# 19

# Temporality

## WILLIAM BLATTNER

### Why Being *and Time?*

> By keeping an eye on this connection [between Dasein and temporality] it should be shown
> that *time* is that on the basis of which Dasein understands and interprets something like
> being. Time must be brought to light and genuinely conceived as the horizon of all under-
> standing of being and every interpretation of being. In order to make this transparent
> [*einsichtig*], we require an *originary explication of time as the horizon of the understanding of
> being in terms of temporality as the being of Dasein who understands being.* (SZ: 17)

*Being and Time* sets out to "pose anew *the question concerning the sense of being*" (SZ: 1).
To answer this question, to say something about what being means, requires us to
acknowledge the role of time: time is the "horizon of all understanding of being," i.e.
being makes sense in terms of time. To say this, however, is only to probe so deep, for
like many other ordinary words in *Being and Time* (e.g. "death," "guilt," "conscience,"
"sight"), for Heidegger "time" refers ultimately to something more fundamental than
time as ordinarily conceived. It refers to *originary temporality*. Time is not the abstract
"container" that we imagine "clock-time" to be, but a basic structure of Dasein's being.

   Through his analysis of time as originary temporality Heidegger aims to accomplish
several things at once: to offer a new interpretation of the basic contours of human
existence; to gain leverage on the development of an ontology; and to lay the ground-
work for ontological idealism (the thesis that being depends upon the understanding of
being). In this chapter I will explore each of these themes as they emerge chiefly in *Being
and Time*. I will rely on other early period texts from Heidegger's corpus, but mostly only
to support the analysis of *Being and Time*.

### The Temporality of Human Existence

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger not only declares the intimate connection between time
and being, but also that between time and Dasein: "*Temporality* will be shown to be the
sense of the being of that very entity whom we call Dasein. This account must prove

311

itself in recapitulating the structures of Dasein that were presented preliminarily and interpreting them as modes of temporality" (SZ: 17). In other words, in the final quarter of *Being and Time*, Heidegger wants to return to the fundamental structures of Dasein's being, which were articulated and described in the first 64 sections of *Being and Time*, and redescribe them in terms of their temporal structure. In doing this, he does not think that he is just dropping another layer of jargon over the structure of human existence. Rather, he believes that he is deepening his analysis by revealing the distinctive *unity* of human existence: "*The originary unity of the structure of care lies in temporality*" (SZ: 327; "care" is Heidegger's name for the being of Dasein).

In Division I of *Being and Time*, Heidegger had analyzed the structure of Dasein's being as consisting of three elements: existence, facticity, and falling. These three together make up the "care-structure." Moreover, Heidegger characterizes existence, facticity, and falling in I.6 thus: "The formal existential totality of the ontological structural whole of Dasein must therefore be grasped in the following structure: the being of Dasein means: being-ahead-of-itself-being-already-in-(the-world-) as being-amidst (intraworldly encountering entities). This being fulfills the meaning of the title *care*, which is used purely existential-ontologically" (SZ: 192). Each of these three elements of the "ontological structural whole," moreover, is spelled out in terms of an aspect of temporality: "The ahead-of-itself is grounded in the future. Already-being-in . . . announces in itself beenness [*Gewesenheit*]. Being-amidst . . . is made possible in enpresenting" (SZ: 327). The upshot of all this is that each of the three fundamental elements of Dasein's being (existence, facticity, and falling) is grounded in an aspect of time (past, present, future), and this is meant to shed light on the intrinsic *unity* of care.

In ¶68 of *Being and Time* Heidegger begins to dive into details. "The temporal Interpretation of everyday Dasein should begin with the structures in which disclosedness is constituted. These are: understanding, affectivity [*Befindlichkeit*], falling and discourse. The modes of temporalization that are to be laid bare in light of these phenomena provide the ground for determining the temporality of being-in-the-world" (SZ: 334–5). To cut through a thicket of issues here, suffice it to say that disclosedness is the manner in which Dasein is open to the world. In the passage above, Heidegger identifies four constituent elements of the structure of disclosedness: understanding (or projection), affectivity (or attunement, mood), falling, and discourse. Each of the first three elements discloses one specific moment of the care-structure: understanding discloses existence; affectivity discloses facticity; falling discloses, well, falling. Discourse is the odd man out, in a way, and in ¶68d Heidegger says that discourse is not associated with any one aspect of time (SZ: 349). In short, for our purposes here, we may treat existence and understanding as interchangeable, facticity and affectivity, falling and, well, falling.

Existence is that aspect of Dasein's being that it always is what it understands itself to be. Dasein understands itself by projecting itself forward into some way of life, or as Heidegger puts it, possibility of being. For example, I may understand myself as a musician by projecting myself forward into a musician's way of life. Such projection, moreover, is not a cognitive or intellectual achievement, nor even an imaginative one, but rather a concrete form of conduct. Heidegger characterizes it as "pressing ahead" into the activity of being what one understands oneself to be. So, to project myself forward into a musician's way of life is not to fantasize about being one, nor even to plan being

312

one, no matter how concretely, but rather actually to set about doing what musicians do.

Facticity is that aspect of Dasein's being that it is concrete or determinate. Facticity is Dasein's distinctive form of factuality. This determinateness discloses itself to Dasein through affectivity, which is the way things matter to Dasein. Everything Dasein encounters, from the most significant and oppressive events of one's life, to the most trivial and irrelevant, matter to it. The piano or clarinet I play are alluring and empowering, thus being worthy of ginger care. More importantly, Dasein's own possibilities matter to it. Being a teacher is rewarding and challenging; being a father is fulfilling and animating (and challenging too!). That I am someone determinate or concrete, that I am situated in an ongoing life, in a time and place, rather than just being an abstraction, manifests itself to me in the way in which things matter to me.

Existence and facticity do not just both happen to characterize Dasein's being. Rather, they are equally important ("equiprimordial") and interwoven. In II.2 of *Being and Time* Heidegger describes facticity as the ground or basis (*Grund*) of existence. That is, we project forth into the possibilities we pursue *because* they matter to us as they do. I press ahead into being a father *because* it is fulfilling, into being a teacher *because* it is rewarding. If those possibilities did not matter to me as they do, I wouldn't pursue them.

Finally, the third element of Dasein's being (of the "care structure") and of disclosedness is falling. Before diving into a description of falling, however, we must cut through a significant terminological ambiguity in *Being and Time*. On the one hand, *falling* refers to Dasein's tendency to *fall away from* authenticity and *onto* the world of its mundane concerns in fleeing from the anxiety of a confrontation with death. On the other hand, it names Dasein's essential *encounter with* and *absorption in* non-human things in the course of pursuing its possibilities. Equipment, paraphernalia, gear (*das Zeug*) are available (*zuhanden*) to Dasein as it goes about its daily business. In being a father, I have to do with baseball gloves and bats, with homework assignments and pencils, skillets and eggs, and so on. Primarily and usually (*zunächst und zumeist*) I confront these things; I am not primarily focused on being a father as such. I am busied with the paraphernalia, tasks, and events that are involved in my projects and possibilities. The latter define the former by giving them their place in a cultural matrix of human concerns, projects, possibilities, places, and times. What is more, the paraphernalia always show up in terms of my facticity or affectivity, the way things matter to me.

In what way are these three elements of the care-structure specifically temporal? Let us begin with existence and understanding. Heidegger tells us that Dasein's existence is its being-ahead-of-itself. This "ahead" certainly *suggests* futurity. We cannot, however, take this suggestion in its most obvious terms, for Heidegger admonishes us: "The 'ahead' ['*Vor*'] does not mean the 'in advance' ['*Vorher*'] in the sense of the 'Not-yet-now – but later' ['*Noch-nicht-jetzt – aber später*'] . . ." (SZ: 327). Projection is a matter of pressing *ahead* into some way to be Dasein, but this way to be Dasein is not displaced off into the future; it is not later to come. Consider an event that is later to come, say, tomorrow evening's Silver Spring–Takoma Thunderbolts game. This event is (right now) off in the future. Tomorrow at 7 p.m., it will be in the present, and by about 9:30 p.m., it will belong to the past. It is an event that, as it were, slides through the temporal continuum. (This is true, whether one conceives time as an "A-series"

313

or a "B-series," *à la* McTaggart, be it noted.) It is distinctive (though obviously not fully general), moreover, of such temporal events that while they remain off in the future, they are merely possible: the Thunderbolts game may be rained out, after all. This is to say that the game is possible in the sense that it may become actual. Heidegger denies that this holds for Dasein's possibilities, however. "Possibility, which Dasein in each case is existentially, is distinguished just as much from empty, logical possibility as from the contingency of something occurrent [*vorhanden*], in so far as with the latter this and that can 'happen' ['*passieren*']" (SZ: 143). In other words, the possibility of being a musician is futural, not because it is merely possible, rather than actual. Instead, it is a possibility that can never be actual, a future that can never be present.

> "Future" does not here mean a Now, which *not yet* having become "actual," sometime *will be*, but rather the coming in which Dasein comes toward itself in its ownmost ability-to-be. (SZ: 325)

> Temporalizing does not mean a "succession" ["*Nacheinander*"] of the ecstases. The future is *not later* than beenness, and this is *not earlier* than the present [*Gegenwart*]. (SZ: 350)

In other words, Dasein's possibilities are not the sorts of items that can be actualized in the present. I never can have become a musician, even though I am now pressing ahead into being one. I call this claim *the Unattainability Thesis* (Blattner 1999).

What does it mean to say that I cannot have become a musician? The point is not that there are conditions on being a musician that I cannot satisfy (say, I have no rhythm). The point is rather that understanding myself as a musician is not attempting to bring about some possible, future state of myself. The possibility of being a musician is not an end-state at which I aim; it is not something that I "sometime *will be*" (SZ: 325). Being a musician is always futural with respect to what I am doing now. Of course, one can have attained the social status of being a musician: the prerogatives, obligations, and expectations that devolve upon a person in virtue of occupying a certain station, role, career, or occupation in life. A social status, however, is not the same as an existential possibility, what Heidegger calls an *ability-to-be* (*Seinkönnen*). An existential possibility is a manner of self-understanding with which one is identified in virtue of pressing ahead into it. Social statuses and existential possibilities come clearly apart in the case of the *poseur*. Think of Frank Abignale Jr in *Catch Me if You Can*. He occupies a series of social statuses as which he does not understand himself. He is faking it, yet he is accorded the social statuses *seriatim* of teacher, airline pilot, etc. (even if illegally, in a certain sense), and he is capable of living up to the expectations of these statuses. Social status and existential possibility also come apart in one who has resigned her existential projection, even though she still occupies the social status. If I have resigned or taken back my self-understanding, say, as a father, then I no longer identify with it and no longer press ahead into it, even if my fellows, and the law too, will hold me accountable to the obligations of fatherhood.

The prospect of resigning one's self-understanding points toward an ominous threat that Heidegger believes looms constantly before Dasein, what he *calls* "death,"

314

but which is not exactly what we normally call "death." In II.1 Heidegger defines death as the "possibility of the impossibility of existence" and characterizes it as a "way to be Dasein." Heideggerian death is a way to be Dasein and, therefore, not non-existence *per se*. The latter, the end or ending of a human life, Heidegger calls "demise" (*Ableben*), in contrast with death (*Tod*). For clarity's sake, I will call Heideggerian death "existential death." Existential death is the condition in which Dasein is not able to be or exist, in the sense that it cannot understand itself, press ahead into any possibilities of being. Existential death is a peculiar sort of living nullity, death in the midst of life, nothingness. What would it be like to suffer existential death? To be unable to understand oneself is not for one's life to cease to matter altogether. As Heidegger says early on in *Being and Time*, Dasein's being is necessarily at issue for it. The issue – Who am I? How shall I lead my life? – matters to me, but when existentially dead no possible *answer* matters. All answers to these questions are equally uninteresting. This is what Heidegger calls *anxiety*, although on its face it sounds more like what we today call depression: the total insignificance of the world, including the entire matrix of possible answers to the question: Who am I? Anxiety and existential death are two sides of the same coin: global indifference that undercuts any impetus to lead one sort of life or another (see Blattner 1994a for more detail).

To tie all this together, Heidegger accords the phenomenon of existential death ontological importance, because it signals something about the very nature of human possibilities. If existential death looms constantly as a threat to who I am, then who I am, my possibilities, can never characterize me in any settled way. If they did, then I could never find myself un*able* to be them. Hence, my originary future is not the sort of thing that can *be* present, not a property that can positively characterize me in the way in which a determinate height or hair color, or even a determinate social status, can characterize me. It is a future that is not later than, that does not *succeed*, the present.

Just as the "ahead" in "being-ahead-of-itself" describes a future that can never come to be present, so Heidegger argues that the "already" in "being-already in a world" picks out a past that never was present. Dasein's originary past is, recall, its attunements, the way things already matter to it. I am always already "thrown" into the world and into my life, because I am always attuned to the way it matters to me. These attunements are the "drag" that situates and concretizes the "thrust" of my projection. These attunements, however, are not past events. They do not belong to the sequential past, as the various episodes of my life-history do. In Heidegger's language, they are not "bygone" (*vergangen*). They belong, rather, to the existential or originary past, to my "beenness" (*Gewesenheit*). My attunements were not at one time present, after which they slipped into the past. Rather, at every moment that an attunement characterizes me, even at its first moment, I am already thrown into it; it is already past.

So, it becomes clear that the sense in which care is temporal is exotic, to say the least. Existence or projection is not futural by aiming itself at a possible future state of the self, and facticity or attunement is not past by revealing historical episodes or states. They are futural and past, rather, in a non-successive sense. They make sense in terms of a future that never will come to be present and a past that never was present.

315

## But Why Call It "Time?"

At this point one might certainly suspect that something has gone wrong. One might argue that if Dasein's possibilities are the sorts of things that cannot come to be present, then they are not futural either, and if not futural, then not distinctively temporal. In other words, one might urge that if the argument above holds, the sense of "ahead" in "being-ahead-of-itself" is only metaphorically temporal. Heidegger acknowledges the force of this consideration, when he concedes that his interpretation of Dasein "does violence" to the everyday understanding of human existence (SZ: 311). Still, he believes that his interpretation is required by the phenomena.

Heidegger answers that originary temporality *explains* time, and for that reason it deserves the title originary time.

> So, when we have shown that the "time" that is accessible to Dasein's intelligibility is *not* originary and, what is more, that it arises out of authentic temporality, then we are justified, in accordance with the proposition, *a potiori fit denominatio*, in labeling *temporality*, which has just been exhibited, *originary time*. (SZ: 329)

Time as we encounter it in our everyday experience is not originary. How do we encounter time in our everyday experience? Heidegger distinguishes, in fact, two sorts of everyday time, *world-time* and *time as ordinarily conceived*. Time as we ordinarily *conceive* it (*der vulgäre Zeitbegriff*) is time as the pure container of events. Heidegger may well build the term "conceive" into its name, because he wants to emphasize that when we disengage from our ordinary experience and talk about and contemplate time as such, we typically interpret time as such a pure container, as the continuous medium of natural change. When we are pre-theoretically engaged with time, however, we experience it as *world-time*. World-time is the sequence of meaningfully articulated, everyday times: dinner time, bed time, rush hour, the Great Depression, the Cold War Era, the 1960s, and the like.

World-time differs from ordinary time in that the times of world-time are overtly defined in terms of their relation to human interests, whereas ordinary times are conceptualized as independent of human interests. Thus, the distinction between world-time and ordinary time shares some of the contours of the distinction between the available and the occurrent. The available (*das Zuhandene*, the ready-to-hand) is the paraphernalia of human life, all of the things that are what they are in virtue of the way they are involved in human practices. A football is a football in virtue of the role it plays in the game of football. Likewise for knives, computers, cornfields, etc. The occurrent (*das Vorhandene*, the present-at-hand), however, is what it is independently of human practices. Electrons and galaxies, and maybe numbers too, would be and be what they are, whether or not humans had ever discovered them and developed theories about them. This parallel is no mere coincidence.

World-time is the temporal medium in which worldly events take place, in which the available is caught up in human activities and in which human affairs run their course. Hammers are actually taken up and put to use in construction in world-time, and the World Series, presidential elections, and birthday parties all take place in world-time.

316

World-time is *world*-time, both because it is the time in which worldly events are measured and ordered, and because it belongs to the very structure of the world. The world, in Heidegger's technical sense, is the concrete social milieu in which the available has its place and in terms of which human beings understand themselves, hence in which human beings lead their lives. (This is the world in the ontic-existentiell sense, sense 3, defined on SZ: 65, as elaborated in ¶18.) As Heidegger writes, the world is "that '*in which*' a factical Dasein 'lives'" (SZ: 65). This world is articulated temporally: things happen in the world, and they can be measured in part by *when* and *for how long* they happen. The *when* and *for how long* of world-time, however, are not understood in terms of the pure clock-time of nature. To answer *when vis-à-vis* world-time is not to ask for a cosmological or natural specification of time, but rather to ask how an event is situated with respect to dinner time or the American Civil War. These are the contentful, meaningful times in terms of which we lead our lives: they make up world-time.

Ordinary time, however, is the pure flow of clock-time, meaningless, empty, and potentially precise. It is, as Heidegger says, a "pure succession" (SZ: 422). The characteristic "datability" and "significance" of world-time are missing. World-time is datable in that the nows of world-time are essentially characterized in terms of their content: dinner time is dinner time in virtue of its relation to dinner, for example. What is more, because dinner time is defined in terms of dinner, it can be an appropriate or inappropriate time to do something: an inappropriate time to call a friend, an appropriate time to tell your parents why you got detention at school. Ordinary time lacks this datability and significance. It is pure and apparently disconnected from human concerns.

One might infer from all this that ordinary time is somehow "more real" than world-time, because more independent. Whereas world-time depends crucially on human practices in order to be what it is, ordinary time does not seem to do so. To make the point more striking, we may think of ordinary time as natural time – "nature-time" as Heidegger sometimes calls it – the time in which natural events take place. A natural event, such as an earthquake or supernova, is independent of human beings and their practices. They are, and would be what they are, whether or not humans existed. We are thus inclined to infer that the time in which they take place must likewise be independent of us, hence more real than world-time. As natural as these last inferences seem, they are not right, according to Heidegger. Natural time is not so radically independent of human life, nor is it "more real" than world-time. To see why, however, we must explore the contours of Heidegger's temporal idealism, his idealism about time. In the process we will also find the answer to the question of why originary temporality is a form of time after all.

By *temporal idealism* I mean the thesis that time depends on Dasein. As Heidegger puts it in *Being and Time*: "So, when we have shown that the 'time' that is accessible to Dasein's intelligibility is *not* originary and, what is more, that it arises out of authentic temporality" (SZ: 329). In *The Basic Problems* he writes: "There is no nature-time, inasmuch as all time belongs essentially to Dasein" (GA 24: 370). In the most striking statement of the doctrine, he writes, in *Introduction to Metaphysics*:

There is, in itself, the possibility that humans not be at all. There indeed was a time when humans were not. But strictly speaking, we cannot say: there was a time when humans

317

*were* not. In every *time*, humans were and are and will be, because time only temporalizes itself in so far as humans are. There is no time in which humans were not, not because humans are from eternity and to eternity, but rather because time is not eternity, and time only temporalizes itself in each case in every time as human-historical. (EM: 64)

No Dasein, no time. (This doctrine is close enough to classical idealist doctrines that it makes sense to call it a form of idealism, even though Dasein is not a subject, and time does not depend on *ideas*.)

More specifically, time depends on Dasein, insofar as it depends on Dasein's originary temporality. Originary temporality is a formal structure of Dasein's being, and so, in this sense, world-time and natural time depend on the being of Dasein. The precise formulation here is crucial: time belongs to Dasein's being. Time is not an entity, but rather an ontological structure. For this reason Heidegger rarely says of time that it "is," except when he is articulating a common or even philosophical misconception. Rather, he uses the verb *sich zeitigen*, which in ordinary German means "to ripen" or "come to fruition." One might try to leverage the term into an interpretation of originary temporality as a form of self-fulfillment, especially if one connects it with the prevalent verb *sich vollziehen* (to perform or fulfill) in *Being and Time*. I believe this would be a mistake, however. In ¶48 Heidegger rejects the applicability of the metaphors of ripening and maturation to Dasein's fundamental structure (which is, obviously, not to say that individuals do not mature). Instead, Heidegger appropriates the verb *sich zeitigen* in order to construct a way of saying "time is" without saying "time *is*." Time *is* not, because time is no entity. As he writes in *Logic: The Question Concerning Truth*: "Time cannot at all be occurrent; it does not have any sort of being – rather, it is the condition of the possibility that it gives [*es gibt*] such a thing as being (not entities). Time does not have the sort of being of some other thing, but rather, it *temporalizes*" (GA 21: 410). Just as Heidegger writes "it gives being" (*es gibt Sein*) – or later, "being obtains" (*das Sein ereignet sich*) – rather than "being is," so he writes "time temporalizes itself" (*die Zeit zeitigt sich*), rather than "time is."

So, to say that time depends on originary temporality is not to say that time would not *be*, if originary temporality were not. Rather, it is to say that if originary temporality did not obtain, world-time and natural time would not obtain either. We are not talking about an existential dependence here, in the logician's sense of "existential," but about something else. But what? As we saw above (SZ: 329), Heidegger writes that time "arises out of" (*entspringt aus*) originary temporality. Recall as well that in the very same passage he pointed to this relation of arising out of to clarify in what sense originary temporality is time. Hence, by understanding what Heidegger means in writing that time arises out of originary temporality, we can see both what he has in mind by way of time's dependence on originary temporality and why he thinks that originary temporality is a sort of time.

By "arise out of," Heidegger refers to a sort of conceptual or phenomenological degeneration. In a well known passage, he writes, "The ontological origin of the being of Dasein is not 'humbler' than what arises out of it; rather, it towers above the latter in power, and all 'arising out of' in the ontological field is degeneration" (SZ: 334). By "degeneration," Heidegger seems to have in mind leveling off, as when he describes ordi-

318

nary time as leveled off world-time. World-time is leveled off into ordinary time, in that the datability and significance of world-time are "covered up," so that time seems merely to be a "pure succession of nows" (SZ: 422). The full bloom of world-time, as a sequence of datable, significant, spanned, and public nows, is reduced to the narrower disk of a sequence of spanned and public nows. The world-time now is not only significant and datable, as discussed above, but also spanned and public. Nows are spanned, insofar as they stretch from a before to an after, from a no-longer-now to a not-yet-now. Nows are public in that they are not the private possession or horizon of an individual or group, but rather accessible to all as a horizon for measuring events. Ordinary nows are spanned and public, but not datable and significant. Thus, in degeneration the complexity of a phenomenon is covered up, so that some of its crucial features are obscured, and this in turn makes the phenomenon appear to be something different.

Just as ordinary time is a leveled off version of world-time, so world-time is a leveled off form of originary temporality. Just as immediately above, we have a reduction in complexity or features, a narrowing down of understanding from a full-blooded phenomenon to one that is thinner. In this case, however, the thinning out is not the thinning of a *now*. Originary temporality, after all, does not consist of nows. Rather, we have a disconnection of the now from the ontological horizon in terms of which it makes sense. To spell this out, we must return to originary temporality and look into the one dimension of originary temporality that we neglected above: the present.

We saw above that originary temporality consists of an originary future, Dasein's being-ahead-of-itself insofar as it exists or understands itself in terms of some possible way to be Dasein. Originary temporality also involves an originary past, Dasein's being-already-in-a-world, insofar as it is one to whom things already matter in determinate ways. But what of the originary present? In Heidegger's technical language, the originary future and past consist of ecstases and horizons that are coordinated with one another. The ecstasis of the originary future is Dasein's pressing ahead, and the horizon is that into which Dasein presses ahead, namely, its possibilities. The ecstasis of the originary past is Dasein's being already, and its horizon is the way things matter to Dasein. We must now ask ourselves, what are the ecstasis and horizon of the originary present?

Heidegger calls the ecstasis of the originary present *enpresenting* (*Gegenwärtigen*, making-present). The horizon of enpresenting is, Heidegger says, the in-order-to (SZ: 365). The *in-order-to* is Heidegger's general term for the involvement relation that binds the available to the human practices in terms of which they make sense and are defined. Contact cement is involved in home repair, because it is in order to bind objects together. The in-order-to constitutes the significance of the available. Various uses of equipment are appropriate or inappropriate only in virtue of the equipment's defining in-order-to relation. It is, furthermore, only in terms of the web of in-order-to relations that nows themselves can be significant. Significance, the worldliness of the world (*die Weltlichkeit der Welt*), is constituted by the in-order-to. This in-order-to is made accessible to Dasein in enpresenting.

This is all to say that enpresenting or the constitution of worldly significance is one of the three ecstases of originary temporality, and enpresenting's horizon, the in-order-to, is one of the three horizons of originary temporality.

> The schema in which Dasein comes toward itself *futurally*, whether authentically or inauthentically, is the *for-the-sake-of-itself*. We fix the schema in which Dasein is disclosed to itself in affectivity [*Befindlichkeit*] as thrown, as the *in-the-face-of-which* of thrownness, or better the to-which of abandonment. It indicates the horizonal structure of *beenness*. Existing for the sake of itself in abandonment to itself as thrown, Dasein is as being-amidst . . . also enpresenting. The horizonal schema of the *present* is determined through the *in-order-to*. (SZ: 365)

Dasein's being-amidst (*Sein-bei*) intraworldly entities belongs to the structure of care, and its temporal meaning is enpresenting. Translated out of the jargon of *Being and Time*, this means that Dasein's relation to the worldly entities and events that surround it, and thus to the meaningful time in which the events and entities take place and find their location, is but one element of the structure of originary temporality. The degeneration of originary temporality into world-time is a reduction in the sense of a disconnection, an abstraction, of the world-time now from its home in originary temporality.

This abstraction of the now, however, should not be thought of on the model of the medieval conception of the standing now (*nunc stans*). The world-time now is not disconnected from its own past and future, i.e. from other world-time nows. The standing now was conceived as a now, a moment of time, with no past and no future, a singular, isolated moment of time. The world-time now, as Heidegger conceives it, is isolated from the *originary* past and future, but not from the world-time past and future. The world-time now is one now in a sequence of nows; world-time is a succession of nows. The world-time now is intrinsically spanned from a world-time past (no-longer-now) to a world-time future (not-yet-now). It is thus spanned, Heidegger argues, because it is a significant now, a now defined by the relations implied in the in-order-to.

The in-order-to binds the available to its function and to its co-equipment. This coffee mug is in order to drink coffee. To be in order to drink coffee, however, the mug must be situated in an equipmental context. As Heidegger famously writes, "Strictly speaking, there never is *a* piece of equipment. To the being of equipment there belongs always an equipmental totality, in which this piece of equipment can be what it is" (SZ: 68). Thus, the in-order-to binds the available to a task or function and from out of an equipmental context. The understanding of these several relations is, moreover, captured in the ecstatic structure of our understanding of the world-time now. As Heidegger writes, "The *expecting* of the in-which in unity with the *retaining* of the with-which of involvement makes possible in its ecstatic unity the specifically manipulative enpresenting of the piece of equipment" (SZ: 353). That is, simply insofar as we enpresent the world-time now, we also expect a world-time future, in which the task in which the equipment is involved will be completed, and we retain the world-time past in which the equipment's co-equipment (the *with-which* (*das Womit*) of involvement) was available for use along with the equipment we are currently wielding. This ecstatic structure Heidegger calls *the temporality of circumspective concern*. Put in comparatively jargon-free terms, Heidegger's point is that insofar as we are immersed in a now in which we deal with the paraphernalia of our world, we are aimed ahead into the completion of our tasks and rely upon the wherewithal of our environment. The world-time now is inherently

320

spanned or stretched from a before to an after. It is significant, datable, spanned, public, and sequential or successive.

This world-time now-structure is, however, embedded in originary temporality as merely one of the latter's ecstases. We wield equipment in order to tackle tasks only because we understand ourselves the way we do: I apply contact cement to my disintegrating formica countertop, because I understand myself as a homeowner. In Heidegger-speak, the in-which of involvement "goes back to" (*zurückgehen*) the for-the-sake-of-which of self-understanding (SZ: 84). Further, I rely on the co-availability of a vise clamp, as I apply the contact cement, only because it makes a difference to me whether my house is falling apart. Again, in Heidegger-speak, we rely on the where-withal or co-equipment of a piece of equipment only because we are capable of relying on anything at all, only because our tasks already matter to us. The structural unity of the ecstases of the temporality of circumspective concern is parasitic upon the unity of originary temporality. The world-time now necessarily spans from the before to the after, because it is embedded in the structure of originary temporality.

Here we arrive at Heidegger's comprehensive explanatory strategy. We can recognize phenomenologically that the now experienced in engaged everyday practice is part of a larger whole, the whole that is the care-structure of Dasein. Heidegger calls the structural unity of care *originary temporality*. When we considered this above, however, we quickly arrived at the question of why originary temporality should be thought of as a sort of *time* at all. Heidegger answers by showing how if we do classify originary temporality as a form of time, we are able to explain aspects of ordinary time that otherwise remain mysterious, such as its continuity. The continuity of natural time is the way in which natural times stretch back to their immediate predecessors and forward to their immediate successors. This continuity or unbrokenness of natural time remains a brute fact about time, unless we can explain it metaphysically. For this reason, metaphysicians have long sought to do so, but always failed. Heidegger's suggestion is, then, to explain the continuity of natural time as a reduced or leveled off form of the span of world-time. The spannedness of world-time, what is more, is merely a leveled off form of the inherent unity of originary temporality, the way in which the originary future and originary past are intrinsically bound up with one another and with the originary present, which opens up the now for us. In short, originary temporality should be called a form of time, because it is explanatorily fruitful to do so. "*A potiori fit denominatio*": the name derives from the more powerful (SZ: 329). (Heidegger believes, moreover, that he can offer explanations of the irreversibility and infinitude of time as well.)

Therefore, Heidegger aims in one stroke to answer two central questions: why call originary temporality "time," and why hold that time is dependent upon originary temporality? In both cases, the answer is that the three varieties of time (originary temporality, world-time, ordinary time) form a degenerating series. If we view ordinary time as a thinned out version of world-time, and if we regard world-time as a disconnected abstraction from originary temporality, we gain explanatory leverage on time. We can now see why ordinary time is continuous, infinite, and irreversible, where beforehand these were bald mysteries. Moreover, if we accept this account in terms of degeneration, we have an excellent reason to regard originary temporality as a form of time: it is a fuller and explanatorily more fundamental form of time.

# Residual Issues: Authenticity and Historicality

I have assumed, without arguing explicitly, that originary temporality is "modally indifferent" with respect to authenticity and inauthenticity. This will surprise many readers, for ¶65 of *Being and Time*, which first introduces originary temporality, focuses on *authentic* temporality and follows upon two and one-half chapters devoted to death, guilt, conscience, resoluteness, and authenticity. I contend, however, that Heidegger's initial focus on authentic temporality is merely strategic. Heidegger is concerned with death and anxiety for two reasons. First, the distinction between an existentially authentic or owned life and an inauthentic or unowned life is located in one's response to death and anxiety. Second, death and anxiety reveal important structures of Dasein's being. That Dasein can find itself unable to understand itself and project forth into a way of life, that it can find itself equally indifferent to all human possibilities, shows that it is capable of living as nothing, as a question without even a provisional answer. This, in turn, forces us to recognize that the possible ways to be Dasein are not possible as potentially actualizable, that Dasein presses ahead into a future that never can become present. The latter implies, finally, that originary temporality is not successive. (The preceding is a synopsis of the argument above.)

Thus, Heidegger focuses first on authentic temporality, because the analysis of authenticity makes up the context in which he has nudged us toward seeing just how exotic our mode of being really is. He makes clear along the way, however, that originary temporality as such is modally indifferent. Two passages may serve as representative: "Running ahead [*Das Vorlaufen*, anticipation, the *authentic* version of the future] makes Dasein *authentically* futural, and indeed in such a way that running ahead itself is only possible in so far as Dasein, *as an entity*, always already comes toward itself at all [*überhaupt*], that is, in so far as it is futural in its being at all" (SZ: 325, see also 327). In other words, the authentic future is but one mode of something more fundamental, namely, the originary future. "The schema in which Dasein comes toward itself futurally, *whether authentically or inauthentically*, is the for-the-sake-of-itself" (SZ: 365, emphasis altered). That is, the originary future is specifically neither authentic nor inauthentic. Despite appearances to the contrary, originary temporality is modally indifferent. For this reason, exploring authentic temporality, although it would be relevant here, is not necessary. So, space limitations encourage me to leave the topic to another occasion.

The same space limitations also force me to leave the theme of historicality to another context. Historicality is obviously closely bound up with temporality. I do not believe, however, that originary temporality *just is* historicality (as is at least suggested by Gadamer 1975; Guignon 1983; Pöggeler 1987), nor that the chapter on historicality in *Being and Time* sheds much light on temporality *per se*. As Heidegger says, "the analysis of the historicality of Dasein aims to show that this entity is not 'temporal' because it 'stands in history,' but rather the opposite, that it does and can exist historically only because it is temporal in the ground of its being" (SZ: 376).

The concept of historicality aims to capture the distinctive way in which Dasein stands in time, distinctive in virtue of its originary temporality. In a nutshell, Dasein is historical, in that it inherits its possibilities from its forebears and inherits them as

322

already mattering. Dasein's possibilities are handed down to it by way of tradition. Heidegger's discussion of historicality may be illuminating for its own sake, but it does not spell out originary temporality itself.

One theme we cannot leave to the side, however, is the official and ultimate reason why Heidegger is interested in temporality in the first place: its role in ontology.

## Temporality and Ontology

In the course of exploring the relationship between originary temporality, world-time, and ordinary time we have seen the close relationship between world-time and the available, and between ordinary time and the occurrent. Indeed, world-time constitutes the temporal structure of the being of equipment, just as ordinary time is the temporal structure of the being of the occurrent. All this gives us leverage on Heidegger's claim that "*time* is that on the basis of which Dasein understands and interprets something like being" (SZ: 17). The three basic sorts of being (*Seinsarten*) discussed in *Being and Time* are existence (the being of Dasein), being-available (the being of equipment), and being-occurrent (the being of independent objects). For each of these three sorts of being, moreover, there is a corresponding mode of time: originary temporality, world-time, and ordinary time. Whenever we understand something as an entity, that is, in terms of its being, we do so on the horizon of time. We understand being, entities *qua* entities, in terms of time. This is what Heidegger calls the Temporality of being (*die Temporalität des Seins*): "The fundamental ontological task of the interpretation of being as such, therefore, includes working out the *Temporality of being*. The concrete answer to the question of the sense of being is given for the first time in the exposition of the problematic of Temporality" (SZ: 19). Heidegger never completes this task, alas. It would have been center stage in Division Three of *Being and Time*, which he abandoned. Without diving too much into speculation, we can reconstruct some of the basic outlines of his vision, however. Part of Heidegger's goal was to explain the fundamental unity of being in general. What binds Dasein's existence, the availability of equipment, and the occurrence of things together, so that they all count as modes of *being*? We may divide this question in two: what binds the three modes together, and in virtue of what does the whole complex count as being?

As we saw in the preceding section, the three modes of being are all fundamentally structured by modes of time and temporality. These varieties of time are bound together by the complex relations of degeneration and dependence we have explored. Ordinary time is a degenerate form of world-time, and world-time a degenerate form of originary temporality. In some sense, we are learning to see time as ordinarily conceived as a superficial and degraded version of originary temporality. We are learning to see what time "really is." At its conceptual core – which is not a pared down logical scaffolding, but a fuller whole that makes sense of its degenerate faces – time is originary temporality. Because time is at bottom originary temporality, being is at bottom Dasein's existence. "Of course, only as long as Dasein *is* . . . 'is there' ['*gibt es*'] being" (SZ: 212). This is to say that being at large depends on Dasein. It is not to say, however, that entities depend on Dasein: were all humans to pass from the scene, the stars would not blink out of existence. And yes, before humans evolved, the dinosaurs strode the Earth.

It is only to say that the *being* of these things would not obtain, were there no Dasein (see Blattner 1994b for more detail). This is a complex and dark position, but it is Heidegger's. It fits in well with the interpretation we have developed here, and it clarifies the significance of the Temporality of being.

Finally, the oddest question we have asked: why are existence, availability, and occurrentness modes of *being*? Here we have very little to go on, but perhaps the following may crack the door open just a tad. In *Basic Problems* Heidegger writes, "The sequence, mentioned earlier, of projections so to speak arranged one upon another: understanding of entities, projection upon being, understanding of being, projection upon time, has its end with the horizon of the ecstatical unity of temporality" (GA 24: 437). Temporality, or more properly, *Temporalität*, is the final horizon for the understanding of anything at all. Although the argument here is barely a hint, it at least suggests a thought: what better basis for regarding something as *being* than that it constitutes the final horizon of interpretation and understanding? Time is meant to be that horizon, and in its most fundamental mode, time is originary temporality. To end where we began, "In order to make this transparent, we require an *originary explication of time as the horizon of the understanding of being in terms of temporality as the being of Dasein who understands being*" (SZ: 17).

## References and further reading

Blattner, W. (1994a) The concept of death in *Being and Time*. *Man and World*, 27, 49–70.

Blattner, W. (1994b) Is Heidegger a Kantian Idealist? *Inquiry*, 37, 185–201.

Blattner, W. (1999) *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1975) *Truth and Method* (trans. G. Barden and J. Cumming). New York: Crossroad Publishing.

Guignon, C. B. (1983) *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Pöggeler, O. (1987) *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking* (trans. D. Magurshak and S. Barber). Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International.