

What does Authenticity Do in Being and Time?

Sacha Golob

Forthcoming in

The Cambridge Critical Guide to Being and Time

Edited By

Aaron James Wendland

and Tobias Keiling

Authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) plays a foundational role in early Heidegger. To “work out the question of Being adequately”, Heidegger states, “we must make an entity—the inquirer—transparent in his own Being” (*BT* 27/7; similarly, *BP* 103). Authenticity is central to such transparency: if our understanding of Dasein is to serve as “a foundation for the basic question of ontology, then it must first have been brought to light . . . in its possibilities of authenticity and totality” (*BT* 276/233). Authenticity, in other words, underpins the ontological project. The aim of this chapter is to better understand what authenticity is and why it matters so much to Heidegger.

Before getting underway, one restriction in scope. I will not address the idealism which may seem implicit in the claim that the existential analytic is the best way to grapple with ontology (*BT* 27/7, 424/372).¹ Instead, I want to focus on authenticity itself. What is the

¹ I discuss this in Golob (2014, ch.4). I argue Heidegger is ultimately a realist.

nature of this state? How does Heidegger's use of the term link to broader ideas of "being true to oneself"? or "expressing oneself"? And why should it be so significant for his work?

Most recent literature on Heideggerian authenticity frames the issue in terms of reasons. We can distinguish two dominant positions. On one approach, let's call it the "Transcendental Reading", authenticity explains our ability to *recognise* reasons—our capacity, as it is often put, to act "in the light of" norms, rather than "merely in accordance with them". I will consider work by Crowell and Kukla in particular. On another approach, let's call it the "Unity Reading", authenticity allows us to identify a *particular group* of reasons to which the inauthentic are blind—these reasons play a distinctive role in our lives, unifying our commitments. I focus on analyses by Guignon and McManus. I believe that both approaches contain important insights. But I also think neither captures the core of Heidegger's view. I thus present a third option, call it the "Structural Reading", on which authenticity consists in an at least inchoate awareness of certain *structural* facts about normative space. The Structural Reading, I argue, allows us to make perfect sense of authenticity's relationship to philosophy: Heidegger's preference for it is not a matter of "moralizing critique" but a condition for ontological investigation (*BT* 211/167).

We can alternately frame the issue in terms of the self. There is a classic ambiguity in non-Heideggerian "authenticity talk". For some, an authentic life is one expressive of my own very particular individuality, my unique character traits. For others, it is one expressive of deep truths about all human selves. You can see the distinction in early Sartre, for example, where a truly authentic life consists in recognising that neither I nor anyone else is defined by unique character traits, at least in anything like the usual sense. It is clear that Heidegger's concern is with the broader notion: even when the focus is on "mineness", it is on "the essence of mineness and selfhood as such" [*das Wesen von Meinheit und Selbstheit überhaupt*] (*MFL* 242). Framed in these terms, the three approaches again offer different

results. Roughly, the Transcendental Reading equates authenticity with the very conditions on selfhood, whilst the Unity and Structural Readings identify it with particular forms of selfhood, particular achievements.

The structure of this chapter is simple. I will take the Transcendental, Unity and Structural Readings in turn. I argue that the last provides the most plausible analysis of Heidegger.

1. Transcendental Readings

Kant's *Groundwork* draws a famous contrast between two types of being:

Everything in nature works in accordance with laws. Only a rational being has the capacity to act *in accordance with the representation* of laws, that is, in accordance with principles.

(Kant [1785] 1902, 412; original emphasis)

Kant ([1783] 1902, 34) equates acting on principles with acting on the basis of “a connection that is expressed by ought”. The claim is this: to explain the behaviour of rational beings we must refer not just to the laws of nature, but to what those beings *take to be* laws, i.e., to what they take to be required or forbidden or permissible. This explains why the laws of logic, unlike the laws of physics, sometimes fail to determine my behaviour: I ought to avoid inferential errors, but unlike gravity, the efficacy of logical laws is “mediated by our attitude” towards them (Brandt 1994, 31).

Compare the case of a dog. For Kant, Fido's behaviour is governed by a lawlike pattern of associative input-output correlations (Kant 1900, 52). But the efficacy of biological laws in determining this action is entirely independent of Fido's own (non-existent) attitude to such laws. In contrast, to explain why someone acted morally or failed to do so, I need to

reference both the law *and* their attitude to it (Kant [1785] 1902, 412). Even if that attitude is one of ignorance or indifference, it needs to be cited if we are to explain why, unlike biological laws, it failed to have an effect.

Kantians standardly express this point as follows: Fido acts merely *in accordance* with a law, whereas rational agents act *in the light of them*. Kant himself aligns this distinction with moral responsibility and with a highly-theorised notion of first-person awareness: he is explicit that animals lack such “I” states, which are thus sharply distinguished from a merely egocentric spatial awareness ([1798] 1907, 127).

I introduce this background because, stripped of Kant’s assumption that all norms are laws, it plays a vital role in shaping contemporary readings of *Being and Time*. This is because Dasein’s world is essentially normative: to see something “as” a hammer as opposed to “as” a sculpture is, amongst other things, to see it as appropriate for certain tasks. Indeed, for Heidegger, “the ‘as’ is the basic structure whereby we understand and have access to anything” (*LQT* 153).

The “as”, and the relation that sustains it and forms it, makes possible a perspective upon something like being. (*FCM* 484)

Similarly, to see that there are things “one just doesn’t talk about” is to refer to a norm, that there are certain things that *ought not* be addressed. The Heideggerian world is thus suffused with an awareness of norms. As he puts it, in a deliberately Kantian idiom, for Dasein “entities are manifest in their binding character [*Verbindlichkeit*]” (*FCM* 492): i.e., as located within a web of obligations, prohibitions and requirements.

Crowell, perhaps the most influential current commentator on Heidegger, reads *Being and Time* as an analysis of the structure and conditions of such normative awareness. In Kant’s language, it illuminates the conditions that allow us “to think and act not merely in accord with norms, but *in light* of them” (Crowell 2001, 170; original emphasis). Elsewhere

he talks of Dasein's distinctive "responsiveness to the normative *as* normative" (Crowell 2013d, 24; original emphasis).²

The Transcendental Reading works by linking these ideas to authenticity. The place to start is by distinguishing three similar sounding claims.

- (i) Only if we are authentic can we identify the transcendental condition for Dasein's acting in the light of norms rather than merely in accordance with them.
- (ii) The possibility of being authentic is a transcendental condition for Dasein's acting in the light of norms rather than merely in accordance with them.
- (iii) Being authentic is a transcendental condition for Dasein's acting in the light of norms rather than merely in accordance with them.

Let's take these in turn.

(i) is an epistemic claim. It chimes with the suggestion, in my opening paragraph, that authenticity is key to a transparent understanding of Dasein. Heidegger makes similar remarks about other states closely linked to authenticity: for example, "resoluteness" "brings us before the primordial truth of existence" (*BT* 355/307). Also note that (i) is perfectly compatible with both authentic and inauthentic agents acting in the light of norms, just as both moral and immoral agents act on maxims for Kant. The point would be that Division Two identifies transcendental conditions on my sensitivity to the normative, conditions of possibility which are assumed, but not described, in Division One.³ For these reasons, I will proceed for the moment as if (i) is unobjectionable.

² I discuss such "responsiveness" in Golob (2020).

³ A comparison might help: on a widespread reading of Kant, the Transcendental Analytic sets out various arguments which are in fact already assumed, but cannot yet be made explicit, in the Transcendental Aesthetic. In that sense, an account consisting solely of the Aesthetic would be "unintelligible".

What about (ii)? There are passages where Crowell, for example, does endorse it.

Consider this:

When I give reasons and communicate as the one-self, this is a trace of my subjectivity, possible only for a creature that can be responsible, can answer the call of conscience.

(Crowell 2001, 450)

Only a creature that *could* answer the call of conscience, which I take to at least overlap with authenticity, could also give reasons: in other words, the capacities are co-extensive and all Dasein necessarily possess both. This seems to me unproblematic as well.

This brings me to the stronger (iii): it is this which is the heart of the Transcendental Reading. Here again is Crowell:

The agent functions within the nexus of practices in much the way that she functions within the constraints of nature: she acts in accordance with norms but not in the light of them; hence such behaviour is largely predictable from a third-person point of view. This is the picture of the functioning of norms within social practices which we get from Division One of *Being and Time*, where it is difficult to distinguish human from animal teleological action. . . . there are reasons for what Larry Bird does on the court, just as there are reasons for what the wasp does, but neither does them *for* those reasons, in light of them. (Crowell 2013b, 207; original emphasis)

Similarly:

There is, however, a further aspect to the project whereby Dasein enters into the space of reasons . . . Heidegger terms such a project “resoluteness” (*Entschlossenheit*) . . . To be resolved is to take responsibility for the standards inherent in the practices in which I am engaged; only so is it possible for there to *be* practices rather than mere occurrences. (Crowell 2013b, 210; original emphasis)

The former passage implies that an agent “within the nexus of practices” is not acting in the light of norms, any more than the wasp is. The latter passage similarly implies that only with resolution do we enter normative space. These seem endorsements of (iii).

Crowell’s view is a highly complex one, and at times he distances himself from such claims. For example, he argues against Korsgaard precisely on the grounds that she is forced to analyse mindless coping in non-normative, animalistic terms (Crowell 2013c, 257).

Perhaps this shows that I am giving those remarks too much weight?

I think, however, that there is a genuine and important tension in Crowell’s position, driven by some deep-seated philosophical issues. As Blattner notes, Crowell often ties authenticity to the first-person perspective. Crowell writes: “It becomes evident from [Heidegger’s] description of the one-self that it understands (is aware of) itself wholly in third-person terms” (Crowell 2001, 173–4).

I agree with Blattner (2015, 121) that this is implausible: when Tom starts talking, whether that act is described from his own first-person perspective or his listener’s third-person viewpoint is simply orthogonal to the question of whether Tom’s self-understanding is deformed by conformism or the other problems Heidegger associates with inauthenticity. Idle talk, to take a classic marker of inauthenticity for Heidegger, is supposedly a widespread social phenomenon: viewing oneself in the third-person, at least for any length of time, is much more unusual. The two cannot be equated. But Crowell’s move is explained once we

see the role of (iii). (iii) uses authenticity to define what *brings* an act within the space of reasons as opposed to being merely a natural occurrence. Given the very widespread Kantian assumption that normativity is tied to the first-person perspective, echoed in Heidegger's analysis of "mineness" (*BT* 67/42), a commitment to (iii) will immediately imply that inauthentic agents must operate in third-personal form. Hence Crowell:

Heidegger's account of the one-self, then, describes my practical identity as a specific form of anonymity: engaged in the world, I am aware of myself only as 'another' or as 'anyone' – that is, in third-person terms. (Crowell 2001, 437)

So, whilst Crowell's attitude to (iii) is complex, it does have a systematic role in his position: it explains, amongst other things, his claims regarding the inauthentic and the third person that Blattner criticised.

In other cases of (iii), matters are more straightforward. Consider Blattner's incisive summary of Kukla's (2002, 4–5) attempt to link Heideggerian anxiety and Hegel's Antigone.

[Kukla] argues that an agent who is responsive to norms must always already have been alienated from the norms by way of what she calls 'moments of authenticity'. (Blattner 2015, 129)

In my terms, this is (iii): no authenticity, no normativity.

The basic problem with (iii) is that it represents a confusion of levels: it treats a rare achievement, authenticity, as a condition on some very basic aspects of human intentionality. The issue with the first-person is symptomatic of the same error. Fleshing this out, those who either endorse or flirt with (iii) are committed to either:

(iiia) The behaviour of inauthentic Dasein is not analysable as acting in the light of norms.

or

(iiib) There are no truly inauthentic Dasein: any putative case is or was authentic.

Note that (iiib) is not the claim that all Dasein have experienced anxiety. Kukla's (2002, 4–5) story, for example, requires that we react to anxiety in a certain way, namely by recognising the possibility of challenging norms; it is not enough that an agent merely experiences anxiety and immediately chokes it down and carries on exactly as before.⁴ Once this is appreciated, (iiib) is manifestly too strong as a reading of Heidegger. It misrepresents his pessimism about mass culture and contemporary society: it also conflicts with texts such as *BT* 190/234 which emphasises the “rare” nature of “real anxiety” and the “even rarer” cases of a proper understanding of it.

What about (iiia)? Well, this also fails textually. Heidegger gives relatively little concrete detail about the life of the inauthentic but one of the most striking facts he does offer is how *normatively sophisticated* they are. For example, both *HCT* and the 1931 *Schwarze Hefte* use the same example of agents dominated by *Gerede*: in each case, they are engaged in sophisticated, and yet in an important sense sophistical, academic work. For example, Heidegger views scholarly exegesis of *Sein und Zeit*'s links to Kierkegaard as a derailment device by which academics serve to distract themselves and the public from the book's real import (*GA* 94: 74; see also 39). Similarly, *HCT* (376) presents academic conferences as devices for “covering up” ideas through parroting them out. If we turn to *BT* itself, we find similar results: inauthentic agents, dominated by idle talk, are masters at derailing conversations, with a set of rote talking points already “stowed away” for whenever discussion of death, for example, gets a little real (*BT* 297/254). The behaviour of these

⁴ For extremely helpful discussion, see Blattner (2015, 126–129).

agents is surely both inauthentic and an instance of acting in the light of norms, of putting forward arguments, defending principles, raising counterexample, albeit distracting and irrelevant ones—behaviour that is completely different from that of non-human animals, for example.

Note that appealing to “mindless” or “automatic” coping, for example via Crowell’s allusion to Larry Bird, doesn’t help: the sophisticated academics are as at home in logical space as Bird is on the court, debating with complete fluidity and immediacy—yet they are engaged in a very direct and complex fashion with norms, principles and counter-examples.

Pulling these points together, (iii) is a mistake. Authenticity for Heidegger is a rare and highly valued state; by extension, it is not well read as a transcendental condition on comparatively basic human achievements such as acting in the light of norms. The Transcendental Reading either collapses into (i) and (ii), claims which are better absorbed by other approaches as we will see, or reveals itself as (iii)—in which case it should be rejected.

2. Unity Readings

I now turn to what I called “Unity Readings”. Here authenticity consists not in the foundational ability to respond to reasons *per se*, but in a grip on a *specific class* of reasons—reasons which in an important sense unify our commitments. In the literature, this approach takes two forms: I deal briefly with the older version, illustrated by Guignon, before turning to McManus’ more recent work to see the view in its most sophisticated form.⁵

Guignon defined authenticity in terms of the imposition of a “coherent, cumulative narrative” across our commitments.

⁵ McManus (2019) himself distinguishes his approach from Guignon’s which he refers to as a “standpoint account”. But for me, the two share an underlying identification of authenticity with an awareness of a particular class of reasons, i.e., those that unify our commitments, even if they differ over the nature of that unity.

In contrast to the dispersal and endless “making-present” of everydayness, such a life is authentically futural to the extent that it clear-sightedly faces up to the inevitable truth of its own finitude and lives each moment as an integral component of the overall story it is shaping in its actions. (Guignon 2000, 89)

A few years later, he writes:

Martin Heidegger's conception of authentic resoluteness gives us a picture of life as an unfolding story aimed at a fulfilment of a specific sort. Such resoluteness provides a focus and continuity to a life that can help an individual find meaning and order during times of personal difficulties. (Guignon 2013, 204)

The authentic life is thus marked by unity, unity with important similarities to that of a story.

One immediate problem is that such stability seems insufficient for “authenticity” either as Heidegger understands it or in a looser sense. I can live a life marked by “continuity and constancy” in the service of a wildly delusional self-narrative. It is hard to see how that could contribute to the self-transparency Heidegger prizes. Conversely, Guignon obscures the links between inauthenticity and rigidity. The authentic for Heidegger are marked by flexibility and a responsiveness to the individual contours of the situation; in contrast to the predictability of inauthentic behaviour (*BT* 355/307). Agents who seek above all to maintain narrative consistency must force the world into a set mould rather than genuinely responding to it on its own terms. As Fisher (2010, 262) suggests in an acute discussion of Mallick’s *The Thin Red Line*, the authentic person: “[D]oes not appropriate the situation to his life by projecting a life-gestalt in order to make sense of it. On the contrary, he allows his life to be appropriated for the sake of the situation.” Guignon was aware of such concerns, but he took

them to be problems with Heidegger's position, evidence of "something deeply dissatisfying about the final picture that emerges in *Being and Time*" (Guignon 2000, 91). Perhaps though there are better exegetical options?

This brings me to McManus's more sophisticated version of the Unity approach. The idea is that authentic agents achieve a distinctive unity which "pulls together in an overall judgment of her situation all the demands that it makes upon her" (McManus 2019, 1195). Unlike Guignon's, McManus's authentic agent thus finds unity in a close engagement *with* the world, rather than a narrative that might diverge from it.

At the heart of McManus account is the "all things considered judgement model" or ATCJM.

The ATCJM understands Heidegger's 'openness to the concrete situation' as a responsiveness not just to the particular aspect of my situation that would strike a holder of office *a*, the pursuer of goal *b*, the adherent of norm *c* or project *d*, but instead a responsiveness to all of those aspects at once and to the need to adjudicate between them. I am capable of such responsiveness—and indeed it is demanded of me if am not to be 'closed' to the normative multi-dimensionality of my life—precisely because I may *be* not only the holder of office *a*, but also the pursuer of *b*, as well as the adherent of *c* and of *d*. Through all-things-considered judgment, I make of my situation a whole and I act as a whole. (McManus 2019, 1191)

In an earlier paper, he expresses this in terms of "full stop" judgements:

The authentic possess an answer to the question, ‘What should be done?’ . . . What does this situation call for?—not ‘from some particular kind of person, with some particular interest, role or responsibility’—but ‘What does it call for full-stop?’ (McManus 2018, 195)

Inauthenticity is simply the mirror image of this, characterised by “qualified” or “Q” judgements (McManus 2019, 1194). These have two distinctive features. First, they are “departmental”: they state what one ought to do *qua* holder of some particular role or seeker of some particular goal. For example, “as a lawyer, one ought to do x here” (McManus 2018, 195). Second, they evade “answerability”. If Tom tells us that “as a lawyer, one ought to do x, as a friend y”, he remains silent on the most fundamental question of what *he* thinks I should ultimately do. Here is McManus:

When do I speak for a matter with my person? More idiomatically perhaps, when do I speak for myself? . . . We *do* feel that we can intelligibly say to someone ‘Yes, I know that you think that as a holder of office *x* you should do *y*, but what do you yourself think ought to be done all things considered?’ (McManus 2019, 1194, 1200)

Inauthentic agents thereby fail to genuinely express themselves.

One immediate concern might be over the specificity of McManus’ definition: Heidegger’s account of inauthenticity is often taken as a broad exercise in *Kulturkritik*. Consider a student body or a resident’s association enthusiastically caught up in some new social movement. Even if one agrees with the political goals, the discourse will have many of the features Heidegger aligns with inauthenticity: strong group pressure; predictable, rehearsed patterns of argument whereby “everyone is acquainted with what is up for discussion . . . and everyone discusses it, but everyone also knows already how to talk about”

it; a preference for speech that allows the group to self-position as “doing the right thing”, with real action relegated to second place (“talking about things gets passed off as what is really happening, while taking action gets stamped as something merely subsequent and unimportant”, *BT* 218/174); a continual escalation of what counts as “the very newest thing” and what is already unacceptably retrograde (*BT* 218/174); and etc. Such people are plausibly behaving inauthentically in a Heideggerian sense—but they are very unlikely to make hedged judgements in the way McManus suggests. On the contrary, they tend to be enthusiastic purveyors of “full stop” verdicts.

To properly assess the proposal, however, we need to tease apart various strands. For example, is what matters that the agent pulls together the various demands *as she sees them* or the various demands as they *in fact* are? McManus (2019, 1194) defines a Q judgement as “one that does not take into account—is not true to, one might say—some of what I think or value”, strongly suggesting the former. To press these questions, let’s consider McManus’s own example:

For example, rather than listen to my wife’s worries or help my son resolve an argument with his friend, I sit down to mark essays on the grounds—when challenged—that ‘I’ve got to do my job!’ But I do not see or present myself as a locus of decision here: ‘I’ve got to do my job!’ and, of course, I do have to do my job. On a superficial level, I am beyond reproach: I am acting in line with a norm that is generally accepted in my society, by my family and by myself. But in fact I am seeking here to be ‘relieve[d]’—‘disburdened’—‘of [my] choice, [my] formation of judgments, and [my] estimation of values’ (*HCT* 247) by—so to speak—dispensing the decision that my action expresses across my mere Q judgment—‘In order to do my job, I need to do my marking.’—and the background general acceptance that one indeed ought to do one’s job. (McManus 2019, 1197)

There are several dimensions here and varying them independently will dramatically vary the case.

Suppose first I minimise family obligations because, having weighed all factors, I sincerely and correctly believe that my job must take priority—of course, marking is unlikely to be an emergency but there are obviously plenty of careers that will generate such emergencies (it would be criminal for the fire chief to settle down for a family dinner as the town burns). Surely, this is unproblematic and not McManus' target. Next, suppose, having weighed all factors, I sincerely believe that my job must take priority, a belief that follows from a reasonable assessment of the information available to me—but which is in fact false. Perhaps, although the evidence was invisible to anyone but a professional therapist, my son's falling out was really a sign of deep depression. Depending on one's broader epistemology and ethics, I may or may not have fallen short in some way, but again it is hard to see this as inauthentic and thus hard to see as the case McManus has in mind

Next, suppose I minimise family obligations because I want to avoid grappling with those normative demands. This seems a better bet and it fits with McManus talk of “seeking to” escape responsibilities. Note further this remains plausibly inauthentic and a “Q judgement” even if, *were* all factors considered, it would emerge that my job should indeed have taken priority, i.e., even if my verdict were, in some objective sense, the “all things considered” right one. This is because my behaviour is still marred by a problematic escapism. This is a familiar TV trope: the fire chief who hides from personal problems by attending obsessively to what are nevertheless real emergencies. Pulling this together, I suggest that the McManus' account identifies inauthenticity with a certain decision structure: a failure to weigh all factors of which the agent is aware out of a desire to escape responsibility.

We can express this in terms of an internal/external reason contrast. McManus' authenticity does not require us to identify the "all things considered" external reasons: that would beg the question as to how such a class might be defined. Rather, it is the "all things considered" internal reasons: when I am inauthentic I fail to "take into account—[am] not true to, one might say—some of what I think or value" (McManus 2019, 1194). In failing to unify their judgements, the inauthentic are thus not true to themselves.

McManus's (Forthcoming) account is an ingenious one and I cannot do full justice, in particular, to the links he posits to Heidegger's Aristotle. But we now have enough on the table to identify some problems with it.⁶

First, the view entails that individuals who are simply blind to a whole host of considerations will find it easier to be authentic. The convinced bigot laying down the law leaves no doubt as to what they think, offering plenty of "full stop" verdicts. Yet it is hard to see them as any kind of model: they achieve unity precisely because their grasp of the factors to be unified is *impoverished*. One possible response would be that this person might be "no model" in a moral or epistemic sense, but nevertheless be authentic: they can be "true to themselves" in a pre-theoretic sense. There are two problems here, though. One, Heidegger aligns authenticity with a high degree of sensitivity to the situations we are facing (*PS* 163–4, *BP* 407–8) and one of the attractions of McManus's account, as noted in contrast with Guignon, is that it initially seemed to accommodate this. But the proposed reply allows for authenticity in cases even of utter insensitivity. Another, which I will develop below, is that it is hard to see why such authenticity would be so methodologically significant for Heidegger: after all, our authentic bigot might endorse principles utterly incompatible with Heidegger's project (for example, they might insist that racial categories should underpin the existential analytic).

⁶ I am indebted to Denis McManus for very generous discussion of the following objections.

Second, it relies on a precarious alignment of the “all things” dimension of the judgment with the “I” dimension: the Q judgement hedges that “qua lawyer, one ought to do x” whereas the authentic judgement declares what “I” think in giving an overall verdict. But consider a case in which I conclude “As father, I must do y, as husband I must do z”—and yet where there is no “all things considered verdict” that I can identify with, no overall solution I can regard as anything but a squalid compromise, inexpressive of who I am. In such a case, there is no reason to treat the ATC judgement as distinctively expressive of myself and thus no reason to see it as distinctively linked to authenticity.

Third, it is unclear why the remedies Heidegger offers would help if McManus’s diagnosis were right. For example, McManus (2020, 140; emphasis added) reads anxiety as an experience in which the options facing me appear “insignificant *in themselves*” since a full adjudication of their weight rests on the all things considered judgment to come. But this is hard to square with the phenomenology Heidegger describes, which is of a global collapse of meaning, one in which “the world has the character of completely lacking significance” (*BT* 231/186). If McManus’s “insignificance in themselves” were correct, the phenomenology should surely be of multiple values clamouring for attention, as when we feel the pull of incommensurable goals. Similarly, it is unclear why Heidegger would suggest that philosophy fosters authenticity: the “task of philosophizing is to evoke the Dasein in man”, to “liberate” it from the layers of misconstrual and self-deception (*FCM* 258, 255).⁷ This is partly because McManus’ account is too focused on the speaker’s motivations: if the task is to get me to face up to all my various responsibilities, family, job, friends etc, I may need a pep talk but I am unlikely to need an understanding of the history of being or even an analysis

⁷ Thus, philosophy is a “questioning” which seeks to “develop a readiness for the moment of vision”, i.e. for the “liberation of the Dasein in man” (*FCM* 254-5).

of how we are all thrown into social roles. Why should that move me if the pleas of my own son have already failed?

Fourth, McManus's model does not explain Heidegger's suggestion, noted in the opening lines of this chapter, that authenticity is a uniquely enabling condition for philosophy. As he puts it in *BT*, it is authentic awareness which "guarantees...that we are coining the appropriate existential concepts" (*BT* 364/316). There are countless people who have successfully made "all things considered" judgements, and yet believed the philosophical nonsense Heidegger sees as characteristic of modernity or of organised religion. For example, someone could be authentic on McManus' account and be an utterly convinced Cartesian: this is impossible to square with the idea that authenticity "make[s] an entity—the inquirer—transparent in his own Being" (*BT* 27/7). Conversely, it is not unheard of for those who evade their personal responsibilities to have great intellectual insights: I need not belabour Heidegger's own case here. Of course, that does not exempt them from challenge but, as Heidegger stresses, his aim is "purely ontological", not to offer a "moralizing critique" (*BT* 211/168). Blanking your son, as in McManus' example, is unattractive, but there is no reason why it should connect to good or bad philosophy.

The underlying problem here is that McManus's notion of authenticity is too ontic: I am true to myself in the sense that I am taking into account all my own individual, ontic commitments: my family, my friends, my job, Those are the "all things" which I must consider.

McManus's account is, however, an immensely rich one, particularly in its appeal to Heidegger's Aristotle, and there may be other lines on which it can develop: for example, in forthcoming work, he suggests that the unity characteristic of ATC judgments could map the

unity of types of being that Heidegger aims to analyse (McManus, forthcoming, 34).⁸ I cannot address this here, but we have at least some idea of the attractions and weaknesses of the ATC model and of Unity stories more broadly. The final task is to introduce the Structural approach.

3. Structural Readings

I will now introduce the third approach on which authenticity consists in an at least inchoate or pre-theoretic awareness of certain *structural* facts about the space of reasons. This is equivalent, as we will see, to the claim that authentic Dasein possesses at least an inchoate or pre-theoretic understanding of its own fundamental nature.

Let me start by connecting the first of these formulations, in terms of reasons, with the second, in terms of self-understanding. As in 1., Dasein's world is a web of obligations, prohibitions and requirements, of behaviour, tools and even assertions understood as appropriate or inappropriate. Heidegger's early work ultimately grounds such norms in Dasein's self-understanding: the pile of scripts precariously balanced on the office floor shows up for me "as for marking" just as they may show up to the cleaners "as for disposal". As Crowell nicely observes:

This holds of my affective intentional states as well, whose reason-responsiveness is tied to what I am currently trying to be. For instance, as I lecture I notice a student sleeping and I become angry. A sleeping student is not inherently a reason to get angry, but given my practical identity as a teacher it is an instance of what Heidegger might call "obtrusiveness" and constitutes a (defeasible) reason for anger. (Crowell 2014, 255)

⁸ My worry would be that the two unities are very different: ATC's primarily unify a range of competing goals within a broad "ready-to-hand" horizon, whereas the unity of being concerns radical ontological diversity.

It is thus Dasein's self-understanding which anchors the normative web. Here is the claim in Heidegger's own terminology:

Why is there anything such as a why and a because? Because Dasein exists . . . The for-the-sake-of-which, as the primary character of world, i.e., of transcendence, is the primal phenomenon of ground as such. (*MFL* 276)

What is distinctive about authentic Dasein then? Authentic Dasein is marked by a particular self-understanding: it lives with a "primordial" awareness of its own nature (*BT* 276/233).

Since Dasein is a normative being, this awareness implies an awareness of certain general or structural facts about the space of reasons, facts which are picked out by Heidegger's existential analytic. The two formulations with which I began this section thus merge.

Heidegger often captures this in perfectionist terms: authentic Dasein is one that lives in the light of, and thereby realises, its essence, "becom[ing] 'essentially' Dasein in that authentic existence" (*BT* 370/323), fulfilling the ancient injunction to "become what you are" (*BT* 186/145, 312–3/267–8).

Before proceeding, let me stress that my proposal is independent of what exactly these structural facts are: full discussion would require detailed treatment of the throw, conscience, etc. But one can see the main idea with a simple example. Suppose we agree with Carman (2003, 307) that *Being and Time* shows that all value is "worldly through and through, embedded in the contingencies of historical tradition and social life". This implies, for example, that there are no transcendent moral laws in either a religious or a Kantian sense. On my reading, authentic Dasein would be aware of this and live its life in recognition of it. It is thereby defined by a certain "intimacy" or "transparency" with itself, stemming from a harmony between Dasein's self-conception and its reality (*HCT* 282, *BT* 27/7). In short,

authentic Dasein understands the normative landscape on which it operates, and thus the horizon against which particular choices appear.

We can now understand the relationship between authenticity and philosophy. On the one hand, it makes perfect sense that it is “authentic” pre-theoretic awareness which “guarantees . . . that we are coining the appropriate existential concepts” (*BT* 364/316).⁹ This is because authenticity is an inchoate grip on Dasein’s existential structure. On the other hand, we can see why philosophy fosters authenticity. Insofar as it unpacks the structure of normativity, it “leads us to the brink of our possibilities”, making the contours of our world clear (*FCM* 257). Of course, there is always a risk that the discipline will degenerate into “free-floating speculation”. But at its best philosophy can:

Make manifest the Dasein in contemporary man once more, so that he can in general perceive . . . what is essential in Dasein. (*FCM* 257)

With my account in place, let me now highlight some key contrast with those discussed above.

First, the transcendental reading. I hope it is now clear why I endorsed this in 1.:

(i) Only if we are authentic can we identify the transcendental condition for Dasein’s acting in the light of norms rather than merely in accordance with them.

This epistemic claim reflects authenticity’s methodological role: authentic self-understanding implies an awareness of the structures which ground our engagement with reasons. Crucially, that awareness need *not* be explicit or thematised. For example, Heidegger believed that early

⁹ Theory must thus “be attested in its existentiell possibility by Dasein itself” (*BT* 312/267).

Christian communities “lived temporality as such” (*PRL*: 82). This was marked by Paul’s rejection of an “objective” model of time in favour of one in which talk about the future, say, is not about “when” but about the “how of self-comportment”, i.e., in which it is an inchoate way of delineating the distinctively teleological orientation that Heidegger analyses as “originary temporality” (*BT* 373–4/326–7, *PRL* 106). The Pauline Christian thus possessed an authentic but inchoate understanding of the foundational structures that define Dasein’s intentionality: the philosopher’s task is to use phenomenology to articulate that understanding in systematic terms.

We can also see how my account avoids the problematic (iii):

(iii) Being authentic is a transcendental condition for Dasein’s acting in the light of norms rather than merely in accordance with them.

On my reading, all Dasein operate “in the light of”, rather than merely in accordance, with norms: recall the highly sophisticated, if sophisticated, Kierkegaard scholars attacked by Heidegger. Since Heidegger, like Kant, equates normativity with “mineness”, it follows that such “mineness” is a constitutive feature of all Dasein, be it authentic or inauthentic:

That being which is an *issue* for [Dasein] in its very being is in each case mine . . . As modes of being, authenticity and inauthenticity . . . are both grounded in the fact that any Dasein whatsoever is characterised by mineness. (*BT* 68/42–3; original emphasis)¹⁰

¹⁰ Heidegger follows almost exactly the orthodox Kantian line on which the boundary between normativity and non-normativity is co-extensive with the boundary between humans and non-human animals: the latter cannot see something “as” a hammer and thus cannot see it as appropriate or inappropriate for certain tasks (*GA* 27: 192, *FCM* 397, 416, 450)

In the case of inauthentic agents, however, the “I”, the “mineness” that characterises Dasein, is occluded or inoperative (BT 151/115–16). This is not because inauthentic Dasein ceases to act in the light of reasons, as on the Transcendental reading, but rather because its engagement with reasons is inadequate: inauthentic Dasein abnegates its own responsibility, whilst nevertheless remaining responsible precisely for that in a way that a dog, say, simply could not be (BT 164/127, HCT 340). This abnegation can take many forms, but it is rooted in an attempt to deny or silence or blot out the normative facts of which authentic Dasein is aware. This explains why inauthenticity is such a broad phenomenon for Heidegger: destabilised and threatened by guilt or anxiety, burying oneself in triviality is one option, a dogmatic adherence to theism another.

Second, consider Unity approaches such as Guignon’s. As McManus (2019, 1182–3) notes, one reason these may seem attractive is that Heidegger talks of *Das Man* as “dispersed” [*zerstreut*] (BT 167/129) or “fragmentary”, Stambaugh’s rendering of “*als unganzen*” (BT 276/233). This seems to locate authenticity in the context of post-MacIntyrean or post-Frankfurtian concerns about the need for commitments such as narratives in achieving unity and thereby genuine selfhood. But, as I argued in 2., narrativity is no guarantee against inauthenticity and we can now see that the very same primary texts in fact support the Structural approach better. To begin, we must not overread “*zerstreut*” which Heidegger often uses loosely for quite general facts about Dasein that are neutral between authenticity and inauthenticity (for example, BT 82/56). Next, note that the distinctive sense which the inauthentic man is dispersed is that he loses himself in trivial matters, desperately seeking “distraction” [*Zerstreuung*] in “things of little significance” to the point that “he does not genuinely see himself” (BT 441/389–90, BT 216/172, PS 51).¹¹ This fits perfectly with my model: the problem is not lack of unity, but *lack of depth*, superficiality. Inauthentic Dasein

¹¹ Translation modified.

flees from the inchoate awareness of its own nature, encountered in states such as anxiety, desperately fixing its eyes on the busy work of everyday life instead. Similarly, the full text reference to inauthentic Dasein as “*als unganzen*” makes clear that what the inauthentic lack is precisely an adequate grip on their own nature:

One thing has become unmistakable: our existential analysis of Dasein up till now cannot lay claim to primordially. Its fore-having never included more than the inauthentic Being of Dasein and of Dasein as less than a whole [*als unganzen*]. If the Interpretation of Dasein's Being is to become primordial, as a foundation for working out the basic question of ontology, then it must first have brought to light existentially the Being of Dasein in its possibilities of authenticity and totality. (BT 276/233)

Inauthentic Dasein is “less than a whole” not because it lacks consistent principles or a narrative that govern its life—it may have plenty of those—but because it fails to acknowledge the full facts of its nature: in Heideggerian terms, the full span of originary temporality.

Third, consider McManus’ more sophisticated version of the Unity reading. I allow the inauthentic to make a very wide range of errors: this matches the broad *Kulturkritik* style of Heidegger’s presentation which I suggested McManus could not explain. What matters is simply that they lack and seek to dodge the awareness the authentic possess. This will sometimes manifest itself in elaborate system-building as a form of reassurance, sometimes in a clinging to inherited views, most often in a simple refusal to engage with anything beyond trivialities. It is also now clear why Heidegger insists that only the authentic can accurately philosophize, another point which made little sense on McManus’s account.

Only he can philosophise who is already resolved to grant free dignity to Dasein in its most radical and universal-essential possibilities. (*MFL* 22)

As Crowe (2006, 29) nicely puts it, “authenticity . . . is a concrete experience that provides . . . a purchase on the phenomenon that is to be interpreted”.

Other problems for McManus also now ease. For example, I suggested that on his account Heidegger’s focus on anxiety and the history of being as remedies for inauthenticity made little sense: why should that bring me to attend to my family, as in his example, when I am deaf to their own pleas? But if the aim is to open the way for at least an inchoate grip on Dasein’s structure, it makes much more sense: in deconstructing the canon, for example, Heidegger can break down long sedimented assumptions about agency. Yet we need to be careful with the word “remedy” here. Heidegger’s aim is not to supply internal reasons that might move the inauthentic to authenticity in the way much moral philosophy seeks to persuade the egoist on their own terms. Rather, Heidegger’s goal is to create openings, for example by drawing attention to overlooked experiences such as anxiety or boredom, through which at least some agents can glimpse a more accurate self-understanding.

The account I have given is not the full story. Heidegger aligns multiple other states with the inauthentic/authentic divide and a complete analysis would need to account for those. One can see how that might be done. Conscience and anxiety, for example, are further ways in which the true structure of Dasein makes itself manifest, intruding into even everyday life, offering a chance to “hear [our] own self” (*BT* 363/315). Similarly, resoluteness is fundamentally an acknowledgement of the structural normative facts I have stressed: for example, “a self-projection upon one’s ownmost being-guilty that is ready for anxiety” (*BT* 343/296–7). A full analysis would also need to discuss the links which Heidegger draws between authenticity and phronesis, to detail the structural normative facts

which I have only gestured at here and to unpack the relationship between the inchoate awareness of them found in the authentic and the explicit articulation of them in Heidegger's text. I have attempted to do these things elsewhere (Golob 2014, Ch. 6 and forthcoming).

I asked what authenticity "does" in *Being and Time*. Phenomena such as guilt, the throw, and anxiety map the structure of the self, where this self is understood in normative terms. Authenticity is a distinctive form of self-knowledge, or "transparency" in Heidegger's terms, regarding that normative structure. Given Heidegger's premise that to investigate being we must investigate Dasein, it follows that authenticity underpins the entire project. We can also see now how this dovetails with the other great phenomenological pillars of the text: Heidegger must explain in what sense the authentic can have an "inchoate" or "inexplicit" or "pre-judgemental" grip on such knowledge and how the philosopher can translate that into systematic form without thereby distorting it.

