

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

**BEING AND TIME**

TRANSLATED BY  
JOHN MACQUARRIE & EDWARD ROBINSON

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*Dedicated to*  
EDMUND HUSSERL  
*in friendship and admiration*  
*Todtnauberg in Baden, Black Forest*  
*8 April 1926*





# CONTENTS

[Page references marked 'H' indicate the pagination of the later German editions, as shown in the outer margins of the text.]

*Translators' Preface* 13

*Author's Preface to the Seventh German Edition* 17

## *Introduction*

Exposition of the Question of the Meaning of Being	H. 2	21
I. THE NECESSITY, STRUCTURE, AND PRIORITY OF THE QUESTION OF BEING	H. 2	21
1. The necessity for explicitly restating the question of Being	H. 2	21
2. The formal structure of the question of Being	H. 5	24
3. The ontological priority of the question of Being	H. 8	28
4. The ontical priority of the question of Being	H. 11	32
II. THE TWOFOLD TASK IN WORKING OUT THE QUESTION OF BEING. METHOD AND DESIGN OF OUR INVESTIGATION	H. 15	36
5. The ontological analytic of Dasein as laying bare the horizon for an Interpretation of the meaning of Being in general	H. 15	36
6. The task of Destroying the history of ontology	H. 19	41
7. The phenomenological method of investigation	H. 17	49
A. <i>The concept of phenomenon</i>	H. 27	51
B. <i>The concept of the logos</i>	H. 32	55
C. <i>The preliminary conception of phenomenology</i>	H. 34	58
8. Design of the treatise	H. 39	63

## *Part One*

The Interpretation of Dasein in Terms of Temporality, and the Explication of Time as the Transcendental Horizon for the Question of Being

### *DIVISION ONE: PREPARATORY FUNDAMENTAL ANALYSIS OF DASEIN*

I. EXPOSITION OF THE TASK OF A PREPARATORY ANALYSIS OF DASEIN	H. 41	67
9. The theme of the analytic of Dasein	H. 41	67

10. How the analytic of Dasein is to be distinguished from anthropology, psychology, and biology	H. 45	71
11. The existential analytic and the Interpretation of primitive Dasein. The difficulties of achieving a 'natural conception of the world'	H. 50	76
II. BEING-IN-THE-WORLD IN GENERAL AS THE BASIC STATE OF DASEIN		
12. A preliminary sketch of Being-in-the-world, in terms of an orientation towards Being-in as such	H. 52	78
13. A founded mode in which Being-in is exemplified. Knowing the world	H. 59	86
III. THE WORLDHOOD OF THE WORLD		
14. The idea of the worldhood of the world in general	H. 63	91
A. <i>Analysis of environmentality and worldhood in general</i>	H. 66	95
15. The Being of the entities encountered in the environment	H. 66	95
16. How the worldly character of the environment announces itself in entities within-the-world	H. 72	102
17. Reference and signs	H. 76	107
18. Involvement and significance: the worldhood of the world	H. 83	114
B. <i>A contrast between our analysis of worldhood and Descartes' Interpretation of the world</i>	H. 89	122
19. The definition of the 'world' as <i>res extensa</i>	H. 89	123
20. Foundations of the ontological definition of the 'world'	H. 92	125
21. Hermeneutical discussion of the Cartesian ontology of the 'world'	H. 95	128
C. <i>The aroundness of the environment, and Dasein's spatiality</i>	H. 101	134
22. The spatiality of the ready-to-hand within-the-world	H. 102	135
23. The spatiality of Being-in-the-world	H. 104	138
24. Space, and Dasein's spatiality	H. 110	145
IV. BEING-IN-THE-WORLD AS BEING-WITH AND BEING-ONE'S-SELF. THE 'THEY'		
25. An approach to the existential question of the "who" of Dasein	H. 114	150
26. The Dasein-with of Others, and everyday Being-with	H. 117	153
27. Everyday Being-one's-Self and the "they"	H. 126	163

## Contents

V. BEING-IN AS SUCH		
28. The task of a thematic analysis of Being-in	H. 130	169
A. <i>The existential Constitution of the "there"</i>	H. 134	172
29. Being-there as state-of-mind	H. 134	172
30. Fear as a mode of state-of-mind	H. 140	179
31. Being-there as understanding	H. 142	182
32. Understanding and interpretation	H. 148	188
33. Assertion as a derivative mode of interpretation	H. 153	195
34. Being-there and discourse. Language	H. 160	203
B. <i>The everyday Being of the "there", and the falling of Dasein</i>	H. 166	210
35. Idle talk	H. 167	211
36. Curiosity	H. 170	214
37. Ambiguity	H. 173	217
38. Falling and thrownness	H. 175	219
VI. CARE AS THE BEING OF DASEIN		
39. The question of the primordial totality of Dasein's structural whole	H. 180	225
40. The basic state-of-mind of anxiety as a distinctive way in which Dasein is disclosed	H. 184	228
41. Dasein's Being as care	H. 191	235
42. Confirmation of the existential Interpretation of Dasein as care in terms of Dasein's pre-ontological way of interpreting itself	H. 196	241
43. Dasein, worldhood, and Reality	H. 200	244
(a) Reality as a problem of Being, and whether the 'external world' can be proved	H. 202	246
(b) Reality as an ontological problem	H. 209	252
(c) Reality and care	H. 211	254
44. Dasein, disclosedness, and truth	H. 212	256
(a) The traditional conception of truth, and its ontological foundations	H. 214	257
(b) The primordial phenomenon of truth and the derivative character of the traditional conception of truth	H. 219	262
(c) The kind of Being which truth possesses, and the presupposition of truth	H. 226	269

**DIVISION TWO: DASEIN AND TEMPORALITY**

45. The outcome of the preparatory fundamental analysis of Dasein, and the task of a primordial existential Interpretation of this entity	H. 231	274
<b>I. DASEIN'S POSSIBILITY OF BEING-A-WHOLE, AND BEING-TOWARDS-DEATH</b>		
46. The seeming impossibility of getting Dasein's Being-a-whole into our grasp ontologically and determining its character	H. 235	279
47. The possibility of experiencing the death of Others, and the possibility of getting a whole Dasein into our grasp	H. 237	281
48. That which is still outstanding; the end; totality	H. 241	285
49. How the existential analysis of death is distinguished from other possible Interpretations of this phenomenon	H. 246	290
50. Preliminary sketch of the existential-ontological structure of death	H. 249	293
51. Being-towards-death and the everydayness of Dasein	H. 252	296
52. Everyday Being-towards-the-end, and the full existential conception of death	H. 255	299
53. Existential projection of an authentic Being-towards-death	H. 260	304
<b>II. DASEIN'S ATTESTATION OF AN AUTHENTIC POTENTIALITY-FOR-BEING, AND RESOLUTENESS</b>		
54. The problem of how an authentic existentiell possibility is attested	H. 267	312
55. The existential-ontological foundations of conscience	H. 270	315
56. The character of conscience as a call	H. 272	317
57. Conscience as the call of care	H. 274	319
58. Understanding the appeal, and guilt	H. 280	325
59. The existential Interpretation of the conscience, and the way conscience is ordinarily interpreted	H. 289	335
60. The existential structure of the authentic potentiality-for-Being which is attested in the conscience	H. 295	341

III. DASEIN'S AUTHENTIC POTENTIALITY-FOR-BEING-A-WHOLE, AND TEMPORALITY AS THE ONTOLOGICAL MEANING OF CARE	H. 301	349
61. A preliminary sketch of the methodological step from the definition of Dasein's authentic Being-a-whole to the laying-bare of temporality as a phenomenon	H. 301	349
62. Anticipatory resoluteness as the way in which Dasein's potentiality-for-Being-a-whole has existentiell authenticity	H. 305	352
63. The hermeneutical situation at which we have arrived for Interpreting the meaning of the Being of care; and the methodological character of the existential analytic in general	H. 310	358
64. Care and selfhood	H. 316	364
65. Temporality as the ontological meaning of care	H. 323	370
66. Dasein's temporality and the tasks arising therefrom of repeating the existential analysis in a more primordial manner	H. 331	380
IV. TEMPORALITY AND EVERYDAYNESS	H. 334	383
67. The basic content of Dasein's existential constitution, and a preliminary sketch of the temporal Interpretation of it	H. 334	383
68. The temporality of disclosedness in general	H. 335	384
(a) The temporality of understanding	H. 336	385
(b) The temporality of state-of-mind	H. 339	389
(c) The temporality of falling	H. 346	396
(d) The temporality of discourse	H. 349	400
69. The temporality of Being-in-the-world and the problem of the transcendence of the world	H. 350	401
(a) The temporality of circumspective concern	H. 352	403
(b) The temporal meaning of the way in which circumspective concern becomes modified into the theoretical discovery of the present-at-hand within-the-world	H. 356	408
(c) The temporal problem of the transcendence of the world	H. 364	415
70. The temporality of the spatiality that is characteristic of Dasein	H. 367	418
71. The temporal meaning of Dasein's everydayness	H. 370	421

V. TEMPORALITY AND HISTORICALITY	H. 372	424
72. Existential-ontological exposition of the problem of history	H. 372	424
73. The ordinary understanding of history, and Dasein's historizing	H. 378	429
74. The basic constitution of historicity	H. 382	434
75. Dasein's historicity, and world-history	H. 387	439
76. The existential source of historiology in Dasein's historicity	H. 392	444
77. The connection of the foregoing exposition of the problem of historicity with the researches of Wilhelm Dilthey and the ideas of Count Yorck	H. 397	449
VI. TEMPORALITY AND WITHIN-TIME-NESS AS THE SOURCE OF THE ORDINARY CONCEPTION OF TIME	H. 404	456
78. The incompleteness of the foregoing temporal analysis of Dasein	H. 404	456
79. Dasein's temporality, and our concern with time	H. 406	458
80. The time with which we concern ourselves, and within-time-ness	H. 411	464
81. Within-time-ness and the genesis of the ordinary conception of time	H. 420	472
82. A comparison of the existential-ontological connection of temporality, Dasein, and world-time, with Hegel's way of taking the relation between time and spirit	H. 428	480
(a) Hegel's conception of time	H. 428	480
(b) Hegel's Interpretation of the connection between time and spirit	H. 433	484
83. The existential-temporal analytic of Dasein, and the question of fundamental ontology as to the meaning of Being in general	H. 436	486
<i>Author's Notes</i>		489
<i>Glossary of German Terms</i>		503
<i>Index</i>		524

## TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

MORE than thirty years have passed since *Being and Time* first appeared, and it has now become perhaps the most celebrated philosophical work which Germany has produced in this century. It is a very difficult book, even for the German reader, and highly resistant to translation, so much so that it has often been called 'untranslatable'. We feel that this is an exaggeration.

Anyone who has struggled with a philosophical work in translation has constantly found himself asking how the author himself would have expressed the ideas which the translator has ascribed to him. In this respect the 'ideal' translation would perhaps be one so constructed that a reader with reasonable linguistic competence and a key to the translator's conventions should be able to retranslate the new version into the very words of the original. Everybody knows that this is altogether too much to demand; but the faithful translator must at least keep this ahead of him as a desirable though impracticable goal. The simplest compromise with the demands of his own language is to present the translation and the original text on opposite pages; he is then quite free to choose the most felicitous expressions he can think of, trusting that the reader who is shrewd enough to wonder what is really happening can look across and find out. Such a procedure would add enormously to the expense of a book as long as *Being and Time*, and is impracticable for other reasons. But on any page of Heidegger there is a great deal happening, and we have felt that we owe it to the reader to let him know what is going on. For the benefit of the man who already has a copy of the German text, we have indicated in our margins the pagination of the later German editions, which differs only slightly from that of the earlier ones. All citations marked with 'H' refer to this pagination. But for the reader who does not have the German text handy, we have had to use other devices.

As long as an author is using words in their ordinary ways, the translator should not have much trouble in showing what he is trying to say. But Heidegger is constantly using words in ways which are by no means ordinary, and a great part of his merit lies in the freshness and penetration which his very innovations reflect. He tends to discard much of the traditional philosophical terminology, substituting an elaborate vocabulary of his own. He occasionally coins new expressions from older roots, and he takes full advantage of the ease with which the German language lends itself to the formation of new compounds. He also uses familiar

expressions in new ways. Adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions are made to do service as nouns; words which have undergone a long history of semantical change are used afresh in their older senses; specialized modern idioms are generalized far beyond the limits within which they would ordinarily be applicable. Puns are by no means uncommon and frequently a key-word may be used in several senses, successively or even simultaneously. He is especially fond of ringing the changes on words with a common stem or a common prefix. He tends on the whole to avoid personal constructions, and often uses abstract nouns ('Dasein', 'Zeitlichkeit', 'Sorge', 'In-der-Welt-sein', and so forth) as subjects of sentences where a personal subject would ordinarily be found. Like Aristotle or Wittgenstein, he likes to talk about his words, and seldom makes an innovation without explaining it; but sometimes he will have used a word in a special sense many times before he gets round to the explanation; and he may often use it in the ordinary senses as well. In such cases the reader is surely entitled to know what word Heidegger is actually talking about, as well as what he says about it; and he is also entitled to know when and how he actually uses it.

We have tried in the main to keep our vocabulary under control, providing a German-English glossary for the more important expressions, and a rather full analytical index which will also serve as an English-German glossary. We have tried to use as few English terms as possible to represent the more important German ones, and we have tried not to use these for other purposes than those we have specifically indicated. Sometimes we have had to coin new terms to correspond to Heidegger's. In a number of cases there are two German terms at the author's disposal which he has chosen to differentiate, even though they may be synonyms in ordinary German usage; if we have found only one suitable English term to correspond to them, we have sometimes adopted the device of capitalizing it when it represents the German word to which it is etymologically closer: thus 'auslegen' becomes 'interpret', but 'interpretieren' becomes 'Interpret'; 'gliedern' becomes 'articulate', but 'artikulieren' becomes 'Articulate'; 'Ding' becomes 'Thing', but 'thing' represents 'Sache' and a number of other expressions. In other cases we have coined a new term. Thus while 'tatsächlich' becomes 'factual', we have introduced 'factical' to represent 'faktisch'. We have often inserted German expressions in square brackets on the occasions of their first appearance or on that of their official definition. But we have also used bracketed expressions to call attention to departures from our usual conventions, or to bring out etymological connections which might otherwise be overlooked.



In many cases bracketing is insufficient, and we have introduced footnotes of our own, discussing some of the more important terms on the occasion of their first appearance. We have not hesitated to quote German sentences at length when they have been ambiguous or obscure; while we have sometimes taken pains to show where the ambiguity lies, we have more often left this to the reader to puzzle out for himself. We have often quoted passages with verbal subtleties which would otherwise be lost in translation. We have also called attention to a number of significant differences between the earlier and later editions of Heidegger's work. The entire book was reset for the seventh edition; while revisions were by no means extensive, they went beyond the simple changes in punctuation and citation which Heidegger mentions in his preface. We have chosen the third edition (1931) as typical of the earlier editions, and the eighth (1957) as typical of the later ones. In general we have preferred the readings of the eighth edition, and our marginal numbering and cross-references follow its pagination. Heidegger's very valuable footnotes have been renumbered with roman numerals and placed at the end of the text where we trust they will be given the attention they deserve. Hoping that our own notes will be of immediate use to the reader, we have placed them at the bottoms of pages for easy reference, indicating them with arabic numerals.

In general we have tried to stick to the text as closely as we can without sacrificing intelligibility; but we have made numerous concessions to the reader at the expense of making Heidegger less Heideggerian. We have, for instance, frequently used personal constructions where Heidegger has avoided them. We have also tried to be reasonably flexible in dealing with hyphenated expressions. Heidegger does not seem to be especially consistent in his use of quotation marks, though in certain expressions (for instance, the word 'Welt') they are very deliberately employed. Except in a few footnote references and some of the quotations from Hegel and Count Yorck in the two concluding chapters, our single quotation marks represent Heidegger's double ones. But we have felt free to introduce double ones of our own wherever we feel that they may be helpful to the reader. We have followed a similar policy with regard to italicization. When Heidegger uses italics in the later editions (or spaced type in the earlier ones), we have generally used italics; but in the relatively few cases where we have felt that some emphasis of our own is needed, we have resorted to wide spacing. We have not followed Heidegger in the use of italics for proper names or for definite articles used demonstratively to introduce restrictive relative clauses. But we have followed the usual practice of italicizing words and phrases from languages other than English