

From Um- and Mitwelt to *Das Man*: A comment on the Functions of *Das Man* within Heidegger's Being-In-The-World

Term Paper

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I Introduction

HEIDEGGER devotes Chapter IV of Division I to the analysis of the second “structural moment” of being-in-the-world (BIW); this has to lead him to uncover “the entity, *which* respectively *is* in the mode of BIW (...) in Dasein’s average everydayness”¹. His answer to the question of the “who” of everyday Dasein is articulated along three sections (§§ 25-27). The first of these sections (§ 25) contains an introductory discussion concerning the possibility, and the framing, of the mentioned question; I shall only briefly refer to it *infra* II.3. The second section (§ 26) is an inquiry into the existential structures that underlie Dasein’s encounter with other Daseins; notably the structure of Mitsein. The third section (§ 27) introduces the notion of “Das Man” as both the ordinary manifestation of Dasein’s BIW with Others, and as the answer to the who-question.

The relation between the second and the third sections poses a puzzle. Different prominent readers of HEIDEGGER offer different conceptualizations of this relation. For some, Das Man is the *corollary* of the modes of being analyzed under § 26²; others envisage the discussion of Das Man as a further *implication* of a particular aspect of Mitsein³. What these authors generally agree to is that HEIDEGGER himself was not clear. They also tend to converge in acknowledging the key-role of Chapter IV within *Being and Time* (BT), if not within HEIDEGGER’s entire thought.

Against this background, the aim of this paper is two-fold. I primarily intend to shed some light on the nature and possible functions of the notion of Das Man in HEIDEGGER’s account of BIW. In doing so, constant references to Mitsein (and related existential structures) will need to be made. Consequently, I also hope to contribute to a further clarification of the relation between HEIDEGGER’s analysis of Mitsein and his analysis of Das Man.

Section II of this paper will provide an overview of Dasein’s behavior towards other entities in its BIW. By discussing – in this order – Dasein’s relation to things, to Others, and to itself, I will try to lay plain some of the basic pillars of HEIDEGGER’s “new ontology of the subject” (OLAFSON

¹ P. 53; emphasis added (all references that only indicate the page-number correspond to HEIDEGGER 1926).

² As we shall see, this is the case *e.g.* of Prof. DREYFUS; the reason, synthetically stated, is that he interprets social *intelligibility* in terms of Das Man (*infra* III.1).

1987:12), which represents “the last nail in the coffin of the Cartesian tradition” (DREYFUS 1991:144). It will appear that there is a continuum between the three stages of analysis – things, Others, Dasein itself – and, in a sense, Das Man is already contained in this continuum⁴. To what extent this is so will become clearer when Das Man is specifically addressed (Sections III-VI).

In **Section III**, I shall introduce the notion of Das Man and suggest a way of comparing the approaches to Das Man by the various authors I will be considering. The fundamental distinction is the one between Das Man as a source of intelligibility, and Das Man as a source of (a weak sense of) normativity; these are the two categories around which I propose to organize the conceptions of Das Man. **Sections IV** and **V** are, respectively, an elaboration of each of these categories. By way of conclusion, **Section VI** will tentatively sketch out a way of reading together these two categories.

II “...the last nail in the coffin...”

The Cartesian Self is an abstract, “worldless” *subjectum*; a self whose essence consists in treating “everything, including its own natural and historical experience in the world, as an object of knowledge”⁵. But this worldless Self has – nevertheless, we might say – a kind of being, namely the only kind of being that DESCARTES believed to be available: it is a substance. Thus, the “spiritual thing” (HEIDEGGER) is both *cogitans* and a *res* (DESCARTES 1824). In other words, it is both *abstracted from* the “external world” (immaterial), and a substance *within* that world.

As OLAFSON notes (OLAFSON 1987:7), HEIDEGGER’s main objection to this account was not the paradoxical *relation* between immaterial and material substances (“mind” / “body” and, per extension, the rest of the “external world”). It was rather the *conditions of an inference* from the “inner sphere” to the existence of the “outer sphere”. The Cartesian subject doubts the existence of the “external world”. Accordingly, his knowledge of it is not more than a belief which, by its nature,

³ I would include in this category those authors who conceive of intelligibility independently of Das Man, the latter having “only” a (usually negative) *normative* function. Examples are Profs. OLAFSON and INWOOD.

⁴ HEIDEGGER does not explicitly make this claim but, in a slightly different context, he insinuates that the germ of the analysis in Chapter IV is contained in his previous account of the worldhood (Chapter III); p. 113.

⁵ OLAFSON 1987:6; the author speaks of a “purely epistemic form of selfhood”.

can be true or false (*ibid.*:13). The very presupposition of the doubt – and thus of the inquiry itself – is the possibility of conceiving the mind independently from the world (*ibid.*:9). If it was not independent, it could not doubt the world’s existence. So the world, if there is such, must be external to our mental states; if the world does not exist (if the belief was false), its nonexistence does not undermine the existence of the doubting Self; if the world does exist (if the belief was true), the doubting Self will turn out to be “side by side” (*nebeneinander*) with the material substances in the world⁶.

HEIDEGGER can be said to challenge the *presupposition* of the doubt; not (necessarily) the way it is *solved*. The presupposition is a certain conception of the Self, upon which the subsequent proof-searching-enterprise is built⁷. For the purposes of our present inquiry, we may distinguish three features of the Cartesian Self that HEIDEGGER’s construction specifically refutes.

First, the Self’s **detached** character – its extramundane *locus standi* (OLAFSON 1987:13). Second, what could be called the Self’s epistemological **priority** over the external world and the Other Selves – that is, the Self always-already knows itself before it can project that knowledge on other substances. Third, the Self’s **self-containedness** or self-sufficiency – the Self *qua* Self does not receive any attribute from a source external to it, and therefore subsists even in the case there is no other substance besides it (otherwise they are side-by-side)⁸.

The new ontology of the subject proposed by HEIDEGGER refutes each of these three features. Its main insight is that we operate, in our everyday activities, on the very presuppositions about the world and our being which realism seeks to justify, so that the task of ontology must be to spell out this inarticulate (pre-ontological) understanding⁹. My presentation of HEIDEGGER’s analysis of

⁶ Cf. p. 55.

⁷ See p. 60 *passim*. Accordingly, OLAFSON argues that HEIDEGGER’s refutation of critical (v. naïv) realism does not primarily consist of a rejection of realism’s proofs of the external world, but of the very claim that proofs are needed (OLAFSON 1987:11 *et seq.*).

⁸ OLAFSON explains how the application of the features of a “material substance” to the mind produces a reversal of the subject-object relationship, to the extent that the substances’ attributes are, in the case of the mind, the representations of ideas, and the nucleus to which they are attributed is the substance that *contains* these representations (OLAFSON 1987:7).

⁹ OLAFSON 1987:12, 15; cf. p. 12.

Dasein's BIW will be structured such as to show how Dasein is essentially not detached, not epistemologically prior, and not self-contained.

II.1. Dasein's Discovery of Things,...

In our everyday dealings with the world we encounter entities around us whose being is ready-to-hand¹⁰. These entities, conceived of as equipment within an equipmental totality, are assigned to referential contexts (*Verweisungszusammenhänge*) which in turn are bound up with a series of involvements. The involvements lead to for-the-sake-of-whichs (*Worumwillen*).

It is our concerned (*besorgend*) activity that puts us in relation to these non-existing entities (things). Our Dasein has a two-fold relation to them. On the one hand, Dasein's activity is constitutive of the totality of involvements. Dasein "encounters" entities – *i.e.* entities are made "present" to Dasein – because it "discovers" (*entdeckt*) them, and thereby attributes them meaning within a referential context:

"only because Dasein does this [discovery] there is a unitary world rather than a collection of entities. Dasein is not just one thing among others; it is at the centre of the world, drawing together its threads" (INWOOD 2000:22).

On the other hand, precisely because Dasein is "at the center of the world", it is placed *in* the totality of involvements. It is a feature of Dasein's discovery of no-existing entities that it takes place in the framework of Dasein's *concern* with them. Dasein discovers entities because it dwells in the world (*Sein-bei*); Dasein is always-already "in" the world¹¹, and this allows Dasein to bring entities into a zone of openness (*Unverborgenheit*). The world becomes a *Umwelt* – "that which surrounds the 'clearing' (*Lichtung*) that each Dasein constitutes" (OLAFSON 1998:21, note 4).

It therefore appears that Dasein's ability to discover things is intimately connected to Dasein's not being detached from the world it discovers: as HEIDEGGER puts it, Dasein is always-already "outside" of its "internal sphere" (p. 62). To be a ground for the involvements, Dasein must be placed within them. Dasein must be part of the world in order for the world to be meaningful.

¹⁰ In my exposition, I am partly relying on CAVALIER 1999.

¹¹ See pp. 53 *et seq.*

Thus far, as DREYFUS points out, HEIDEGGER has not yet cut himself loose from the Cartesian / Husserlian tradition, which also conceives the Self as a unitary source of meaning (DREYFUS 1991:141). Even if HEIDEGGER has proven that the inside/outside dichotomy is false, this is not sufficient. Something else must be said about the priority of the source of meaning over the entities it attributes meaning to, and about its independence from such entities. The source of meaning is not a detached *subjectum*, but what makes it a source in the first place?

II.2. ... Disclosure of Others,...

The world, besides being a *Umwelt*, is a *Mitwelt* (p. 118). Dasein does not only discover non-existing entities; it further discloses¹² other Dasein, that is, other human beings (“Others”). Ontologically, just as Dasein is never without a world (worldless), it is never without Others.

According to HEIDEGGER, the primary (*zunächst*) and ordinary (*zumeist*) way in which we encounter Others is *through* the ready-to-hand equipment (*aus dem Zuhandenen her*)¹³. This can be connected to the public character of equipment: *i.e.*, the fact that it is *general* (it is equipment no matter who uses it), and that there is a *normal* (appropriate) way of using it (DREYFUS 1991:151-152). As a result of this double feature, Others are embodied in the very meaning of equipment. When discovering pieces of equipment, we cannot help thinking – implicitly or explicitly – that it has been manufactured, that it has been borrowed, that it has been used, and/or that it can be used in a certain manner. It is therefore primarily and ordinarily through their (actual or potential, past, present or future) *actions* that Others are disclosed to us: “there Others are that which they carry out”¹⁴.

Another way of putting this is to say that the primary understanding we have of Others is mediated through the world as a realm of intelligibility (OLAFSON 1998:28-29). But there is more to the insight that equipment “‘speaks to us’ of communal objectives” (GUIGNON 1983:105). It is not only that we can understand Others through the equipment, but rather that we can understand the

¹² I am using a different verb for the “covering-up” of non-existing and existing entities, following the vocabulary used by HEIDEGGER (*entdecken v erschliessen*), though some authors employ indistinctively the notion of disclosure.

¹³ See pp. 120, and 123-125.

¹⁴ P. 126. OLAFSON makes the point that our knowledge of Others’ actions is not to be opposed to any potential knowledge of their “inner lives”, since the notion of “privacy of motives” belongs to Cartesianism. The author argues that, although some thoughts are private, the frontier between our thoughts and our actions is blurred (OLAFSON 1998:33-35).

equipment – and, generally, the world – through the Others. In other words, the Self is not the “first” to *assign* meaning to an inert world; most of the time, the Self *learns* the meaning of the world as it has been established by the “common fund” of intelligibility contributed to by the Self’s predecessors: “the disclosure of entities in the world (...) is essentially joint and cooperative” (OLAFSON 1998:20).

The next question to ask is which structures of Dasein’s BIW allow for this shared form of intelligibility to arise. HEIDEGGER answers that these are the *existentialia* of Mitsein and Mitdasein. Our Mitwelt is such that Others are “also” there “with” us – their being is, *like* ours, circumspectively concerned BIW; they are therefore existentially *with* us, and not occurrent next to us (*mit-vorhanden*) in the way non-existing entities are vis-à-vis each other. Others’ circumspensive concern makes intelligibility possible; and Dasein’s essential structure of Mitsein makes our being-with-one-another (Miteinandersein) possible¹⁵.

Mitsein is existentially constitutive of BIW (p. 121); Dasein is essentially Mitsein (p. 120). It is not merely an empirical fact that other human beings are in the world; rather, it is a constitutive element in our own way of being as it is in theirs (OLAFSON 1998:3-4). Because Dasein *is* Mitsein, it can disclose other Dasein. To characterize this “disclosure” of Others, HEIDEGGER often uses the idea of “liberating” (*freigeben*). This ought not to mislead us into conceiving the Self’s disclosing activity as again somehow prior to (or necessary for) the activity of Others. I here endorse GUIGNON’s interpretation of this disclosure as an understanding of the expressiveness of Others (GUIGNON 1983:104). For this author, it is of the essence of Dasein that it manifests its “competence” in dealing with equipment (the source of the shared intelligibility). This manifestation is captured by other Daseins thanks to their Mitsein-structure. The capturing of this expression is what amounts to Mitdasein. Mitdasein is the “*umweltlich freigegebene Seinde*” (p. 123). Roughly put, Mitdasein is what is encountered, and Mitsein is what makes the encountering possible¹⁶.

¹⁵ HEIDEGGER claims that Mitsein makes Miteinandersein both ontologically *and* factually possible (p. 120-121).

¹⁶ Since, of course, also the encountered Dasein has Mitsein (this is what makes it express itself in a way intelligible for Others), and the encountering Dasein necessarily expresses itself, too, there is a deep connection between Mitsein and Mitdasein.

Since Mitsein is an existentiale, Dasein has Mitsein even when it is factually alone (p. 120). One might assimilate Dasein's "readiness" for dealing with equipment to its "readiness" for dealing with Others (DREYFUS 1991:149). However, the character of Dasein's being towards Others is different from its being towards entities ready-to-hand and present-at-hand: this difference is the difference between concern and solicitude (*i.e.*, concern-for, or *Fürsorge*). There can be various forms of solicitude, which HEIDEGGER also calls modi of Miteinandersein (and of Mitdasein, and of Mitsein; *cf.* pp. 121-124). Basically, the modi range from positive to deficient. The latter include indifference (*Gleichgültigkeit*) and being-away (*Fortsein*), and characterize the average everyday Miteinandersein (p. 121). Positive modi range from a taking-over of the Other's concern (*einspringen*) to an assisting of the Other *in* his concern (*vorausspringen*). HEIDEGGER holds that everyday Miteinandersein is placed between these two (positive) extremes (p. 122); to reconcile this with his previous claim that the ordinary mode of Miteinandersein is deficient, one might regard the deficient modi as placed precisely *between* the two positive extremes.

Dasein is primarily and ordinarily in the deficient modi of solicitude (p. 121). "Positive" and "deficient" modi of solicitude are not to be mixed up with the idea I shall later (Section III) introduce of a positive and a negative aspect of Das Man. Anticipating, it can be said that Das Man "arises" precisely in connection to the deficient modi of Miteinandersein. Das Man is as much a creature of average everydayness as deficient modi of solicitude are¹⁷.

In sum, through the articulation of the structures of Mitsein, Mitdasein and Miteinandersein, HEIDEGGER has taken a further step away from DESCARTES and HUSSERL. Our Umwelt is neither internal nor external and, moreover, it is a common or shared world, a Mitwelt¹⁸. Such as the Self *learns* about the equipment instead of originally *attributing* meaning to it, so too the Self does not

¹⁷ This makes it rather implausible to claim, as OLAFSON does in his recent book, that *Fürsorge* – our being for the sake of Others (*unwillen Anderer*) – has an "unmistakably ethical character" (OLAFSON 1998:4), since it refers to "actions that significantly affect other human beings and their interests" (*ibid.*:45). This is not to reject OLAFSON's attempt to construe a foundation of morality upon an interpretation of *Fürsorge*; it is only to highlight – as the author occasionally does himself – that any such attempt is certainly a departure from HEIDEGGER's premises.

¹⁸ "HEIDEGGER seeks to show that while there are a plurality of centered disclosing activities, these activities presuppose the disclosure of one shared world" (DREYFUS 1991:144).

project its being to “another” (p. 124), but does essentially (always-already) understand the Others’ being. We are *reciprocally present* to one another as having the same world.

II.3. ... and Disclosure of Itself

But the question of the Others provokes the question of the Self. Dasein is not occurrent, and thus not isolated (DREYFUS 1991 146). What is the place of Dasein’s self-disclosure in the reciprocal presence with other Dasein? As HEIDEGGER argues in § 25, the reflective “I”-perception (*reflektives Ichvernehmen*) can be ontologically misleading¹⁹. The ontic taken-for-grantedness (*Selbstverständlichkeit*) that the who of everyday Dasein is “I” needs to undergo an existential analysis (p. 115), which may yield the conclusion that “the who of everyday Dasein is precisely not I myself” (*ibid.*). Indeed, this is where HEIDEGGER’s comment leads (§ 27). But at this stage I am only interested in the disclosure of Dasein to itself that is involved in the process of answering the who-question. This self-disclosure is what triggers the overcoming of the “I”. So we may reformulate the question as: what is the place of the reciprocal presence in Dasein’s self-disclosure?

The place is a constitutive one. OLAFSON extensively explains that the understanding each of us has of the kind of entity we are, is the result of our relation to other like beings²⁰. The “Others” is a notion that essentially includes ourselves:

““The Others’ does not mean anything like: the whole rest of the outstanding [*Übrigen*] except for me, from which the “I” elevates [*heraushebt*] itself. Rather, the Others are those from which one does ordinarily *not* distinguish oneself, amongst which one also is” (p. 118).

In a way analogous to the manner that Dasein understands the Others, it also understands itself primarily in terms of its own *actions*: “Dasein finds ‘itself’ ordinarily in that *which* it carries out, uses, expects, avoids – in the ordinarily *besorgten umweltlich Zuhandenen*” (p. 119). Here again, actions are not meaningless physical moves, but purposeful human comportment within a referential context (DREYFUS 1991:147). But actions are not “mental states”. “Mental states” play a secondary,

¹⁹ It can even be ontically misleading (p. 116 *in fine*).

²⁰ “...early in our lives we are acquiring what can only be called an implicit understanding of the purposive ordering of our own lives as well as those of others. But this in turn gradually brings into being an (equally implicit) understanding of the kind of entity each of us is; and this, too, is something we achieve in our relation to other like beings” (OLAFSON 1998:24).

almost subsidiary function – they come to the foreground, so to speak, in exceptional situations of a “breakdown” of the Self²¹. Due to the ordinary pre-eminence of our “transparent coping”, the “perverse assumption” is often made that “the subject is a self-sufficient substance” (DREYFUS 1991:147-148). That is, that the Self is a self-contained and occurrent entity. But this is the wrong way of understanding HEIDEGGER’s insight that the Self is disclosed through its actions.

The Self’s actions are purposive if, and only if, they correspond to an intelligible occupation of those made available by society (*i.e.*, the Others): “to grasp Dasein as it is is to understand it as such-and-such – as a banker, dentist, waitress, truck driver” (GUIGNON 1983:105). The substance of the human being is its existence (p. 117); Dasein exists in terms of its possibilities. Therefore, existence receives its meaning in terms of the available and actually pursued occupations. It is the social organization of roles and equipment that ultimately attribute a meaning to Dasein (DREYFUS 1991:158-159).

Dasein “finds itself” primarily through the Others, and the Others are primarily encountered through the concerned engagement with the Umwelt. It follows that, as opposed to the Cartesian / Husserlian tradition, HEIDEGGER’s Self is not initially given to itself within a self-contained “sphere of ownness”. There is no such sphere. Dasein is essentially Mitsein - “there is no plural for Dasein”, in GUIGNON’s extreme formulation (GUIGNON 1983:104). Dasein is itself plural, in the sense of not being a unique source of meaning. It cannot be such, because it receives its own meaning from the Um- and Mitwelt. This is the last step towards overcoming Cartesianism, since “only when the objectifying tendency of individualism is circumvented can the Cartesian ontology be fully overcome” (*ibid.*:104).

III Das Man

Das Man – the “one”, as in “one submits one’s papers on the deadline” – is the answer to the question of the *who* of everyday Dasein. Everyday Dasein – let us recall – is the Dasein of the deficient modi of Miteinandersein. It is the Dasein that discloses Others from the ready-to-hand

²¹ P. 118; as DREYFUS puts it, only in “*special derivate circumstances* our everyday familiarity breaks down and leads to the separation between psychic life and behavior” (DREYFUS 1991:151).

equipment, and that understands itself in terms of its occupations. This is how HEIDEGGER derives Das Man from the considerations under § 26:

“The own Dasein, as well as the Mitdasein of Others, is encountered primarily and ordinarily from the *umweltlich besorgten Mitwelt*. In its *Aufgehen* in the *besorgten* world, which means at the same time in the Mitsein towards the Others, Dasein is not itself. Who is it, then, who has taken over the being as everyday Miteinandersein?” (p. 125 *in fine*).

Hence, the own Dasein is not itself insofar as it encounters itself through the world; it is also not itself insofar as it encounters Others through the world, because Others’ Daseins are essentially like its own Dasein, and so by deriving their Dasein from the Umwelt the Self is implying that its Dasein also derives from the Umwelt. Therefore, in a sense, the being of both the Self *and* the Others is diluted in the deficient modi of Miteinandersein (*cf.* p. 126). But there is a counterpart to the Self’s and Others’ fading away – the counterpart is the “dictatorship” of Das Man, in whose bosom the Self and Others are merged. Das Man is, therefore, nobody and everybody at the same time (p. 128). It embodies anonymity (p. 127). And the more imperceptible it is, the more pervasive its influence (p. 126).

Before commenting on what this “influence” consists in – that is, before addressing the nature and function of Das Man – it is useful to sketch out different ways in which different authors have articulated the derivation of Das Man from the account of Um- and Mitwelt. This will help me, in turn, to set the basis for the distinction I will draw in the sections to follow between two dimensions, and two aspects, of Das Man.

I shall consider the accounts by DREYFUS/GUIGNON, INWOOD and OLAFSON, in this order. Although all of them connect Das Man to some loose notion of normativity, this connection is strongest in the case of OLAFSON and weakest in the case of DREYFUS/GUIGNON.

DREYFUS (DREYFUS 1991:151-152) introduces Das Man in the context of the public character of equipment. equipment is both general and creates norms (*supra*). The latter means that there is an “appropriate” way of using equipment. Such appropriate way is not necessarily a (morally) “good” one, but is first of all a way that corresponds to the nature of the piece of equipment within the

context of involvements from which it receives its meaning. It is also in this sense that GUIGNON's talk of a "correct way" needs to be understood (GUIGNON 1983:106). So Das Man is an aspect of the referential context that underpins everyday intelligibility.

INWOOD (INWOOD 2000:24-26) focuses on another facet of social intelligibility: roles, instead of equipment. He considers Dasein's "thrownness" as a qualification of the claim that Dasein consists in its possibility: Dasein cannot so much decide *whether* or not to be (it did not decide to be born), as *how* to be. Once we are in the world, can we *freely* choose what to become? INWOOD mentions two types of restrictions on this freedom: on the one hand, facticity (material constraints)²²; on the other, social conventions which allow for an evaluation of different courses of action. Whatever INWOOD means by "evaluation", it must be closer to normativity than DREYFUS/GUIGNON's "appropriateness" as a result of INWOOD's separation of social conventions from material constraints. But his evaluation stops short of moral or other kinds of "absolute" imperatives: as examples of such "evaluation" he cites the *significance* of the option, and whether it is or not *agreeable*.

It is OLAFSON who presents Das Man as a consideration *different from* the "common fund" of knowledge that makes human endeavors possible (OLAFSON 1998:35). He characterizes Das Man as a "further element" of HEIDEGGER's account of Mitsein; one that – according to OLAFSON – has a strong bearing on Mitsein's ethical character (*supra* note 17). In a footnote (*ibid.*:36, note 22) he argues that, although for HEIDEGGER the status of Das Man is ontological [p. 129: Das Man as an existential], HEIDEGGER has failed to provide a satisfactory justification for this. OLAFSON thinks that the claim that Das Man is a modality of Mitsein is insufficient to prove that the relation between Mitsein and Das Man is necessary. It is not surprising that OLAFSON conceives the relation between Mitsein and Das Man as rather contingent, in view of the thoroughly negative normative content he attributes to Das Man. In his eyes, Das Man is the source of conformism: it provides people with ready-made *justifications* for their actions, thereby depriving people from their capacity and willingness to choose. "Justifications" must here be understood as largely "ethical justifications".

²² "Existentiality is always determined by facticity" (p. 192).

Whereas DREYFUS/GUIGNON emphasize the function of Das Man as a source of intelligibility, Olafson virtually disconnects intelligibility from Das Man, which he entirely assigns to a “normative” sphere. For OLAFSON, Das Man does not tell us how the world is and what particular entities or roles are for, but only what is the right thing to do (with them). For DREYFUS/GUIGNON, and more ambiguously for INWOOD, Das Man *does* tell us how the world is and what particular entities or roles are for, and *besides* it helps us forming (value) judgements about our and Others’ actions.

The rest of this paper will be consecrated at bringing out the possible meanings of Das Man. As announced *supra*, and as the just referred doctrinal disagreement reflects, this is a notion whose implications HEIDEGGER left obscure in many respects. I will therefore try to elucidate the nature and functions of Das Man with the help of the previously mentioned accounts (and some others). Due to the heterogeneity of these authors’ claims, I will structure my exposition in a way that attempts to do justice to most of these insights, whilst not wholly embodying those of a particular author.

I shall first consider Das Man in its relation to intelligibility, and subsequently in its relation to normativity. Admittedly, this classification runs against OLAFSON’s argument, but I will try to show that his account of intelligibility does not substantially differ from the accounts by DREYFUS or INWOOD, who explicitly articulate it in terms of Das Man. Within each of these categories – Das Man and intelligibility (Section IV), Das Man and normativity (Section V) – I will distinguish between a positive and a negative aspect. The terms “positive” and “negative” have to be taken broadly; they do not appeal to any uniform evaluative criterion, but pretend to reflect the sense in which such aspects are presented by the authors.

I am thus organizing the conceptions of Das Man along two axes: intelligibility – normativity, and positive – negative. The first axe is stressed by OLAFSON (because he only connects Das Man to normativity); the second axe is emphasized by DREYFUS, who advances the idea that Das Man has a positive and a negative aspect which HEIDEGGER does not clearly disentangle: “HEIDEGGER does not distinguish constitutive *conformity* from the evils of conformism” (DREYFUS 1991:154).

IV Das Man and Intelligibility

The world – Mitwelt, Umwelt – is a referential context; it is the forum in which we are with one another and jointly create meaning. What is the function of Das Man in this connection?

IV.1. Positive Aspect

The positive answer is the point famously made by DREYFUS, on the basis of what he considered a crucial sentence of HEIDEGGER hidden in the midst of a long paragraph (p. 119): “Man-selbst [the Self *qua* Man] articulates the referential nexus of significance” (DREYFUS 1991:161).

For DREYFUS, this is the corollary of the exposition of the existential structures under § 26. Intelligibility does not ultimately rest on some conceptual scheme (that could be made explicit), nor on some arbitrary system of belief. Rather,

“the source of the intelligibility of the world is the average public practices through which alone there can be any understanding at all (...) the one [Das Man] represents averageness, which in turn is necessary for the functioning of the referential whole, and it is thanks to the one that there is a single shared public world rather than a plurality of individual worlds” (DREYFUS 1991 154-155).

DREYFUS calls this his Wittgensteinian interpretation of Das Man, due to its reliance on “shared background practices” that uncover a “single shared world” (DREYFUS 1991:144-145). It is Das Man – the “appropriate” way of using equipment – which makes possible the discovery of entities, and the envisaging of equipmental wholes (*ibid.*). As previously noted, DREYFUS conceives this function of Das Man as norm-creating, although what he understands by “norm”, in this context, is closer to “regularity” than to any strong sense of “normativity”:

“norms define the in-order-tos that define the being of equipment, and also the for-the-sake-of-whichs that give equipment its significance”²³.

²³ DREYFUS 1991:154. It is this rhetorical sense of “norm” that allows DREYFUS to say, on the basis of BOURDIEU’S notion of “*habitus*”, that “there would be no norms without people, but there could be no people without norms” (*ibid.*:159). Cf. also the usage of “norm” by RUSPOLI (1998), who derives Das Man from two main characters of “norms” – that they are shared by each person, and that they are transparent (not realized) – and specifically excludes a third character, namely the norms’ bindingness (“authoritative aspect”).

OLAFSON's approach to the source of intelligibility is similar to INWOOD's (*supra*) in that it concentrates on human actions (roles). Contrary to INWOOD (and to DREYFUS), however, OLAFSON does not speak of Das Man in this connection. He rather discusses intelligibility within the framework of HEIDEGGER's refutation of realism. As noted *supra*, realism's inquiry obscures the fact that the possibility of formulating an inquiry already presupposes the answer that the inquiry is after:

“every inquiry (...) presupposes the existence, not of a solitary self, but of one that is essentially embedded in a field of selves and (...) this fact is a prior condition for the achievement of the kind of epistemic mastery over an objective natural milieu”²⁴.

OLAFSON stresses that the “social character of our knowledge” is not merely a contingent feature of it. The enterprise of knowledge – *i.e.*, intelligibility – depends on our having been able to identify other beings like ourselves (the author calls this “truth as partnership”; OLAFSON 1998:23). And, in turn, formulating an inquiry – whichever – depends on intelligibility. Thus, when we inquire after the existence of “other minds”, “we are in effect trying to call into question something that has enabled us to reach the point at which we can pose this question” (*ibid.*:25).

The important idea for our purposes is that intelligibility is a product of our disclosure of Others and of ourselves. OLAFSON explains that our feeling of interdependence ordinarily diminishes when we reach adulthood (“mature”); but, he claims, “even in this separateness we are bound together” (*ibid.*:25-27). This being bound together is because our (public) actions are always interpreted by Others, regardless of how much we think we “own” such actions²⁵. OLAFSON stresses that we cannot help being aware of this fact (*ibid.*:29). Pushing this only one step further, we might conclude that because our actions, to be meaningful, must be understandable by Others, our actions do not really belong to us. This way we would resume the connection to Das Man in DREYFUS' “positive” sense.

²⁴ OLAFSON 1998:20; “...it is hard to see what answer to their question these philosophers can expect other than the one to which they are already committed by the presuppositions of the ‘search’ in which they are ostensibly engaged” (*ibid.*:16).

²⁵ “...Alter cannot be consistently denied a role in the dis-covering of what Ego is doing or has done though Ego very likely thinks of this as something to which Ego has exclusive rights” (OLAFSON 1998:32).

IV.2. Negative Aspect?

DREYFUS' analysis of the "positive" aspect of Das Man goes as far as to claim: "the one takes the place of the individual subject as the source of significance" (DREYFUS 1991:158). Indeed, at some points in § 27 HEIDEGGER seems to be implying a total absorption of the individual by Das Man. He writes that "Dasein is not itself, the Others have taken its being from it" (p. 126), and that "Dasein is dispersed [*zerstreut*] in the respective Man" (p. 129). This is subsequently explained like this:

"Primarily, it is not 'I' that 'am' in the sense of the own Self, but the Others are, whose way is that of Das Man (...). Dasein is primarily Man, and it ordinarily remains this. When Dasein discovers the world (...), this discovery (...) is realized as a removal of the concealments and cloudings (...) with which Dasein sealed itself against itself" (p. 129).

This would be Das Man's relation to intelligibility brought to the extreme: Dasein would be denied any function as source of intelligibility. It would not only not be the *only* source (*supra*), but it would be no source *at all*.

OLAFSON attributes this "overstatement" to DREYFUS. According to OLAFSON, DREYFUS' emphasis on the "pervasive social element in our lives" amounts to a denial of Dasein's disclosive function; instead, disclosure would be "entirely dependent on a common anonymous fund of know-how and know-what" (OLAFSON 1998:26) and thereby HEIDEGGER's ontological characterization of the individual would be adulterated. This critique, however, is not applicable to DREYFUS. Admittedly, his frequent stress of "shared social practices" and "social habit" can be misleading at some points; but this does not prevent his overall message from reaching the reader: the individual contributes to the shared social practices as much as it borrows from them.

OLAFSON's critique, by contrast, could be applicable to GUIGNON. This author defines Mitdasein as the meaningful expressions of Dasein in the world (*supra*), but repeatedly *identifies* Dasein with these expressions, on the basis that Das Man is an *existentiale* and, thus, "cannot be overcome" (GUIGNON 1983:110):

“Dasein *just is* the roles it takes over in existing (...). I am *nothing but* my meaningful expressions (...). Dasein’s being is *fully* delineated by its social competence and expressions (...). The self is *nothing other* than an *exemplification* of forms of life that anyone can fill in for me”²⁶.

This is, of course, not what HEIDEGGER says. The previously quoted phrases from § 27 must be complemented with other considerations appearing in the same §, which suggest that the ontological interpretation of Dasein’s BIW is frequently obscured precisely by Dasein’s everyday way of being, namely Das Man (p. 130). In approaching the phenomenon of everyday BIW – the argument would go – the ontological structure of Dasein can be better grasped.

Another way of putting this is a pervasive dialectics between “our own observations and our own recollections” and “a common fund to which we all contribute” (OLAFSON 1998:26).

V Das Man and Normativity

§ 27 of BT is sown with expressions that have a normative ring: dominion and power (*Herrschaft* and *Macht*), “what is proper” (*was sich gehört*), “to be right” (*Recht haben*), to judge (*urteilen*), responsibility (*Verantwortlichkeit*), etc. The anonymous subject – Das Man – does not only present us with options, but it dictates certain options, or at least speaks in favor of them: “Das Man (...) prescribes the way of being of everydayness” (p. 127).

HEIDEGGER does not specify what this normativity consists in, *why* “the public is always right” and, more importantly, *how* this moves individuals to act in a particular manner. This fact, coupled with HEIDEGGER’s joint treatment of the intelligibility and the normativity facet of Das Man, helps explain why the accounts of many authors are ambiguous, too. They are especially ambiguous in their delimitation of “normativity” (which all the mentioned authors, in some way or another, acknowledge).

²⁶ GUIGNON 1983:105-109, emphasis added. Though one might almost conceive this position as a (Cartesian) new dualism, GUIGNON expressly states that “By regarding the self as nothing other than its meaningful expressions, HEIDEGGER is able to fully break away from the Cartesian tradition”.

DREYFUS insists that “averageness is not merely statistical”, and that we have a “tendency to conform our behavior to a norm, even if that norm is frequently violated” (DREYFUS 1991:153). There is, thus, in his view something more to Das Man than a conscious factual repetition of a behavioral pattern, but it is not clear what is the nature of this “something more” once it is disconnected from averageness. DREYFUS notes that the “norms” deriving from Das Man are neither moral nor prudential (*ibid.*:152), but nevertheless notices that we feel embarrassment when we fail to conform to them (*ibid.*:152).

OLAFSON’s discussion of Das Man is no less misleading in this respect. Notwithstanding his explicit expelling of the questions regarding intelligibility from Das Man, he asserts that Das Man determines the status of *both* what is “true” and what is “right” (OLAFSON 1998:37). What Das Man determines as “right” is, for OLAFSON, a set of moral values presented as objective²⁷. But, as opposed to DREYFUS, he seems to conceive a continuum between behavioral patterns and feeling of boundness:

“It is as though the fact that in many situations I do the same thing as other members of my society (...) meant that I must be doing these things simply *because* they are the done thing. (*ibid.*:39; emphasis added).

This point is specifically denied by RUSPOLI, in whose view the authoritative/normative aspect of “norms” is not intrinsic to Das Man:

“it does not follow that we stand at the distance we do because ‘this is what one does’. I think we cannot give any reason at all for the distance we stand (...). We are not following norms at all, but norms are following us (...) Norms explain these practices”²⁸.

However, the *average* position amongst the authors I am considering is that Das Man engenders a weak normativity: Das Man makes a claim to correctness or, better, erases the need for a

²⁷ This is consistent with the author’s enterprise of grounding a system of morality upon the attack of moral objectivism (and on the basis of HEIDEGGER’s *Mitsein*).

²⁸ RUSPOLI 1998. He even adds that the claim that norms cause people to conform presupposes a viewpoint on the practices that is at odds with HEIDEGGER’s epistemological premises: “we should not try to reduce practices that exist in shared worlds to the way individual subjects learn these practices”.

claim to correctness of one's everyday actions. This position is my point of departure. (I shall not myself *normatively* evaluate this *average* position).

V.1. Negative Aspect

HEIDEGGER's conception of Das Man as a "dictatorship" taking away responsibility from individuals and worshipping mediocrity strongly reflects KIERKEGAARD's views expressed in "*The Present Age*" (1846). Almost all of the notions that HEIDEGGER presents as structural moments of Das Man are adaptations from KIERKEGAARD's rhetoric. The aim of KIERKEGAARD's book was resolutely one of social criticism. HEIDEGGER's taking over of KIERKEGAARD's expressions, therefore, reinforces the normative reading of Das Man. According to this reading, HEIDEGGER was realizing

"a very harsh critique of the whole conception of 'values' as objective criteria for the guidance of our lives. These were declared to belong to an anonymous public mode of selfhood (one) that occludes both the individuality and the distinctive ontological character of the human being"²⁹.

The structural moments – or characters of being (*Seinscharaktere*) – of Das Man can be explained in terms of a dialectical relation between the individual and the Others (that is, the Others *qua* Man). This relation is, however, different from the above-mentioned one between the common fund of intelligibility and our own supplies to it. To be sure, both relations are analogous, and may in practice be difficult to disentangle (*cf. infra* VI). Nevertheless, at least conceptually, the two are separate: the first relation is the one constitutive of *intelligibility*, whereas the second relation – now at stake – generates *justifications* for social behaviors³⁰.

Distantiality is the name for Dasein's permanent worry about the difference between itself and the Others. Distantiality is different from distinction, because Distantiality may move Dasein either to increase, to reduce or to maintain its distinction from Others. Distantiality, we might roughly say, is awareness of distinction and readiness to do something about it (which may include leaving it as it

²⁹ OLAFSON 1998:3; OLAFSON assimilates this to HABERMAS' "colonization of the lifeworld" (*ibid.*:37, note 24).

³⁰ OLAFSON speaks of "situations in which one human being confronts another and has to justify what he does to that person as someone who is affected by it" (OLAFSON 1998:10); this reminds of Prof. SCANLON's conception of moral responsibility (SCANLON 1998).

is). The next structure is **Dominion** (*Botmässigkeit*); it could be understood as the mirror-image of Distantiality. Dasein is not only absorbed in the Others, but is dominated by them. According to HEIDEGGER, because we are part of the Others (*supra*), we reinforce their power – and, thereby, their power over us. Dominion, so to speak, precludes what Distantiality envisages: there is no distinction between Dasein and the Others, and Dasein moreover cannot do anything about it. Whatever it does will only increase its impotence. This idea strongly recalls the Foucaultian notion of *pouvoir*³¹.

Mediocrity (*Durchschnittlichkeit*)³² must be seen as the result of **Levelling** (*Einebnung*) – which, in turn, is deeply connected to the interplay between Distantiality and Dominion. One could say that distinctions are *de facto* reduced as a result of the Others' Dominion taking hold of Distantiality, so as to make Dasein strive towards an ever-greater assimilation to the “mass”. As KIERKEGAARD writes,

“The envy of characterlessness never understands that distinction is really a distinction (...), but rather reduces it so that it is no longer distinction; and envy defends itself not only from distinction, but against that distinction which is to come. Envy which is establishing itself is a levelling (...) levelling is an abstraction conquering individuality”³³.

Such as KIERKEGAARD introduced the public as “the real Levelling-Master”, HEIDEGGER characterizes the **Public** as constituted by the previously explained ways of being of Das Man (p. 127). HEIDEGGER's Public is “always right in every respect”, though not because it has a deep insight into Dasein and what is real (*echt*), but because it treats everything superficially. The Public lacks insight and thereby obscures what is different and what is unknown. Here the contrast between the dimension of intelligibility and the dimension of normativity can be clearly appreciated. DREYFUS notes that Das Man “accounts for all intelligibility, yet it is no sort of intelligible thing at all”

³¹ That is, his idea of a bottom-up and relational *puissance* that pervasively ramifies as to impregnate all aspects of human life, resistance itself being built in (*cf.* FOUCAULT 1976).

³² I am not using “averageness” to avoid a confusion of this structural moment with statistical regularity (*supra*). HEIDEGGER uses the same German term in both cases, but I understand this as one of his subtle plays with the German language that, in English, might be misleading.

³³ KIERKEGAARD 1846; *cf.* to HEIDEGGER's own description of levelling (p. 127).

(DREYFUS 1991:162). We may add now: precisely because Das Man is not intelligible it is able to dilute individual responsibility into anonymity³⁴. This is the structural moment of **Discharging**.

The subjectivization of the Public – and thus the conquest of individuality – is exacerbated by HEIDEGGER’s claim that the Public too essentially manifests concern about its being (p. 127). In the case of the Public, this is a concern for self-preservation vis-à-vis the challenges coming from deviant behavior (*ibid.*). The attribution to the Public of a feature of existing entities stresses the dialectics between the Self and the Others *qua* Man; a dialectics that suggests incompatibility³⁵.

HEIDEGGER articulates this tension between the two facets of the individual – as Self and as member of Das Man – through the notions of **Authenticity** (*Eigentlichkeit*) and **Inauthenticity** (*Uneigentlichkeit*).

The inauthentic Dasein is the Man-selbst (p. 129): it acts in a certain way simply because that is what one does. This is, for HEIDEGGER, the normal condition of most of us most of the time³⁶. By contrast, authentic Dasein acknowledges its condition as part of an epistemic community and accepts the need for confirmation by Others; in other words, it is not blind to the inevitability of choice (and responsibility) and recognizes the falsity of deferring to the authority of an anonymous “one”.

The relation between the authentic and the inauthentic Dasein allows to qualify the previous characterization of the relation between Self and Others *qua* Man as a dialectic implying *mutual exclusion of its terms*. Although, here again, HEIDEGGER is not explicit, I find it an accurate reading of him to conceive the relation between the authentic and the inauthentic Dasein as a matter of *emphasis, or balance*. Thus, OLAFSON writes that, in its inauthentic facet, “Dasein’s understanding of its own individuated character has been *suspended*” (OLAFSON 1998:46, note 13; emphasis added) or “*avoided*” (*ibid.*:36).

³⁴ Cf. KIERKEGAARD’S characterization of the public as a “huge abstraction”, and “an all-embracing something that is nothing” which in turn reduces individuals to “nothing” (KIERKEGAARD 1846).

³⁵ “...under the regime of Das Man the authority of what is public in the domain of knowledge is purchased at the price of a massive self-disqualification on the part of each individual human being” (OLAFSON 1998:38)

³⁶ Dasein is ordinarily for-the-sake-of Man-selbst (p. 129); cf. INWOOD 2000:26-27.

The corollary of the tension between the individual and Das Man is the attribution also to Das Man of the characters of authenticity and inauthenticity. OLAFSON and GUIGNON implicitly suggest this, and my view is that it is warranted by HEIDEGGER's text. Authenticity, as applied to Das Man, would be tantamount to its complete "isolation of what is supposed to be the case in the world from the disclosive function of the kind of entity that each human being is" (*ibid.*:38). Differently put, authentic Das Man would reify the disclosed referential contexts and habits, and make them appear as necessary meanings and a priori values. Das Man would be inauthentic to the extent that it "b[ore] witness to its own secondary and derivative character – that is, to the inauthenticity of its disclosive function" (*ibid.*). OLAFSON also seems to think that authenticity and inauthenticity of Das Man are equally inevitable, so that – again – the relation between the two facets would be one of emphasis:

"There is (...) no way this occlusion of presence can maintain itself consistently without a tacit acknowledgement of the very fact it seeks to suppress (...). The very efforts it makes to stay clear of the kind of disclosure that might undermine the false security it seeks to protect amount to an acknowledgement of disclosure as a function of individual human being" (*ibid.*:37-38).

V.2. Positive Aspect?

Is there a positive aspect to the normative dimension of Das Man? This can hardly be the consideration that no particular viewpoint is privileged within Das Man³⁷: a particular viewpoint might be better than an unintelligible anonymous "drive". But one could argue that what Das Man obscures is something yet worse than Das Man itself. DREYFUS hints at this: Das Man would be covering up our own (ethical) unsettledness (DREYFUS 1991:153). Thus, transcending Das Man would mean to recognize that

"the only deep interpretation left is that there is no deep interpretation (...) [A]verage everyday intelligibility (...) takes for granted that the everyday for-the-sake-of-whichs and the equipment that serves them are based upon God's goodness, human nature, or at least solid good sense (...) [But]

³⁷ OLAFSON suggests this at a certain point (OLAFSON 1998:38).

what gets covered up (...) is that the ultimate ‘ground’ of intelligibility is simply shared practices. There is no *right* interpretation”³⁸.

DREYFUS, however, makes it clear that HEIDEGGER does not draw any “pessimistic” conclusion from the insight that there is no “source” for Das Man – that Das Man is all there is, that it is the *ens realissimum*³⁹. Das Man is an illusion; its veil of (moral) objectivity is a fake. Nevertheless, it is the realest subject of everydayness. What, then, is left? HEIDEGGER does not take the nihilist stance towards human unsettledness that DREYFUS attributes to SARTRE and DERRIDA⁴⁰.

It is OLAFSON that most concretely develops what he calls HEIDEGGER’s “version of autonomous moral agency”. It consists in “choosing choice” (OLAFSON 1998:47) – that is, in recognizing that “the world contains no moral signposts” (*ibid.*:3) and that, therefore, we must be prepared to supply “authentic responsibility”⁴¹. The virtue of this state of consciousness presumably lies in its “authenticity”: it brings us closer to what we are, and helps us breaking with the two parallel fictions that nourish our everyday thinking about ethics, namely “inflexible legalism” and “self-indulgent antinomianism” (*ibid.*:12). Thus understood, Das Man is, at bottom,

“a set of defenses by which we human beings hide our freedom from ourselves. But it was possible, HEIDEGGER claimed, to dismantle these defenses, at least partly, and to emerge into a new kind of responsibility for one’s own life” (*ibid.*:3).

One need not go as far as OLAFSON and claim that the ground of ethical authority lies in a “dialectic of human agents under conditions of Mitsein” (*ibid.*:11). To acknowledge that, in matters of responsibility, transparency is preferable to obscurity, is sufficient to reject that there can be any positive facet to the normative dimension of Das Man.

³⁸ DREYFUS 1991:155-157, where he quotes Wittgenstein: “Giving grounds [must] come to an end sometime. But the end is not an ungrounded presupposition: it is an ungrounded way of acting”.

³⁹ P. 128. HEIDEGGER’s position contrasts to both HEGEL and HUSSERL, whose attempts to find sources of Das Man lead them, respectively, to posit a meta-social spirit floating above individuals (*cf. ibid.*), and to reduce all meaning to the conscious meaning-giving activity of an individual subject (see DREYFUS 1991:162; but see OLAFSON 1998:21 in the supposed affinity between HEIDEGGER and HEGEL).

⁴⁰ However, see OLAFSON 1998:3, who points at a similarity between SARTRE and BT (in both, “a concept of radical choice was made the basis of an authentic human life, and the concept of authenticity as a kind of existential ideal that had been elaborated by HEIDEGGER was taken over by SARTRE”).

⁴¹ OLAFSON 1998:47; “a choice is due from each of us because there is nothing... that can do the work of choice for us (...); when we do that, we may be said to ‘want to have a conscience’”.

VI Concluding Remarks

I have distinguished two dimensions of Das Man, pursuant to the different ways it has been conceptualized in a series of secondary literature on BT. The first dimension is the nature of Das Man as a source of intelligibility; the second dimension is the nature of Das Man as a source of normativity. I have argued that a positive and a negative aspect of each of these dimensions can be conceived of. I have further claimed that, in the dimension of intelligibility, the positive aspect has the stronger case, whereas it is the negative aspect that has the stronger case in the dimension of normativity. In other words: if the above is true, Das Man underpins everyday social meaning-creation and, at the same time, obscures individual responsibility.

Are these two facets compatible? On the positive/intelligibility side, Das Man stops short of reifying Dasein in its social roles (or concerned engagements with equipment) and depriving it of its disclosing function. However, on the negative/normative side, Das Man may reify referential contexts so as to obscure Dasein's disclosing function. But this only happens when Das Man is thoroughly "authentic" – that is, when Dasein is thoroughly "inauthentic". And we had claimed that Dasein's ordinary mode of being is not so much "inauthenticity" (as a literal reading of HEIDEGGER may give to understand) but a mixture of "authenticity" and "inauthenticity". To the extent this is so, the positive facet of Das Man is compatible with its negative facet.

This seems plausible. The more Das Man contributes to generating intelligibility, the less "visible" or "intelligible" it is itself; and the less "visible" or "intelligible" it is itself, the more pervasive is its dominion and levelling tendency. But, then again, we must refrain from interpreting this in reductionist terms. It must not be taken to imply that the same thing that sheds light on the world covers with shadow the realm of individual responsibility. Such a statement relies on the false assumptions that Das Man is the *only* source of meaning, and that Das Man is the *only* source of choice.

Das Man is neither the only source, nor no source at all. What ties together the positive and negative facets is the possibility of Dasein to be simultaneously authentic and inauthentic. That is –

our ability *decide* to cede our *decisions* to Das Man⁴². Our awareness that we have created Das Man; that what destroys our individuality is itself a product of our individuality.

As OLAFSON suggests⁴³, the Sartrean notion of “bad faith” might provide the missing piece to the puzzles of Das Man. Dasein’s ordinary way of being would thus not be inauthenticity. It would be a self-imposed lie which is, consequently, both believed and not-believed⁴⁴. It would be our recognition, as self-disclosed individuals, that the “pairing of identity and difference is at the heart of our relation to one another” (OLAFSON 1998:25) and thus constitutive of ourselves.

Ultimately, it would signal that the ontological abyss between ownness (*Selbigkeit*) and identity (§ 27 *in fine*) is bridged by the fact that ownness is arrived at through an existential analysis of identity (§ 25).

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⁴² INWOOD 2000 27-28: “if I am inauthentic, if I have ceded my decisions to the ‘they’, I have, implicitly, decided to do so”.

⁴³ He mentions this possibility in OLAFSON 1998:31, and 36 note 22.

⁴⁴ Cf. SARTRE 1943, I, ii. The reference I am making here to SARTRE must be understood as limited to his helpful idea of “bad faith”, and not as including his “nihilist” conception of human freedom and responsibility which – I agree with DREYFUS – is far from HEIDEGGER’s “resoluteness”.

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