

Authenticity and Dogma:
An Inextricable Connection in Heidegger's Thought?

ABSTRACT

How can one be authentic, except with reference to some dogma? An answer to this query is philosophically important in light of the significance that individuals attach to traditions of thought and practice and to epistemic commitments articulated in the context of the political, which are characterized as ideological appeals. Here the thinking of Martin Heidegger is engaged as a way of evaluating the concept of dogma and the seemingly moral and political relevance of the concept of authenticity. The point of the analysis is to conclude otherwise than is presupposed by the question, i.e., to conclude that one can be authentic without reference to some dogma.

Keywords: dogma; ideology; Heidegger; authenticity; authentic selfhood

The Question at Issue

How can one be authentic, except with reference to some dogma? One who, in disposition of intellect if not in actual understanding, is critical of Heidegger's thought (because of its implications for epistemological realism) may pose such a question. The concept in use is that of *Eigentlichkeit*, authenticity, and hence, concerns the related concept of authentic self (*eigentlich Selbst*). The question is not to be dismissed outright as philosophically inconsequential. The question, as framed, presupposes an inextricable connection between authenticity (as *a mode of self-representation* grounded in a concept of selfhood) and dogma (as *a mode of belief* having its consequent sociopolitical set of practices). The implication is that one cannot be authentic except by being dogmatic in belief and practice. A commitment

to authenticity, in short, presupposes an individual's commitment to a 'dogmatic mind.'¹ But, is this presupposition correct? This is the question engaged here.

I argue against the legitimacy of the presupposition, accounting for (a) Heidegger's remarks on authenticity and (b) a reasonably defensible account of dogma and concept of

¹ I use the concept of 'dogmatic mind' initially as used by Tariq Ramadan, <https://tariqramadan.com/english/the-dogmatic-mind-45/>. Ramadan writes: "The common feature of the various attitudes that gradually lead to monopolization of the path to the universal has less to do with the object of the quest than with the disposition of the intellect that goes on it. Points of view are determined by states of mind: all these attitudes have succumbed to the dogmatic temptation that colonizes the intellect. In that sense, the dogmatic mind is not necessarily a religious or a believer's mind, and it is quite capable of influencing very rational intellects. The characteristic feature of the dogmatic mind is its tendency to see things from one exclusive angle, and to think in terms of absolutes: the dogmatic mind thinks that it is God and passes judgement from on high and in the name of eternity, just as it thinks that it is the absolute viewpoint (Bergson sees this as a contradiction in terms) and the only centre of what is seen and what there is to see. Exclusivity is its territory and its property, and the universal is its ideal: its truth alone is true, its reasons alone are rational, and only its doubts are certified."

"The dogmatic mind displays, moreover, one further characteristic. It would be a mistake to think that it accepts the existence of only one point of view: the dogmatic mind is a binary mind. Whilst it states that its truth is the only truth, that its Way is exclusive and that its universal is the only universal, that is because it stipulates –at the same time— that anything that does not partake of that truth, that path and that universal is, at best, absolutely 'other' and, at worst, culpably mistaken. This simplistic state of mind can sometimes be astonishingly sophisticated; it is, to say the least, disturbing to observe, at the heart of postmodernity and globalization, the rise of mass movements that are, in varying degrees, intellectualized or emotive, that shape dogmatic and binary minds that are increasingly incapable of accepting the complex multiplicity of points of view, paths and ways."

ideological appeal. Thus, one may conclude that an individual can be authentic, and be so without reference to any dogma whatsoever. Moreover, given Heidegger's distinctions of authentic selfhood and inauthentic (*uneigentlich*) selfhood in relation to the anonymous "they" (*das Man*) that defers and displaces one's own responsibility, authentic selfhood may be interpreted in a normative manner—despite the more or less prevalent understanding that Heidegger's thought excludes any obviously "prescriptive" account of selfhood, such as one finds issued in moral philosophy (e.g., Kant's *personalitas moralis*).² Heidegger provides phenomenological clarification (description) only.³ But, in the juxtaposition of 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity', one can argue that: Precisely *because* "Dasein finds itself and its world always already interpreted, and moreover finds its own interpretations conditioned by and permanently indebted to the anonymous social normativity governing intelligibility at large, a normativity Heidegger calls *das Man Selbst* [the "they-self"]"⁴, *therefore* an individual can alter his or her interpretation *away from* and *in opposition to* this anonymous (inauthentic) social normativity. This is a move *in the direction of* a normativity that is properly his or her own, i.e., a movement or "modification" from inauthentic selfhood (*uneigentlich Selbst*) to one of authentic selfhood (*eigentlich Selbst*).

² See, e.g., P. Kleingeld, Marcus Willaschek, 'Autonomy Without Paradox: Kant, Self-Legislation and the Moral Law', *Philosophers' Imprint* 19(6) (2019), 1-18.

³ Heidegger's thought has been interpreted to be consistent with either an amoral or even an immoral perspective on life. See, e.g., C. Guignon, 'Authenticity, moral values, and psychotherapy', in C. Guignon (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 215-239. See also the first section of essays on authenticity in M. A. Wrathall, Jeff Malpas, (ed.), *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000).

⁴ Carman, 'Must We Be Inauthentic?' p. 20.

Individuals attach significance to traditions of thought and practice, also to epistemic commitments that are contextually political. These are sometimes characterized, pejoratively, as “ideological appeals,” often articulated in political and religious contexts of collectively defined association and identity. ‘Dogma’ often denotes a collective mode of identity and commitment, often made uncritically and thus without ongoing interrogation of the foundation of beliefs.⁵ Steven J. Bartlett commented about ‘ideology’ in the sense intended here, thus:

By the term ‘ideology’, we usually mean something like ‘a distorted, if only because unilateral and partial, view of reality which comes to supersede and to substitute for the real world.’ From a psychological viewpoint, it is essentially an obsessive delusion, because it reifies a system of beliefs, conferring on these a significance which closes the mind of the believer to realities not admitted by the belief-system. Philosophically speaking, allegiance to an ideology amounts to subscription to a solipsistic creed. It is an orientation which Marx therefore judged to be essentially alienating, since in an ideology, a man mistakes his own mentations for reality. He becomes hermetically sealed in his own system of constructs.⁶

Similarly, in his interpretation of the meaning of the twentieth century, Kenneth Boulding engaged the concept of ideology in relation to history and civilization. Ideology is “an image

⁵ See, e.g., A.C. MacIntyre, *Against the Self-Images of the Age: Essays on Ideology and Philosophy* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1978); L. Althusser, *On Ideology* (London: Verso, 2008); I. Adams, *The Logic of Political Belief: A Philosophical Analysis of Ideology* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1989); J.G. Finlayson, ‘The Theory of Ideology and the Ideology of Theory: Habermas contra Adorno’, *Historical Materialism* 11(2) (2003), pp. 165-187; T. Kleven, ‘Ideology as Moral Discourse or Struggle for Power’, *Social Philosophy Today* 8 (1993), pp. 37-50. See here also, D.E. Ingersoll, R.K. Matthews, A. Davison, *The Philosophical Roots of Modern Ideology* (New York: Sloan Publishing, 2016).

⁶ Bartlett, ‘Philosophy as Ideology,’ p. 5.

of the world [having] power over a man's mind and that leads him to build his personal identity around it"—thus, a "world-image" inclusive of "a value-system capable of developing principles of moral action and a standard for criticism of behavior."⁷

These characterizations of ideology relate to dogma *qua* self-alienation. That includes alienation from one's potentiality to be (*die Möglichkeit*). This potentiality depends on "self-discovery" (*Selbstbefindlichkeit*), particularly on the ontological understanding that, a human being "is either authentically or inauthentically disclosed to itself as regards its existence."⁸ The latter fact relates to the governance of dogma in the "public" domain (understood here in the sense of a *dominium* that commands one's word, thought, and deed according to some systematic engagement and sense of collective identity). This is central to any clarification of the possibility of authenticity.⁹ The latter concept is understood in the sense of the "distinctive potentiality-for-being" that is an issue for the individual, in Heidegger's sense "most one's own" (*eigentlich*), therefore a matter of "self-appropriation" and self-expression. Hence: One's authenticity is a potentiality for being that is discovered, appropriated, and expressed in and for a sustainable authentic selfhood.

Heidegger scholars are agreed generally that Heidegger's distinction of authentic self and inauthentic self does not intend a normative preference for the former over the latter. Such concepts are not normally to be interpreted as part of a normative "ethics." Thus one

⁷ Boulding, *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 161-162.

⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.325.

⁹ Bartlett's comments on philosophy as ideology (see Note 2 above, at p. 5) resonate with the basic point: "In its social and political application, the term [ideology] normally now refers to the embodiment in social institutions of an exclusionary set of beliefs. Understood in this way, an ideology represents the dominant institutionalized social/political paradigm. The beliefs which comprise the ideology provide rationalizations for the policy decisions made by those in power."

would not advance a moral judgment that “one *should be* authentic” or that “one *should not be* inauthentic.” Rather, through these concepts Heidegger presents a phenomenological *description* of human “modes of being.” What is descriptive is therefore first and foremost a matter of methodological commitment, not a prescription *per se*.¹⁰ However, Heidegger is clear that every individual is faced with a basic “existentiell” (*existenziell*) possibility of authentic or inauthentic existence, faced with it *as an issue*, as something yet in question, a matter of one’s “mode” of being *yet indeterminate* but *to be determined* through the primary act of self-disclosure.¹¹

This determination is a matter of “decision” (*Entscheidenheit*). The future is an *ekstasis* of human temporality, according to which one “stands out” into one’s indeterminate future. It is a faulty interpretation to construe an individual’s existentiell possibility according to the metaphysics of presence, i.e., limiting one’s being to what is merely present at hand. Potentiality of being remains at the center of ontological concern, of individual concrete historicity. This *existentiell* possibility is “yet to be determined,” hence the distinction is not idle. It has both moral and political efficacy, (1) relative to an individual’s being-with other humans (*Mitdasein*) and (2) relative to an individual’s engagement of all other beings

¹⁰ Heidegger does not commit to a Husserlian method of phenomenological clarification; “description” is never to be taken as complete or systematically apodictic in what is given as an approximation to the “essence” of a phenomenon. This point is emphasized in Heidegger’s understanding of the simultaneous concealment (*Verborgenheit*) and unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*) of Being (*Sein*).

¹¹ In *Being and Time*, ‘ontic-existentiell’ (*ontisch-existenziell*) is used to characterize the concrete ways in which humans engage their life world and lived experience. Heidegger distinguishes this concrete situation of human existence from the ontological structures he describes phenomenologically, the latter described as “existential” (*existenzial*).

(*Mitsein*) in the life-world (*Lebenswelt*). Both engagements presuppose an individual's concrete historicity, and an attitude of care (*Sorge*) and solicitude (*Fürsorge*).

Heidegger's clarification of *das Man* presents the they-self in the setting of everyday life, in all its negativity (fallenness, anonymity, ambiguity, curiosity, idle chatter, everydayness, etc.). This seemingly makes the issue of authenticity a reasonably normative quest: Understood as a call to an individual's determination of his/her potentiality-for-being, authenticity is to be taken as an essential feature of an individual's properly appropriated ethical being. Heidegger himself asked: "Is it not the case that underlying our interpretation of the authenticity and totality of Dasein, *there is an ontical way of taking existence* which may be possible *but need not be binding for everyone?*"¹²

The implication is positive: Individuated Dasein *can*—one asserts here, *should*—undertake an *existentiell modification* of its everyday understanding of self. This it can and should do as a matter of "care for oneself" (*Selbstsorge*)—an appropriation of "care" (*Sorge*) that is *at the same time* care for others (solicitude, *Fürsorge*).¹³ Heidegger allows for an individual existentiell modification that is not "binding for everyone." He is not speaking of an obligation that is universal, in the way a perfect duty (following Kant here) "binds" an individual to morally necessary conduct, thus to form the individual as *personalitas moralis* on the basis of that practical rationality. Rather, Heidegger says, "Dasein can be *authentically itself* only if it makes this possible *for itself of its own accord.*"¹⁴ Thus, authentic existence is not, in its concrete manifestation, a *praxis* governed by a universalist ethic, even though that seems not to be *prima facie* excluded from an individual's

¹² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.313, italics added.

¹³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.318.

¹⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.308, italics added.

possibilities, given that every individual has a “fateful destiny...in and with its ‘generation’”.¹⁵

Since the point here is *authentic individuation*, the existential analysis cannot discuss (either as a matter of description or prescription) ahead of time “what Dasein *factically* resolves in any particular case.” Authentic individuation is not a matter of the “public” (*öffentlich*) over-determination of one’s ontical (concrete) way of choosing. The choice is between (1) the inauthenticity that characterizes the everyday surrender to *das Man* and (2) the potentiality that includes authentic selfhood in opposition to the standards of the everyday. One speaks here of choice, a free decision, and thus a resolution of what is at issue for an individual. An existential analysis such as Heidegger carries out “excludes even the existential projection of the factual possibilities of existence.”¹⁶ But, while existential

¹⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.436. I do not agree with Vogel in his claim that Heidegger “makes himself vulnerable to the charges that his philosophy is radically individualistic, egocentric, voluntaristic, and decisionistic.” See Lawrence Vogel, *The Fragile "We": Ethical Implications of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1994), p. 38. Vogel argues that the mere fact of possibilities to be chosen “provides no criterion for choice among possibilities;” but it does not follow therefore that authenticity “collapses into irrational decision.” (Vogel, p. 60) Against this conclusion Hubert Dreyfus would have us reasonably relate Heidegger’s resolute Dasein to Aristotle’s *phronimos*. Dreyfus reminds: “...according to Aristotle, since there are no rules [in the sense of rules and standards that are ‘intrinsically’ authoritative] that dictate that what the *phronimos* does is the correct thing to do in that type of situation, the *phronimos*, like any expert, cannot explain why he did what he did.” Heidegger, of course, agrees: “The Situation cannot be calculated in advance or presented like something occurrent, which has not been determined beforehand but is open to the possibility of such determination.” Even so, the decision taken by a *phronimos* is not irrational but consistent with the ethical propriety of the relative mean (hence, virtue) in the given “Situation.”

¹⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.383.

analysis cannot project individual factual possibilities, nevertheless each individual Dasein may resolve to disclose these possibilities *for* her/himself such as *only s/he* can do insofar as they are his or her own. Heidegger says:

Proximally and for the most part the Self is lost in the “they.” It understands itself in terms of those possibilities of existence which “circulate” in the “average” public way of interpreting Dasein today. These possibilities have been made unrecognizable by ambiguity; yet they are well known to us. The authentic existentiell understanding is so far from extricating itself from the way of interpreting Dasein which has come down to us, that in each case it is in terms of this interpretation, against it, and yet again for it, that any possibility one has chosen is seized upon in its resolution.¹⁷

Clearly, one can choose according to the concrete interpretations of existence of the anonymous they or one can choose against it. What matters is an individual’s “constancy of the Self [*Ständigkeit des Selbst*], in the double sense of steadiness and steadfastness [*beständigen Standfestigkeit*],” which Heidegger says is “the authentic counter-possibility [*eigentliche Gegenmöglichkeit*] to the non-Self constancy which is characteristic of irresolute falling.”¹⁸ The latter is evident in the anonymous existence characteristic of an individual’s identification with the self-understanding issued by *das Man*. What is disclosed to an individual as his/her possibility of self-constancy, thus of authentic existence [*eigentlichen Existenz*], need not, therefore (as already noted) be binding on everyone. Notwithstanding, if one is to be open to the ongoing unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*) of beings (*Seienden*), including the unconcealment of an individual’s own most proper (*eigentlich*) potentiality for being, then any individual commitment to dogma (including here any deformation of moral universalism that presents itself as the politics of totalitarianism) seems wholly problematic in relation to an individual’s quest for authentic existence. In fact, following Hannah Arendt

¹⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.383.

¹⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.322.

(1958: 329), one posits that the politics of totalitarianism *qua* dogmatic appropriation of the universal counts as the most totalizing form of surrender to the dictates of *das Man*.¹⁹

Accordingly, to evaluate the basic question posed at the outset, I review in brief what Heidegger has to say about “fundamental metaphysical positions.” Then, in this context, I consider the meaning of ‘dogma’. Thereafter, a clarification of Heidegger’s position on authenticity allows us to reject the presupposition that one can be authentic only with reference to some dogma.

Heidegger on *Wesensgestalt* (“Essential Formation”)

Heidegger clarifies that human existence is always at issue: “As long as Dasein is, there is in every case something still outstanding, which Dasein can and will be.”²⁰ This statement leaves the future for a human being always indeterminate and unsettled, consequent to the relation of concealment (*Verborgenheit*) to unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*) of Being (*Sein*). This process governs human endeavors in the ongoing disclosure of being through and for what humans experience as their life-world (*Lebenswelt*). Disclosure of being both presupposes and entails understanding and interpretation of being (*Seinsverständnis*).

¹⁹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 329. Arendt (p. 239) wrote, e.g., of the captivity of an individual to anonymous processes: “No matter what individual qualities or defects a man may have, once he has entered the maelstrom of an unending process of expansion, he will, as it were, cease to be what he was and obey the laws of the process, identify himself with anonymous forces that he is supposed to serve in order to keep the whole process in motion...” Further, in contrast to the significance Heidegger attaches to being-towards-death as one’s uttermost possibility of being, the totalitarianism of the Nazi death camps made death itself anonymous, as Arendt put it (p. 485): “In a sense they took away the individual’s own death, proving that henceforth nothing belonged to him and he belonged to no one.”

²⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. H.233-234.

Understanding and interpretation are fallible and indeterminate claims about reality. This movement away from determinate claims thereby concedes human finitude in the epistemological quest for certitude about human affairs. This is why the concept of “world” (*Welt*) is first of all presented in the sense of a “referential context of signification,” i.e., what Heidegger calls “significance” (*Bedeutsamkeit*): “The ‘wherein’ of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements: and this ‘wherein’ is the phenomenon of world.”²¹

Human *self*-understanding presupposes an understanding of *world* in the foregoing sense. In Heidegger’s analysis, we encounter entities “(with)in the world” in the threefold sense of entities “present-at-hand” (*Vorhandensein*) such as beings of nature, entities “ready-to-hand” (*Zuhandensein*) such as those of equipment or artifice, and those who, like ourselves, are other *Daseinden* who have a history and without whom there can be no disclosure of world (in the proper sense of that term): *Dasein* is the *topos*, the historical site, for the disclosure of Being.

But, it is most important in the clarification of the *topos* of Being that there can be no disclosure of world without *Dasein*’s *projection* upon possibilities of being (reading in ‘being’ here the infinitive ‘to be’, thus an individual’s possibilities ‘to be’): “A can-be, a possibility as possibility, is there only in projection, in projecting oneself upon that can-be,” says Heidegger.²² It is through such projections, as individuated possibilities of existence, that one gives determination to human existence. Thereby, one may resolve upon an authentic existence, to the extent one *chooses* to overcome the unwitting surrender to the average, the everyday, the ambiguous, and all that characterizes anonymity of the public (all of which is fallenness into inauthentic existence). Authentic existence is not, therefore, to be construed

²¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.86.

²² Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 277.

in the sense of some final settlement or final resolution upon a fully determinate self-discovery. But, this is nonetheless to be understood in the sense of a temporal actualization or facticity that can and does have its historical representation, i.e., in the way an individual's word, thought, and deed are inter-related historically in and with his or her generation.

Projection can be an authentic mode of human action, since the pursuit of possibility involves choices about the future. When these choices follow from sustained self-discovery and self-understanding, then the resolution is in the direction of authenticity that deliberately leaves the dominion of *das Man* behind. Such choices about possibilities of human existence presuppose a mode of thinking that allows for what Heidegger calls "world occurrence"—"...not only in the sense that something is happening within the world which has significance for the world, but also in the sense in which and through which *the world itself arises anew in its actual origins and rules as world.*" On this basis Heidegger considers some individuals to have choices that are so fundamental to the determination of the world as to allow for these determinations of existence to be characterized as "world-historical." There are, in short, "world-historical" individuals. They disclose *a new historical configuration* that governs "for a time," i.e., for an "epoch," thus for what the later Heidegger denominates an "epochal" disclosure within the history of Being (*Seinsgeschichte*). Each such history is related to a conceptual framework that installs a determinate metaphysical order, such as is articulated in the history of Western metaphysics.

One must be careful here, however, about how one conceives "world occurrence." What matters to human existence in the projection of possibilities of being is the grounding freedom through which the world itself—i.e., the totality of the "referential context of signification"—arises anew. If the world itself is to arise anew indeed, then it must do so in tension with the dominant metaphysical position of an age, what Heidegger calls a "fundamental metaphysical position." This includes: (a) a conception of the selfhood of man;

(b) a conception of being; (c) a conception of the essence of truth; and (d) a conception of the manner of standard-giving, i.e., the manner in which standards of understanding and judgment (ontological, theological, epistemological, political, moral, aesthetic) are given in and for an historical epoch. Such positions change historically, of course, despite any internally coherent claims to infallibility and certitude as they relate to human experience and to what is accepted as a referential context of signification. If one construes such a position to be an incorruptible installation of “the” necessarily “true” understanding of being (*Sein*), thus consistent with a given standard of “truth,” then one forecloses prematurely the possibilities of the future, both for oneself (as *Dasein*) and for others (as *Mitdasein*). This, then, is dogma in the most fundamental sense of the word, i.e., it is “metaphysical” dogma. *All socio-politically interpreted conceptions of dogma and ideological appeal have their ground in one or another such metaphysical dogma.*

The change of fundamental metaphysical positions is clear from the history of Western philosophy itself: e.g., when one considers “the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns” about any number of basic questions involving human existence, including, the movement in thought from the Platonic or neo-Platonist and Aristotelian philosophies subsequently incorporated into medieval conceptions about the “order of creation” (e.g., as clarified by Augustine and Aquinas) to the modern “order of reason” (e.g., as clarified by Descartes and Spinoza), onward to the metaphysical and moral nihilism of late modernity (e.g., as represented by Nietzsche) and whatever we may denominate the contemporary *post-modern* order to be (for Heidegger, e.g., “the Age of Technology”). Each metaphysical position constitutes an “essential formation” (*Wesensgestalt*) of the world into which individuals are immersed willy-nilly. Each formation provides (more or less tacitly) the basis of individual and collective self-understanding and a corresponding individual and collective *praxis*. Each metaphysical position resonates historically throughout each subsequent

position, if only implicitly governing “the everyday” of human existence by way of the given standards that are expressed in word, thought, and deed.

Indeed, for European humanity the twentieth century has unfolded under the influence of Nietzsche’s anti-metaphysical position, in its own way yet metaphysical, as Heidegger observed: “The denial of an eternal God or Being entails the destruction of all fixed and immutable standards of good and evil or noble and base and, hence, the destruction of the basis for either a universal moral law or natural standards of excellence. In this light, all standards are revealed as historically relative, as mere prejudices or ideologies serving to maintain the explicit power of some groups, race, caste or class.”²³ Such would be the case with the philosophy of Nietzsche, the political thought of Marx, the psychology of Freud, and the subsequent “death of God” theology articulated in the post-WW2 era. To accept any such formation as *legitimately governing in perpetuity*—including the metaphysical and moral nihilism represented by Nietzsche and adopted into multifarious forms of post-Christian moral philosophy—is to foreclose possibilities of individuated being that issue consequent to the ontological ground of human freedom. This foreclosure assures the continued dominium of the inauthentic modes of living installed by *das Man*—a structure of *Wesensgestalt* not to be accepted.

This ground of human freedom, as the primordial origin of the human way to be, is at once *archē*-tectonic (standard-setting) and *alētheia*-ological (truth-disclosing). Hence, there could be no world-historical determinations of humanity providing a frame of reference for individual self-understanding in the absence of this ground. But, human facticity has always been such that the various metaphysical-historical determinations of humanity are *neither inevitable nor unalterable* in the case of the possibilities of *individuated* Dasein, despite the fact such fundamental positions govern epochally. To say they govern epochally is to say

²³ Gillespie, ‘Martin Heidegger,’ p. 889.

that they unfold for their time and generally govern self-understanding, consistent with the disclosure of beings that is part of every *Wesengestalt* installing a “world-view” (*Weltanschauung*).

What matters, then, is the *overcoming* (*Überwindung*) of a given metaphysical position in and for future possibilities of human existence, ‘existence’ to be understood in Heidegger’s sense that presupposes both human historicity (concretely) and temporality (as ontological structure).²⁴ Human Dasein is *ek-sistent*, Heidegger says, every human being living by way of disclosing his or her world, opening it up to new possibilities of thought, word, and deed, appropriated either authentically or inauthentically. Both modes of self-representation carry their mode of understanding. But, as Hubert Dreyfus remarked, authentic existence depends on an intelligibility that is *better than* the average intelligibility of inauthentic existence.²⁵ To introduce the valuation of “better than,” as Dreyfus does, is to assert a normative value to authentic selfhood as a *preferred* counter-possibility to inauthentic selfhood. Human existentiality unavoidably requires that one project one’s self toward ends—not in the Aristotelian sense of a *telos* that relates functionally (i.e., determinately) to a causal *archē* (as would be the case with what Heidegger denominates “things present-at-hand”), thus not determined in advance by an *archē-teleo*-logical calculus

²⁴ See Chapter 4, ‘Overcoming Metaphysics’, in R. Wolin, *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993), pp. 67-90.

²⁵ See Dreyfus, ‘Can there be a better source of meaning than everyday practices?’ who writes (p. 1) concerning his exposition of Division I of *Being and Time*, that “the average intelligibility described there would later be shown to be an inferior form of understanding, in contrast to a richer and more primordial kind of understanding described in Division II.” Dreyfus here (p. 2) points to Theodore Kiesel’s tracing of the sources of influence on *Being and Time*, thus Division II’s linkage to Aristotle’s elaboration of practical wisdom (*phronēsis*).

according to the “essence” (*Wesen*, in the metaphysical sense of *essentia* related to *existentia*) of an entity; but in the sense of an *open* possibility (*Möglichkeit*). Of course, this existentiality (conceived here “futurally,” rather than in terms of the metaphysics of presence) is always in tension with human facticity, the latter “proximally and for the most part” preoccupied with the present and absorbed in the things about us (our “environing” world). Heidegger clarified this in *Being and Time* thus:

[Not only is Dasein] *inclined* to fall back upon its world (the world in which it is) and to *interpret itself* in terms of *that* world by its reflected light, but also...Dasein simultaneously *falls prey to the tradition* of which it has more or less explicitly taken hold. *This tradition keeps it from providing its own guidance, whether in inquiring or in choosing...* When tradition thus becomes master, it does so in such a way that what it ‘transmits’ is made so inaccessible, proximally and for the most part, that it rather becomes concealed. Tradition takes what has come down to us and delivers it over to self-evidence; it blocks our access to those primordial ‘sources’ from which the categories and concepts handed down to us have been in part quite genuinely drawn. Indeed, it makes us forget that they have had such an origin, and makes us suppose that the necessity of going back to these sources is something which we need not even understand.²⁶

Problematic here is the captivity of the individual to the authority of tradition. Problematic is a lack of explicit consciousness about one’s historical “essence,” i.e., how a type of thinking determines an age in the basic concepts that govern and which have their corollary practices installed. Against the governance of tradition, in pursuit of the sources that permit a self-interrogation, Heidegger would have us undertake an “essential thinking” (*wesentliches Denken*), a mode of thinking that is “untimely,” always and necessarily. This is to say that *there is no law that demands that an individual’s thinking follow his or her time*, that s/he succumb to the governance of tradition as if it were a tradition not to be interrogated. Hence, essential thinking enables one to “overcome” the governance of the given (presumptive)

²⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.21, italics added.

standards—ontological, epistemological, theological, alētheiological, political, moral, aesthetic. Heidegger hence posits the possibility of essential thinking for an individual so that s/he may seek his or her own guidance in the direction of his or her own potentiality for being *even against the authority of tradition*. It is through the posit of a counter-possibility that the individual may seek to clarify what remains concealed, viz., the sources in the process of the transmission and appropriation of a given fundamental metaphysical position. Every tradition has its origin. The sources of tradition are ever subject to interrogation. This is done through the very act of essential thinking, transcending thereby the historical limitations of a fundamental metaphysical position. Such thinking moves in the direction of the new, the “unsaid,” that may yet find its way into unconcealment.

Heidegger on Authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*)

Heidegger’s clarification of essential thinking is positioned in relation to historicism and actualism as modes of thinking and contexts for self-understanding. Proponents of both “calculate” (thus, “calculative thinking,” *rechnendes Denken*) what is seemingly necessary for the present, on the basis of the past, privileging the presumed authority of tradition. Essential thinking (also denominated “meditative thinking,” *besinnliches Denken*) emerges in intellectual strife (*Streit*) with both historicism and actualism. One who is attuned to “the historical essence” of an age, to what is transmitted as a given fundamental metaphysical position, understands the appeal of essential thinking as decisive thinking: the decision to avoid, thereby not to enable, the ‘configuration’ of an inauthentic future: “the future must first win itself, not from a Present, but from the inauthentic future,”²⁷ i.e., from the future that is merely the installation of tradition and its continuing governance over all that is given as “the present.” It is problematic that, on the one hand, “Factically, Dasein is constantly ahead

²⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. H.336-337.

of itself”—attuned to the claim of the future—but also, on the other hand, “*inconstantly anticipatory* with regard to its *existentiell* possibility,”²⁸ i.e., to the need for individuated Dasein to unconceal an authentic self that is to be won against the presumed authority of tradition and the publicness of *das Man* that deficiently settles upon the claim of everydayness, and which thereby sustains inauthentic selfhood.

This is an important distinction:

- (1) One can be immersed in possibilities of being that represent an inauthentic future, possibilities that one merely “awaits” (“The inauthentic future has the character of awaiting [*des Gewärtigens*]”); or,
- (2) Pitting oneself against both historicism and actualism with their installation of the presumed authority of tradition, one can project possibilities of being (in an entirely novel configuration of word, thought, and deed) that disclose “counter-possibilities” to those handed down by tradition, thus appropriating the claim of an authentic future that is avowedly and resolutely one’s own.

The projected possibilities in the second case belong to a future one *anticipates* rather than merely awaits. The individual human Dasein is thus exposed to what amounts to a *fundamental liability*—in the sense of the foundation of (a) individual responsibility *to oneself* in the sense of care (*Sorge*) *for oneself*, (b) accountability *for the care for others like oneself*, and (c) solicitude *for the life-world*. Each of these has normative appeal as essential thinking is pitted deliberately against calculative thinking in the interest of the concrete possibilities that are situationally “one’s own” as one’s own anticipated authentic future. Heidegger puts it this way:

²⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.337, italics added.

Only because Dasein can expressly choose itself on the basis of its selfhood can it be committed to others. And only because, in being towards itself as such, Dasein can understand anything like a “self” can it furthermore attend at all to a thou-self. Only because Dasein, constituted by the for-the-sake-of, exists in selfhood, only for this reason is anything like human community possible.²⁹

Thus, every individual lives at any given moment either by awaiting or by anticipating his or her own possibilities of existence, including the possibility of an authentic existence that depends on an anticipatory disclosure.³⁰ This anticipatory disclosure depends on “understanding oneself in that potentiality-for-Being which reveals itself in projection.”³¹ It is only through this anticipatory act that the individual *decidedly* [one must think here Heidegger’s understanding of decision, *Entscheidung*] wrenches himself *away from* “average” and “ambiguous” meanings of human existence, these having been installed by *das Man* in the interest of a collective identity. “Dasein is authentically itself only to the extent that, *as* concerned Being-alongside and solicitous Being-with, it projects itself upon its ownmost potentiality-for-Being rather than upon the possibility of the they-self.”³²

This concern (*Sorge*) and solicitude (*Fürsorge*) depend on the individual’s “state of mind” (to be understood here not psychologically, but in Heidegger’s sense of an existential structure), i.e., “anxiety” [*Angst*]. Heidegger here points to the anticipatory disclosure that belongs to death as an individual’s uttermost possibility. This disclosure must overcome “cowardly fear” so as to appropriate an “impassioned freedom towards death.”³³ This, then, is a matter of the most fundamental sense of the courage to be, linking to the Aristotelian “man of practical wisdom” (*phronimos*, as Dreyfus understands it), who resolves on a decision (1)

²⁹ Heidegger, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, p. 190.

³⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.263.

³¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.263.

³² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.263.

³³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.266.

relative to himself (2) in a given situation. However, “The fact that an authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole is ontologically possible for Dasein, signifies nothing, *so long as a corresponding ontical potentiality-for-Being has not been demonstrated in Dasein itself.*”³⁴ Heidegger clearly links the sense of *existential* structure to the concrete *existentiell* matter of an individual living consistent with his or her resolute choices. This is a matter of practical wisdom, *phronēsis*, rather than an *a priori* apodictically given imperative of action. Heidegger thus allows for an individual (*Dasein*) to *attest to* “a possible *authenticity* of its existence, so that [s/he] not only makes known that in an *existentiell* manner such authenticity is possible, but *demand*s this of [him/herself].”³⁵ This “demand” is an ontologically grounded imperative of action. Its authority is given in the *ek-stasis* of the authentic future, pitted over and against the governance of the (inauthentic) present (e.g., in the insistence upon collective identity) or the past (e.g., in the presumed authority of tradition).

With this one statement Heidegger articulates what may move one in thought, word, and deed to a “normative” sense of being. To *demand* authenticity of oneself is *to seek it actively*, i.e., resolutely, as *a self-given imperative of action*. This entails an *existential modification* of one’s being “lost” (one’s being governed, more or less tacitly, in the tasks, rules, standards, concerns, possibilities, etc., that define one who is surrendered to *das Man*).³⁶ This surrender is the evidence of one’s being lost in inauthenticity, such that this inauthentic mode of existence determines an individual’s “destiny” (*Geschick*), the very concept denoting the absence of individually determined resoluteness.³⁷ “When Dasein thus

³⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.266, italics added.

³⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.267.

³⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.268.

³⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. H.384-385.

brings itself back from the ‘they,’ the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it becomes authentic Being-one’s-Self...*In choosing to make this choice*, Dasein makes possible, first and foremost, *its* authentic potentiality-for-Being.”³⁸ Heidegger characterizes a task that *belongs to the individual alone*, which *s/he must undertake alone*, as a *singularly individual act of responsibility and accountability*, i.e., as a fundamental liability of selfhood.

In short, as George Schrader put it in commenting on the relation of responsibility and existence in Heidegger’s thought, every human Dasein “is burdened with the ontological necessity of responding to himself in the sense of having to answer for himself for what he is and does. The first as well as the last problem man encounters is his own existence. *To be is not simply to be liable; it is the original human liability.*”³⁹ One can modify Schrader’s claim by linking it to Heidegger’s conceptual distinction of authentic future and inauthentic future, thus to say: *The original human liability is given in the individual Dasein’s projection of possibilities unconcealing the authentic future that must be won against the inauthentic future.* Phenomenologically speaking, Heidegger would say, the authentic future (in the sense of ‘the real’) must be won in a process of unconcealment of being. An individual’s choice is directed at an earnest disclosure of “the real” against the tendency of the everyday to assure the dominance of both “appearance” and “semblance,” especially—as Norman K. Swazo (1986) put it relating Heidegger’s thought on appearance and semblance to Socrates’s complaint about everyday politics in Plato’s *Republic*—in the domain of politics where ideology can and does govern unwittingly.

All depends on an individual’s pursuit of an authentic self won and sustained in fundamental strife (*Riss*) against the installed authority of the anonymous they-self (*das Man-selbst*). Where there is anonymity, as in the case of appeal to the authority of *das Man*

³⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.268, italics added.

³⁹ Schrader, ‘Responsibility and Existence’, p. 271, italics added.

(represented all too often in ostensibly defensible appeals to the authority of tradition), “no one in particular is responsible.” In this way tradition governs to install a collective identity, diminishing possibilities of authentic selfhood. Yet, one who recognizes his or her original liability appropriates an ontological responsibility always first and foremost “one’s own,” thus Heidegger’s choice of ‘*eigentlich*’, according to which authentic *Dasein* affirms its own essential being despite the imposition of collective identity.

Authentic *Dasein* projects upon possibilities of being without calculating precisely how such possibility becomes actualized in the present, i.e., in the sense that all that matters is the actualization as actuality. This is because human facticity (as *Dasein*) is different from the factuality of entities present-at-hand. Simply, “Existent *Dasein* [i.e., when properly understood] does not encounter itself as something present-at-hand within-the-world” in the way in which one does objects of nature.⁴⁰ Interpreting Heidegger, Werner Marx says, “This kind of possibility, which is not thought from the actualizing actuality, is an ‘existential’ which is fundamentally ‘open’ and can be transmuted into a new ‘power of possibility.’”⁴¹ One who holds open the possibilities of authentic being relinquishes attachment to the false security of *das Man*. The task is to listen to one’s own most proper call of conscience that demands a hearing, against the voice of *das Man* that is disclosed as “public conscience” and thus as “a dubious fabrication.”⁴² The individual is expected to assess the “Situation” that is itself “open” to ongoing self-disclosure in the service of self-discovery.

Only in relinquishing this attachment to *das Man* does an individual transmute a possibility of being into a new power of *ek-sistence*, viz., *transcending* one’s historical time

⁴⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.276.

⁴¹ Marx, *Heidegger and the Tradition*, p. 119.

⁴² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, H.278.

and place by heeding the claim of the authentic future. This call of conscience manifests an ontological liability calling forth a normative judgment in a given situation. With the latter one experiences “an existentiell modification of the ‘they’ [*das Man*],” reversing one’s “lostness” that is sustained by appeal to the false security of the anonymous public. This transmutation of possibility is grounded in freedom, which is always the source of obligation and opportunity.⁴³ With this transmutation, the claim of authentic selfhood “denies the they-self its dominion.”⁴⁴ That is not an idle choice: *It is (as a matter of phronēsis) a normative judgment in favor of one’s authentic mode of being.*

When this transmutation occurs, then “Everyday familiarity collapses. Dasein has been individualized,” such that the idle talk (*Gerede*) of the anonymous they loses its hold on the present and authentic possibilities of self-discovery are opened up. Idle talk yields to discourse (*Rede*) in the obligation that interrogates origins rather than merely appropriating the authority of transmitted tradition. Resolutely individuated Dasein in this way overcomes appeals to historicism, actualism, and the authority of tradition. Moreover, “When the call [of conscience] gives us a potentiality-for-Being to understand *it does not give us one which is ideal and universal*; it discloses it as that which has been *currently individualized* and which belongs to *that particular* Dasein.”⁴⁵ Hence, this ownmost authenticity by no means stipulates a universal rule and, so, neither presupposes nor endorses a normative theory that prescribes universally obligatory conduct (in Kant’s sense). Instead, what is normative here is similar to Aristotle’s stipulation of an individual commitment to moral judgment in view of a “relative” mean, thus what follows as the *phronēsis* of the *phronimos* (following Dreyfus here).

⁴³ Heidegger, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.278.

⁴⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.280, italics added.

That said, however, one must be cautioned: Resolute individuation into authentic selfhood does not settle on something like individual autonomy championed, e.g., by either Kantian or Lockean moral philosophy, if neither universal necessity nor universal assent characterizes the resolute decision belonging to authentic selfhood. Instead, as Reinhart Maurer put it, “the realm of human action is established autonomously as *the compromise relationship* of many individual autonomies.”⁴⁶ And, Maurer continues,

Autonomy dissolves itself in an absolute freedom which has nothing on which to stand and on which to rely except each man’s claim to freedom. Therefore, the political and the ethical appear together as the problem of discovering and establishing a system which will do justice to this claim.

How does one do justice to this claim to freedom, if it is not limited merely to the compromise relationship of autonomous individuals sharing in a collective life, especially the type that insists on adherence to a collective identity? The sort of response to the call of conscience that Heidegger describes phenomenologically is not that of a moral calculus according to which one’s “guilt” is interpreted by way of “the domain of concern in the sense of reckoning up claims and balancing them off.”⁴⁷ Heidegger refuses calculative thinking. Rather, Heidegger continues: “The idea of guilt must not only be raised above the domain of that concern in which we reckon things up, but it must also be detached from relationship to any law or ‘ought’ such that by failing to comply with it one loads himself with guilt.”⁴⁸ This places the individual in a situation that (as Heidegger would say) makes the law mere caprice. A phronetic response in a given situation allows the individual to respond to the call of conscience and make a resolute choice at once moral and political.

⁴⁶ Maurer, ‘From Heidegger to Practical Philosophy’, p. 158, italics added.

⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.283.

⁴⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.283.

One cannot eliminate the significance of a political association (or, as Heidegger says, the *polis*) as “the place, the there, wherein and as which historical being-there is,” or, “the historical place, the there in which, out of which, and for which history happens.”⁴⁹ It is in the historical setting of the *polis* (in this essential sense of place, *topos*), in the historical setting of the political, that an individual resolves on authentic selfhood. This resolve occurs only through the *appropriated obligation* of an individual being *at the same time* “*apolis*.”

Preeminent in the historical place...[one becomes] at the same time *apolis*, without city and place, lonely, strange, and alien, without issue amid the essent as a whole, at the same time without statute and limit, without structure and order, because...[along with other Dasein, one and other Dasein] as creators must first create all this.⁵⁰

One becomes *apolis* precisely because one’s resolute choice transcends the present in favor of one’s potentiality that appeals to one from out of the future. In this sense, it is more authentic to be willingly *apolis* than to be *polis* if the latter entails surrender to the appeal of *das Man* and adherence to the collective identity that installs a loss of authenticity.

One who (through the projection of authentic possibilities of being) discloses his or her historical place sustains the tension of being *polis/apolis* in possibility. This is a kind of knowing, not as Platonic *epistemē*, but rather as Aristotelian *phronēsis*, recognizing that *there is no final determination of any individual’s possibilities of being* up until death as the one possibility that outstrips all others. Hence, all political structures and orders, all statutes and limitations (civil or otherwise), are subject to the *irruptive* and *open* disclosure of authentic selfhood despite the individual’s immersion in the “public” ordering of the life-world and its concerns (*Besorgnisse*). Those individuals who resolve on authentic selfhood do so first and foremost “to become pre-eminent in historical being as creators, as men of action.”

⁴⁹ Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp. 152-153.

⁵⁰ Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp. 152-153.

This means a commitment to the fundamental obligation to one's own being, to be a site of ongoing and indeterminate unconcealment of the fullness of one's being, to win the authentic future from the inauthentic future. This is an obligation that *eschews surrender to dogma* to the extent that this dogma is to be found in the "publicness" (*Öffentlichkeit*) of *das Man*, in what is stipulated thereby as both statute and limitation, both structure and order, both deed and misdeed. Swazo clarified this point in the context of the political thus:

The pre-eminence in action as authentic doing is resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*), and as resoluteness for individuation it is essentially political rather than a-political. Just as "resoluteness" is the name Heidegger gives to authentic existence, so the individual Dasein's political resoluteness is what grants the further possibility of an authentic politics correspondent to that authentic existence. This authentic politics, granted by an individual's resoluteness, takes its form by way of that authentically ek-sistent being-with-one another determined by resoluteness.⁵¹

Fred Dallmayr adds clarity to the point:

In *Being and Time*...resoluteness [*Entschlossenheit*] is linked intimately with the notion of "openness" (*Erschlossenheit*), that is, with Dasein's availability for its own essence or ontological ground. This openness is manifest primarily in the call of "conscience" that as the "call of care" summons Dasein into the realm of its ownmost potential...[i.e., a call to] "self-projection toward proper accountability..."⁵²

One who heeds the call of conscience resolves upon a self-projection that sustains his/her ontological obligation. This obligation then grounds autonomy in the modern philosophical sense of positive or negative freedom. Self-projection toward proper accountability therefore means that individuals resolving on authentic selfhood seek ever and again to gain access to the origin of freedom, to the ontological ground of their being as they transcend (*ek-stasis*)

⁵¹ Swazo, *Crisis Theory and World Order*, p. 209.

⁵² Dallmayr, 'Ontology of Freedom,' p. 214.

the limitations of the present. Once this origin is accessed as the ground of freedom, the calculative thinking that installs a dogmatic attitude loses its governing power over an individual. An individual having a true recognition of the call of conscience does not “*expect to be told something currently useful about assured possibilities of ‘taking action’ which are available and calculable.*”⁵³ Heidegger clarifies:

The call of conscience fails to give any such ‘practical’ injunctions, *solely because* it summons Dasein to existence, to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self. With the maxims which one might be led to expect—maxims which could be reckoned up unequivocally—the conscience would deny to existence nothing less than the very *possibility of taking action.*⁵⁴

But, (following Dreyfus) it is not *a priori* maxims that guide the individual but, instead, the practical wisdom that one such as a *phronimos* is able to determine in the given situation of deliberated decision. By contrast, one who finds his or her abode in dogma—whether in terms of the appeal of historicism, actualism, acquiescence in the presumed authority of tradition, or in the sundry appeals of this or that political or religious ideology—betrays the call to proper accountability. The latter is that fundamental liability that ever pits the possibilities of one’s authentic being against those of inauthentic being, the latter ‘secured’ in and for dogma.

Settling the Question at Issue

The central question at issue may now be settled with a determinate answer on the basis of the foregoing clarification of Heidegger’s thought. At the outset the question was: How can one be authentic except with reference to some dogma? Some comments about ‘dogma’ are now in order.

⁵³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.294.

⁵⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.294, italics added.

‘Dogma’ can be understood in several ways. Its plurivocity requires us to answer such that this plurivocity remains explicitly interrogated. The word is usually associated with “doctrine,” “creed,” “canon,” “system of belief,” and so on—all of which have meanings with referential contexts of signification explicitly or tacitly philosophical, religious, and/or political. Each concept has the problematic character of pronouncing and providing what is accounted a final determination of a matter that has been contested. Usually, this is a determination that has, at minimum, a logical internal coherence and, more likely, a degree of presumed correspondence to a given historical setting of *praxis*. What is doctrinal, credal, canonical, or systemically ordering of belief governs human action, e.g., in stipulating or promulgating a given historical relation of a communally sanctioned “*orthodoxy*” with its correlative “*orthopraxis*.” One having “correct belief” or opinion in such a setting is then said to have “correct action” when individual action is manifestly consistent with that belief or opinion. Thus:

- In the Greek philosophical tradition, orthodoxy may or may not be found equivalent to infallible truth, such as Plato represented by way of knowledge of the Forms, even as it may be found *assumed* to be authoritative in the Athenian ancestral custom that Socrates challenged.
- In the tradition of the Roman Christian Church, i.e., for Catholic patristic tradition, orthodoxy may or may not be found equivalent to infallible truth, dependent on the specific appeal to authority, e.g., appeal to the teaching authority of the Magisterium and the Holy Office in Rome or the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of the Pope as Vicar of Christ on earth, thus as one having both spiritual and temporal authority.
- The same holds for other appeals to religious authority, e.g., to rabbinic tradition and *halakha* (oral law) in the case of ‘orthodox’ rabbinic Judaism or

to various schools of Islamic jurisprudence, thus to *sharī'a* (as Islamic law) and authentic *ahadith* (*sunnah*, i.e., traditions of the sayings and practices of the prophet Mohammed) in the case of both Sunnī and Shī'a Islam.

- In the Western philosophical tradition, orthodoxy is meaningful in the context of a fundamental metaphysical position that governs for a time, issuing the standards of thought, word, and deed for an age/epoch, each of which may then be ascribed the status of infallibility by those who adhere to the authority of such tradition.

In each of these cases, however, Heidegger's phenomenological clarification of authenticity and the ontological obligation of authentic selfhood clarifies that *authenticity and dogma cannot be inextricably linked* such as presupposed in the question at issue. On the contrary, the call of conscience that is essential to self-discovery and authentic selfhood makes one's commitment to a given political association wholly *historically contingent and time-limited*. This fact, therefore, demands a perpetual fundamental interrogation with reference to one's futural potentiality. One *can* be authentic *without* reference to dogma, precisely because authenticity is ever a call to challenge the supposed authority of dogma as a challenge to the governance of the past and the present over the claim of the future. This is consistent with an individual's *obligation* to project upon his or her own most proper possibilities of authentic being, consistent thereby with ek-sistent humanity's being-*futural*, in contrast to an individual's selfhood wrongly interpreted as an entity that is merely present-at-hand. In heeding the call to *win* the authentic future *against* the inauthentic future, an individual finds him/herself immersed in a *contest* to overcome the dominance of the everyday and, thereby, to *transmute* the power of being so as *to disclose the future* in the fullness of its openness and not merely according to some fated destiny or determination governed by inherited tradition.

In this sense, therefore, the manifold ways of human being transmute extant structures and orders, extant statutes and limitations, engendering the site of history, creating the *polis* (the political as *topos* of being) anew. The dogma that belongs to metaphysics, philosophy, politics, religion, etc., gives way to *renovation*: All dogmas are overcome as a matter of *praxis*, in what Bernard P. Dauenhauer calls “the renovation of the political,”⁵⁵ thus as the authentic doing of authentic Dasein. Individuated Dasein heeds the summons of the conscience, on that basis resolving to ek-sist in the possibility disclosed while keeping open all other possibilities and foreclosing the demands of the anonymous *das Man*.

It may be said that there is something “uncanny” in this resolve. Heidegger recognized this: “The discourse of the conscience,” asserts, “never comes to utterance.”⁵⁶ In the individual’s resoluteness a reticent projection upon one’s potentiality for being disengages from the dominion of *das Man*: “*authentic disclosedness modifies with equal primordially both the way the ‘world’ is discovered (and this is founded upon that disclosedness) and the way in which the Dasein-with of Others is disclosed.*”⁵⁷ The individual thus *disengages* from mere concern with all that is present-at-hand and appropriates possibilities in the mode of solicitude that ‘leaps forth and liberates.’ However, Heidegger cautions: “One would completely misunderstand the phenomenon of resoluteness if one should want to suppose that this consists simply in taking up possibilities which have been proposed and recommended, and seizing hold of them.”⁵⁸ Indeed, the “situation” of resoluteness is such that it “cannot be calculated in advance or presented like something present-at-hand which is waiting for someone to grasp it. It merely gets disclosed in a free

⁵⁵ Dauenhauer, ‘The Renovation of the Problem of Politics’

⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.296.

⁵⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.297, italics added.

⁵⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. H.298.

resolving which has not been determined beforehand but is open to the possibility of such determination.” That, of course, is consistent with the disposition of one capable of phronetic decision.

The individual Dasein, attesting to the disclosure of his or her *topos*, in and for “the *polis*” as the site of history, “maintains itself both in truth and in untruth with equal primordially.” Resoluteness [*Entschlossenheit*] and irresoluteness [*Unentschlossenheit*] therefore remain always in tension:

The term “irresoluteness” merely expresses that phenomenon which we have interpreted as a Being-surrendered to the way in which things have been prevalently interpreted by the “they.” Dasein, as a they-self, gets “lived” by the common-sense ambiguity of that publicness in which nobody resolves upon anything but which has always made its decision. “Resoluteness” signifies letting oneself be summoned out of one’s lostness in the “they.” The irresoluteness of the “they” remains dominant notwithstanding, but it cannot impugn resolute existence.⁵⁹

The “reticence” that belongs to resoluteness and the commitment an individual makes to his or her authentic selfhood contrast sharply with the “publicness” that belongs to dogma: (1) An individual’s attestation of his or her authentic Self *overcomes* and *disabuses* the inauthentic self of the *anonymous* rule of *das Man*; further, (2) the authentic future is *won* over the inauthentic future as individuated Dasein resolutely attests to its most fundamental obligation (ontological liability) of disclosing the world anew. One concludes, therefore, on the basis of the foregoing clarification grounded in Heidegger’s phenomenological insights, that one *can* be—indeed, one *must* be—authentic without reference to dogma.

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