drafts of *Being and Time*: What does »world« mean here? What does `in` a world imply? How does 'being' in a world appear? When combining both questions, the one of *Dasein* and the one of the world, we come to the reason why Heidegger´s deems modernity as the starting point of his investigation, for it is in the particular sense of the everyday where *Dasein* moves, tarries along in proximity to the puling effect of the Public which co-defines the character of its curiosity, care an ambiguity, in short its having itself there.

Correspondent to the *existentiell* aspect of becoming a Self, Heidegger's reading of the two was also powered by the quest for accentuating the importance of the relation between thought and object which he redefined as *Gegenstand* and not the objectivistic-regional aspect that was handed down by history of philosophy. Accordingly, that becomes another reason why the ontological is "rooted"[32] [*verwürzelt*] in the ontic. The thinker must first question himself whether or not he is existing before attending to the question of being. However, it is the same reason why facticity should not be understood, as Heidegger accentuates in his lecture, as "experience [*Erlebnis*] in the sense

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31 Ibid., p. 11.
32 »Die existenziale Analytik ihrerseits aber ist letztlich existenziell, d. h. ontisch verwurzelt. Nur wenn das philosophisch forschende Fragen selbst als Seinsmöglichkeit des je existierenden Daseins existenziell ergriffen ist, besteht die Möglichkeit einer Erschließung der Existenzialität der Existenz und damit die Möglichkeit der Inangriffnahme einer zureichend fundier- ten ontologischen Problematik überhaupt. Damit ist aber auch der ontische Vorrang der Seinsfrage deutlich geworden.« See Heidegger, M.*, Sein und Zeit* (1977), p. 19.

of an isolated act" for it is not an "artificial extract, as it were, from life, to be so-called ´straightforward´ or ´plain experience´ [*Erfahrung*] in which what is experienced is in turn supposed to unlock the meaning of the being-there of things and of reality in general." The quest for *Seinsverständnis* is therefore correspondingly a quest derived from the notion of *Befindlichkeit*, although the first is connected to truth of being – as its "whatness" [*Washeit*] – while the latter is concerned with one's mood – as the how of becoming. If we merge both together into one scope we get »a formality seeking to accommodate itself to the intentional dynamics of the phenomena that phenomenology wishes to articulate«.[33]

Our objective in the following chapter rests in the second aspect of Heidegger's project of *Being and Time*, although it touches upon the question of becoming behind the quest for the afactical character of being. The reason why lies in the previous statement that a connection between a subject and an object cannot be resolved via formality, only by a sense of being-in-the-world. Inasmuch Heidegger's quest for truth is closely interwoven with the question of becoming a Self, one cannot start disclosing oneself to truth without first attending one's own existential situation, for a "concept is not a schema but rather a possibility of being, of how matters look in the moment".[34] In other words, becoming a Self is not a static state of being but a project caught in between life and death, never finished, always in motion, a notion one should consider when thinking of a concept. Heidegger's main concern lies in grasping possibility as such, the "being there" of a particular *Dasein* and its main characteristic of being as being.

Heidegger's *das Man*

Heidegger proposes a phenomenological angle to understanding the reciprocity between an individual, a *Dasein*, and the public, to which he appoints the definition: *Das Man or the They*. This third person pronoun refers

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33 Kisiel, T., *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (1993), p. 219.
34 Ibid., p. 12.

to both sexes, be it a singular or a plural force. By adding a neuter definite article and capitalizing the initial letter, Heidegger turns a pronoun into a noun that determines the singular *Dasein* as being with another. It could also be translated as the *Nobody* or *the One*, making the singular expression of 'I am' move through all of the specified modes. Similarly to Kierkegaard, Heidegger has arguably a complementary understanding of the public as being something abstract, a phantom, to whom all of us refer to, when being called upon to think as individuals, but yet he depicts it as something which was already present before an individual came "to be". His way of approaching the question of individuality is based on the aforementioned existential that he construed as "Being-in-the-world" [*In-der-Welt-sein*] which means that an individual *Dasein* has no immediate reflection of what it is to 'be' amongst other individuals, "Dasein-with" or *Mitdaseins*. In this sense:

"*Dasein* does not mean an isolating relativization into individuals who are seen only from the outside and thus the individual (*salus ipse* [myself alone]).' Our own' is rather a how of being, an indication which points to a possible path of being-wakeful."[35]

An individual is rather "thrown into existence" or thrown into facticity – into the Da – which Heidegger defines as "*throwness*" or *Geworfenheit*. A *Dasein* thus has no distinction, with the help of which it could then differentiate itself from the collective. Quite the contrary, Heidegger's *Dasein* is rather thrown into a mode of projecting, a state of *mimesis* that is likewise passed on to projecting one's self projects. To live on principles set by the public is therefore a way of giving in to the idea, a close synonym of *eidos*. Heidegger considers this *modus vivendi* as essential to the being-in-the-world of a *Dasein*. Formlessness, which Kierkegaard understands as a lack of meaningful content, is in Heidegger´s case an existential given to an individual's modus of being, which again is not just a depiction of nihilism but a turning point in which an individual can grasp formlessness as very origin of formalizing and return to *das Man* anew leaving only a *Dasein* to be senseful or senseless, maintaining

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35 Heidegger, M., *Ontology – The Hermeneutics of Facticity* (1999), p. 8.

the notion that the entities disclosed can be appropriated in understanding or can remain within non-understanding.

The border between understanding and non-understanding represents the point when Heidegger´s introduces the motion of negativity within a social context. Namely a *Dasein* emerges or falls from *das Man* in what Heidegger calls "the falling" or *Abfallen* which represents the negative of familiarity of the 'there'. It causes a feeling of "uncanniness" [*Unheimlichkeit*] as the opposite of what is – or was – familiar to it, rendering everything strangely unfamiliar. A Dasein becomes lost to itself. The falling could be understood in the same sense as Kierkegaard´s separation from the universal, as it presents an initiation into the possibility of gaining a Self. Correspondingly, the account for anxiety as a sense of groundlessness in Heidegger´s case thereby responds to Kierkegaard´s account for anxiety[36] as "dizziness of freedom, which emerges when the spirit wants to posit the synthesis and freedom looks down into its own possibility".[37] By falling out from the oppressiveness of das Man, a *Dasein* gets a sense of nothingness as such by which it becomes lost to itself and has no choice than to turn back to the nothingness to which it's accustomed to – to a something which is nothing, again, das Man. Heidegger's calls the act which supports the leveling effect a "fleeing back" into das Man which closes the circle by falling back into the world, a motion he enwraps with the term *Verfallenheit*.. Speaking from a methodological standpoint, a *Dasein* never leaves das Man by relating to infinitude in order to reform itself into an authentic existence, for Heidegger chooses a specific path. Falling on an ontic level designates a state of

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36 Although we haven't payed attention to Kierkegaard's concept of anxiety, the given analysis of despair, also undersrood as the final anxiety, has more to do with the movement of thought connected with separation than the existential term itself, considering that Kierkegaard's existential concepts aren't supposed to be conceptual in a strict sense.
37 Kierkegaard, S., *The Concept of Anxiety (*1980), p. 61.

Befindlichkeit, a hermeneutic state of inward consciousness of one's situation[38]. The ´falling off´ puts an individual in a situation where he can realize that he had already been at a crossroad between authenticity and inauthenticity. This close relation between an undifferentiated *Dasein* and its particular "dwelling" in the world, characterized by "*eachness*" or *Jeweiligkeitt*, coupled with the concept of *Jemeinigkeit* as its complementary "mineness" serves as a common ground where Heidegger tries to weave the close relation between "eachness" and "mineness", a Dasein and a Self. The concept of *Einebnung* or leveling, more precisely 'the leveling out' of a *Dasein* is accordingly so a plunge back into averageness or in other words: a plunge into inauthentic existence which incorporates all of the aforementioned structures of *Verfallenheit*.

In Heidegger´s main quest for revealing being, the state of *Befindlichkeit* serves as a substitute for a Husserlian *epoché*. This way an individual *Dasein* tries to counterweigh a quasi-situational character of the falling which covers up facticity by holding it in life's locations or circumstances [*Lagen*]. Contrary to this a re-established state of consciousness gives a *Dasein* the capability of a renewed circumspection by attending the relation of how we perceive everydayness, accordingly dissolving the fascination with the world. In this sense, a connection between a subject and an object cannot be resolved via formality, only by a sense of being-in-the-world. The negativity of falling applies especially to Heidegger´s view on the Cartesian *cogito* which similarly to Kierkegaard´s account lack grounding in *pathos*, although the German philosopher pushes this issue even further, up to the point of juncture between the two objectives of his formal ontology. His pursuit of undermining the *cogito* is based on the fundamental existential of care [*Sorge*] which in his early thought served as a designator of consciousness itself. Caring for one's being is the existential fundament of Heidegger's thought, whilst for Kierkegaard, who himself also formulated his view on care by reading Augustine, defined

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38 Whilst on an ontologic level it designates "individuation" [*Vereinzelung*] of a *Dasein*, accompanied by the attunement [*Grundstimmung*] of anxiety which, in spite of its psychological intermediacy throughout *Being and Time*, becomes an ontological fundament in its final stage.

care [Bekümmerung] as a call for persistence and patience in one's mundane life and therefore doesn't reach far. Heidegger on the other hand tried to close the distance between thinking and care. His step exemplified an attempt to try and close the gap between theoretical and practical philosophy, for the ontological concept of the subject characterizes not only the selflhood of the ́I ́, but the constancy [*Beständigkeit*] of something that is always already present at hand. Thinking thus becomes somewhat strongly related with concern, as in acquiring something that is "present-at-hand" [*Vorhandenheit*]. As a consequence of Heidegger's interpretation only a loss of one's world – or in this sense loss of that which is present-at-hand – a loss of a relation between a subject and an object is also the origin of thought itself. Heidegger defined this as the "obtrusiveness of ready-to-hand" [*Zuhandenheit*]. The present-at-hand is therefore a deficient mode of ready-to-hand, as is superficial reasoning the deficient mode of a rifted being. Empty philosophical reasoning tries to obscure the existential gap of nothingness, because an individual *Dasein* is not aware of its inauthentic being-in-the-world. Instead of embracing one's being, an individual *Dasein* tries to cover it up by pushing further into fallacy.

Unfamiliarity is therefore, as Heidegger notes, "not merely something occasional, but rather belongs to the very temporality of the world's being encountered". Once the familiarity of one ́s surroundings is disturbed and "this disturbable familiarity is what gives to the contingent ́otherwise than one thought ́ the recalcitrant sense of its there".[39] One can see just how the notion of distancing from *das Man* by saying "I am" is thereby strongly correlated by leveling itself, as it is a "*potentiality-for-Being*, as one which is in each case *mine*" making it "free either for authenticity or for inauthentlcity or for a mode in which neither of these has been differentiated."[40] A *Dasein* is therefore constantly on the verge of turning into a mode of authentic existence, because it is already individualized by its fallout and has the ability of owning up to what it essentially is – or always has been. In a pre-given sense, a *Dasein* has already understood itself in its own existence.

39 *Heidegger, M., Ontology – The Hermeneutics of Facticity* (1999), p. 77.
40 Heidegger, M. 1962: *Being and Time* (1962), p. 232.

Between Kierkegaard and Heidegger - a distinction in relation

There are many similarities and differences in the way Kierkegaard and Heidegger understand the relation between the singular and the universal, the individual and the public. Much of the critique of Heidegger, as well the one he appointed toward Kierkegaard, revolves around the ontological difference i.e. the *existentiell* and *existential*, whereas our inquiry moved along the line of the *existentiell*. Given our point of departure, the existential schema presented by the German philosopher differs from Kierkegaard's in one crucial aspect. Heidegger's existentiality is characterized by an all-encompassing proposition that *Dasein* in its being is concerned[41] only with its being and as such finds itself on the verge of owning up to what it essentially is or was, an authentic Self, even though it remains undifferentiated during its process of becoming. Accordingly it remains in a close relation to its own possibility. This way of understanding self-determination differs from Kierkegaard's, inasmuch Heidegger tries to surpass the idealistic model of self-reflection by positioning facticity as a ground zero. Heidegger´s step leads to three important differences.

The first difference lies in the consequence of disregarding the second premise which can be found in the lack of Heidegger's account for fleeing. Why does a *Dasein*, given that it experiences its own possibility, decide to flee from its upmost possibility? In Kierkegaard's case, the burden of fleeing falls on the second premise which causes a *Dasein* to close in its own world, a state also known as the demonic "enclosing reserve" that represents an internalization of separation. The enclosing reserve is characteristic for the demonic self fleeing from freedom – when freedom becomes unfreedom. It is where Theunissen asserts the first premise as the one thwarting the second will to establish oneself independently from the first one. If one were to apply the model of a negative Self unto the model introduced by Heidegger, then we would have to start with Kierkegaard's premise of not willing to be oneself

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41 In refference to Heidegger´s implementation of the existential as Care or *die* Sorge or *die Bekummerung*.

which Heidegger dully implements in to his own thought, but in doing so he doesn't hesitate to overlap the premise of desperately wanting to be oneself as its counterpart. Instead, Heidegger insists on a model of a heroic *Dasein* that stands in front of pure possibility. As a consequence he sets in motion a model of authenticity based on necessity and finitude, leaving no space for self-establishment through a negative relation to the mundane other, a relation driven by willing necessity and finitude, as well as possibility and infinitude. In Heidegger's case the willing to be oneself thereby precedes the above mentioned dialectic between willing to be and willing not to be oneself. This leads to a state of being where, if I quote Theunissen, "even when we don't want to be ourselves, we still want to." [42]

Secondly, there is also a difference in understanding the relation of being 'in between'. In Kierkegaard's case the 'in between' or the inter-essential is based on a relation composed of contrarieties and the relation to that which made this relation possible – in terms of particular historic immediacy, a pre-established Self. Becoming as action represents a movement of the basic relation and as a third part of it turns it a trichotomous one, whose structures we tried to explicate in the previous chapters. Although both philosophers operate with relation, the one Kierkegaard carries into effect is ultimately in need of action, a choice. Even though what can be found hovering over it is an awareness of freedom, a notion I argued for in this contribution, it is still crucial to actually choose. The inter-essential therefore doesn't refer only to a situation but also a direction or a path of one's choosing. It serves as a reminder that our task in attending the how of Kierkegaard's written observations from *The Present Age* must be defined from a "universal standpoint, the final consequences of which can be reached by deduction, a *posse ad esse*, and verified by observation and experience *ab esse ad posse*".[43] On the other side, Heidegger's understanding of in-between can be understood in two different modes, first of which is a primordial being between life and death. Secondly, the between could be understood as a relation of a *Dasein* and the World. Given that their mergence

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42 Theunissen, M., *Kierkegaard's Concept of Despair.* (2005), p. 27.
43 Ibid., p. 12.

as well as a divergence does not presuppose a synthesis, it does not presuppose a sense of property as well, a notion that would render a *Dasein* a subject. Given the explanation of the hermeneutic circle, a *Dasein* is a being of the between, and dully incorporates the ontological difference. As such, the phenomenological goal of observing social phenomena through its hermeneutic situation again divides into the two closely related aspects of Heidegger´s phenomenology we mentioned in the previous chapters. The first goal of grasping existentiality is to maintain a circumspective distance, rendering existentials as formal indications [*formale Anzeige*]. As a second result it provides circumspection [*Umsicht*] into the way an individual *Dasein* observes its everyday life in the world that surrounds it. However, in the aspect of the *existentiell*, the formal indication could also be understood as a substitute for the ethical choice we find in Kierkegaard. It is a formal choice without specific content, based on a horizon of choices which comprehend each and all of *Dasein's* situations and subsequently its determinateness.

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Thirdly, whilst the German philosopher renders the ontological difference crucial to his analysis of *Dasein*, if we refrain only to the ontic stage of existence, we may well see that Heidegger neglects the importance of negatively driven differentiation through an act of defiance[44] toward a pre-given Self which would consequently differentiate a *Dasein* even on an ontic level and provide means to a negatively established relation towards the other *Dasein* understood as seeing the "the exception" that "arises in the midst of the universal"[45] or in Heidegger's case, the historical. Heidegger´s leap toward the ontological condition of any ontic self-discovering or disclosedness [*Erschossenheit*] by way of ontological disclosure [*Entschlossenheit*] thereby places *Dasein* in the world in a way that that it meets up with itself in a worldly manner in ´the there´ it is encountering. Care somehow decreases in its intensity and dissolves into the everydayness in a straightforward manner, pointing towards another side of care known

44 The only notion of defiance one could argue for in Heidegger´s case could be found in the element of obtrusiveness, although it is predominately connected to a *Dasein´s* separating from its own involvement in the world.
45 Kierkegaard, S., *Fear and trembling/Repetition* (1983), p. 226.

as carefreeness which in Heidegger occurs in a pre-given sense as well. Here one can argue for an ethical dimension in Heidegger´s thought and rightfully so as it represents an openness of being with another *Dasein*. However, from a methodological point of view, observing the other only through the scope of possibility one ultimately renders the other as a doublet of the Self which differentiates itself only through its own self-differentiation[46]. The difference between *Jemeingkeit* and *Jeweiligkeit* hence represents one of Heidegger's many unresolved questions in the project of *Being and Time* and ground for numerous critiques.

Conclusion

Kierkegaard´s nature as a writer and not just a philosopher establishes a different kind of a pre-given immediacy, a phantasmagoric sense of *Geworfenheit*, and a directness which contains more imagination and whit that reaches beyond or rather through formality. Therefore, one could argue against Theunissen's interpretation of the Self as a dialectical fundament by pointing out that Kierkegaard does not start with such a theoretically ontological predisposition but rather expresses it self-evidently through his writing. However, Theunissen´s detailed analysis of Kierkegaard´s dialectic method served us well in our inquiry and should not be discarded for its overly formative nature, as we are indeed dealing with a double relation of the Self. In *Kierkegaard's Negativistic Method* as well as *Kierkegaard´s Concept of Despair*, Theunissen even acknowledges the phantasmagoric quality of Kierkegaard's philosophy, especially in regards to the self-determination of a Self which is caught between finitude and infinitude. In its captivity, it consequently reflects its own being out of determination by way of fantasy as well. It is due to the constant suspension of a synthetic unity[47] of the Self which provides a tripartite constellation of faith, reflection and fantasy that are all closely interwoven. Thus the only aspect we can take for certain is that Kierkegaard departs from

46 As self-mediated, due to the way Heidegger understands φαίνεσθαι.

a poetic ambiguity which sets forth an elusive dialectic motion that makes it almost certain it is neither ontological nor formally negative. His poetic nature also applies to the use of oscillating terminology, especially if we consider existential terms such as despair, anxiety, fear; all of which present a different context to the one Heidegger introduces with his more phenomenological approach, where anxiety prevails as an ontological fundament, a constituent of one´s existentiality that firstly accounts for ambiguity but then overlaps it by understanding it as an obstacle which serves to point toward a decisive nature of *Dasein*.

Considering all of the above, it is still more accurate to refrain to the aspect of being thrown into existence as such and start one´s inquiry from there – while still acknowledging the contextual differences. In other words, the point of departure in Kierkegaard´s case should start with a question about one´s human condition, given the fact that it is not defined by a fundament one could build upon but rather by a pre-given relation which cannot be avoided. Adding the notion of separation could respectively establish an aspect of questionability that ought to be maintained throughout as a deconstructive measure in obtaining a methodological aspect to "informalities" found in Kierkegaard´s philosophy of existence and its concepts. Given that neither Heidegger´s ontology approves of aprioristic terms nor a completed ontological unity, as he presupposes a deconstruction of the Self by way of withholding (ger. *Aufenthalt*), this aspect of questionability could also serve as a common ground where one could further investigate the relation between Kierkegaard´s and Heidegger´s philosophy, a relation which inherently operates with the negative notion of separation, self-interpretation and hermeneutic communication. It is also noteworthy that the usual scholarly critique appointed towards Heidegger from a Kierkegaardian perspective, deeming it a form of aesthetic metaphysics, and vice versa, naming Kierkegaard´s thought onto-theological, would do much harm to such an inquiry. The methodological distinction I argued for here is based purely on differentiation through stressing the aspect of a negative relation derived from separation and defiance and a movement of thought that operates through separation and self-projection. Combined

47 Otherwise defined as »repetition«.

they give a contrast which can prove fruitful when thinking about the open question of ethics, authentic identity, relation to the other and the complex question of inwardness.

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