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Section: Academic articles

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Keywords: Heidegger; self; event; authenticity; ontology

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Received: 29 October, 2021.

Accepted: 6 December, 2021.

Published: 15 January, 2022.

How to cite: Bahoh, James. "The irreconcilable self in Heidegger's logic of authenticity and event." *Inscriptions* 5, no. 1 (January 2022): 74–89.

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The irreconcilable self in Heidegger's logic of authenticity and event

James Bahoh¹

Abstract

In Heideggerian ontology, the way Dasein is grounded in being (*Seyn*) as event (*Ereignis*) is a matter of debate. In this article, I address this within a specific scope: I develop an interpretation of the logic of authenticity and inauthenticity in Dasein's 'selfhood' and the relation of this logic to that of the domain of propriety (*das Eigentum*) that forms part of the structure of being as event. I argue authenticity and inauthenticity are logically inextricable from one another: authenticity is structurally problematized by inauthenticity such that the latter co-constitutes the former. This entails that becoming more authentically oneself means reducing alienation not from an idealized authentic state of 'self,' but from the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between authenticity and inauthenticity. This logic is more originarily described by domains of propriety and alienation in the event. The logic of the event forms the pre-personal ground of Dasein's intrinsically problematic selfhood.

Keywords: Heidegger; self; event; authenticity; ontology

The defining task of Heidegger's 1927 *Sein und Zeit* (henceforth *SZ*), the magnum opus of his early period, is to develop a properly grounded science of being (*Sein*).² As is well known, he carries this out in terms of an 'existential analytic of Dasein,' the human being.³ A core concern is to understand certain modulations of Dasein's existence in terms of authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) and inauthenticity (*Uneigentlichkeit*). Around 1930 the famous 'turn' or 'Kehre' in Heidegger's philosophy begins to take place, which entails a dramatic rethinking of ontology. A dominant task in his post-*Kehre*

work is to rethink the nature of being in terms of the concept of event (*Ereignis*). This entails a shift beyond his earlier methodological commitment to explaining being in terms of the existential analytic of Dasein. Dasein is by no means removed from ontology's scope of concern, rather the relation between Dasein and being (now recast with a new technical sense as *Seyn* or being) becomes an issue Heidegger wrestles with anew. Two things are clear in this post-*Kehre* view: (1) one of the essential registers in which the structure or logic of being (as event) can be articulated is

¹ The University of Memphis.

² Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006). English: *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962). Macquarrie and Robinson's translate 'Sein' as 'Being,' however I replace this with 'being' throughout. Citations referencing both original and translated editions of a text indicate page numbers as follows: original/translation.

³ *SZ* 13/34, italics removed.

that of ground (specifically the tripartite *Abgrund* or abyssal ground, *Ur-grund* or primordial ground, and *Un-grund* or distorted ground) and (2) one of the things the event grounds is Dasein. In ontology engaged with Heidegger's post-*Kehre* work, the issue of the manner in which Dasein is grounded in being as event is a matter of debate.

In this article, I focus on this issue in terms of a limited scope: developing an interpretation of the logic of authenticity and inauthenticity in *SZ*'s description of Dasein's 'selfhood' and exploring the relation of this logic to that of what Heidegger calls the domain of propriety (*das Eigentum*) that forms part of the structure of being as event in his 1936–38 *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (henceforth GA65).⁴ I make three main propositions. First, we need to rethink the movement of authenticity in two distinct stages. One stage is what we are used to: working to reduce inauthenticity by reclaiming ownership of ourselves and developing a state of existence consistent with that ownership. Second, authenticity and inauthenticity are logically inextricable from one another in a special way: authenticity is structurally and interminably problematized by inauthenticity such that the former is in part constituted by the latter.⁵ This entails a second stage of authenticity: becoming more authentically oneself means reducing one's alienation not from an idealized authentic state of 'self,' but from the logic of what I shall call 'co-constitutive irreconcilability' between authenticity and inauthenticity. Third, this logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability can be described at a more originary level in terms of

domains of propriety and alienation articulated by Heidegger's concept of event. The logic of eventual propriety and alienation forms the pre-personal ground of Dasein's intrinsically problematic authentic selfhood.

I begin by examining authenticity and inauthenticity in *SZ*, building to an outline of the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between them. I then turn to a short treatment of the shift from Heidegger's pre-*Kehre* to post-*Kehre* work. Of particular importance is the methodological progression of his philosophy along what I call a 'diagenic' axis, since this entails a movement from a properly phenomenological ontology to a post-phenomenological ontology focused on features of being that are diagenically prior to and not dependent upon Dasein. In other words, this is a shift to an ontological realism. With this in mind, I then turn to the intertwined notions of 'selfhood,' 'domain of propriety,' and 'event' in GA65.

1. The logic of authenticity and inauthenticity in *Sein und Zeit*

In popular culture a common trope of self-discovery is finding one's 'true' self or becoming one's 'authentic' self. This usually entails the idea that we are wrapped up in distractions or false versions of ourselves and that if we could get back to our authentic selves, all would be right in our lives – the tumult of the world's alienations and pains might continue to swirl around us, but we ourselves would be centered, on the right track, and at peace. In this picture, each of us is often suggested to have some core of unique traits away from which

⁴ Heidegger, Martin, [GA65] *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2003). English: *Contributions to Philosophy: Of the Event*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniella Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012). 'GA' designations refer to Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*. Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translate 'das Eigentum' as 'the domain of what is proper,' but in most cases I translate this as 'the domain of propriety' or 'propriety'.

⁵ I thank Ashleigh Morales and Sam Munroe, PhD students in Philosophy at the University of Memphis, for their sharp questions on Heidegger's notions of authenticity and inauthenticity during my Spring 2021 seminar on *Sein und Zeit*, questions that helped me think through these notions and clarify the view I am proposing here.

we have strayed, perhaps built around a solid and stable self, an identity at the root of all this that defines who we ‘really’ are. I would like to think about this idea in terms of Heidegger’s notions of authenticity and inauthenticity. My aim will be to distil a logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between the two.

While it is broadly in line with Heidegger’s philosophy to say we are usually swept up in inauthentic modes of existing and that it is preferable to become more authentic, I would like to suggest the reasoning behind this is *not* that reflected in the popular view of self-discovery. There is no stable self, identity, or core of unique traits to get back to; becoming more authentically oneself ultimately means coming to terms with the fact that the only ‘self’ to which Dasein may lay claim is a process of continually being torn apart – temporally distended and racked across constitutive gravitations toward authenticity and inauthenticity. The self is, in short, structurally irreconcilable. The image of the stable self and its logic of identity forms one of the basic coordinates of our inauthentic states or modes of existence. Becoming more authentic entails disassembling that image. We can get a clearer picture of why this is the case by looking to the co-constitutive interdependence in authenticity and inauthenticity.

The notions of authenticity and inauthenticity form a major register of Heidegger’s existential analysis of Dasein in *SZ*, that is, his analysis of the main existential structures or ‘existentialia’ and processes that constitute the human being and the existential transformations the human being can undergo.⁶ Authenticity and inauthenticity are woven through these existentialia. I will not go into detail on all of these, but of particular importance are (1) facticity, (2) understanding, (3) interpretation, (4) futural projection, and (5) *Mitsein* or being-with.

The defining project of *SZ*, however, is ontology, the science of being (*Sein*), prompted by Heidegger’s lengthy technical formulation of the ‘Seinsfrage’ or ‘question of being’ at the start of that text. The terms of the existential analytic of Dasein are developed as a response to the question of being. The reason behind this is that Dasein is ‘the ontico-ontological condition for the possibility of any ontologies.’⁷ In contrast to epistemological blockages arising from the traditional subject-object or thought-object split, when it comes to the science of being Dasein subverts that split because it thinks about its own being or has its own being as an issue. Dasein thus functions as the methodological ground enabling, and defining the scope of, well-grounded ontology: Dasein’s existence. Said differently, because of the way Dasein functions as the ground for ontology, ontology must be carried out as a science of the being (*Sein*) of Dasein or, in Heidegger’s terms, as the *existential analytic of Dasein*.

Thus, Heidegger’s use of the terms ‘authenticity’ and ‘inauthenticity’ carry a properly ontological significance. Although they do have an important sense describing ways we *understand* our own existence, in Heidegger’s account understanding is part of one’s existence (understanding is part of the being of Dasein), and so authenticity and inauthenticity are more fundamentally about the *state* or *mode* of one’s existence at any given time. They are not absolutes: it is structurally impossible for Dasein to be fully authentic or fully inauthentic for reasons we shall see. And becoming authentic is not a task that can be over and done with, like a goal finally accomplished. Rather, one can modulate through states of greater authenticity or greater inauthenticity throughout one’s life. Nonetheless, paying proper attention to one’s existence – especially by doing the existential analysis of Dasein – can enable

⁶ *SZ* 44/70.

⁷ *SZ* 13/34.

more stable states of authenticity, with that authenticity saturating throughout one's existence to a greater degree.

Speaking more strictly, authenticity and inauthenticity are 'modes of being' ('Seinsmodi') for Dasein that are possible only on the basis of the characteristic of Dasein's existence Heidegger calls 'Jemeinigkeit' or 'mineness'.⁸ As he puts it, 'mineness belongs to any existent Dasein, and belongs to it as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity possible.'⁹ Because of the way Dasein is the ground making ontology possible, if I am to do the existential analytic of Dasein, I cannot do it in terms of some other Dasein; I must analyze my own existence. In Heidegger's words, 'we are ourselves the entities to be analyzed. The being [Sein] of any such entity is *in each case mine* [*je meines*].'¹⁰ Thus, methodologically mineness refers to the fact that all of one's analyses of existence are necessarily and systematically indexed to the structures of one's own existence. Because of this, phenomenology is a suitable methodology. It is, though, important to add to this picture that as *SZ* progresses, the analysis of Dasein in terms of being-in-the-world and being-with (*Mitsein*) others builds a case that one's own existence is co-constituted by the worlds we inhabit and the multiplicity of other Dasein we encounter in those worlds.

In addition to the methodological meaning of mineness, we can identify a more fundamental ontological or existential meaning of the term: my existence is characterized by mineness in that all the different structures that make up my existence – the different existentialia – hang together in a fluid (though reflexively self-problematizing) coherence, and they do so in such a way as to be uniquely determined by the singular features of my facticity such that they make up *my* existence and not that

of someone else. Thus, there is a *propriety* that characterizes my existentialia – a logic of constitutive reference runs through them such that they comprise *a* being, not simply a collection of parts. By 'constitutive reference' I mean a structural reference something bears to something else, such that the being of the first thing is in part constituted by that reference – the thing could not be what it is without that reference.

Said differently, the logic of mineness or propriety structures Dasein's existence as a whole. This is a fluid, complex, temporally distended, and self-disrupting whole, but a whole nonetheless. Saturated throughout my existence is the logic of mineness, articulated in terms of the factual dimensions of my life that determine my existence, my circumspensive maneuvering through the world, my discursive interpretations, my understanding, the possibilities I project for myself in the future, and so on. In a certain sense these all belong together, and their belonging together *is* their belonging to me, since they constitute me.

Only to the degree that something is characterized by propriety can it become alienated from propriety. In the case of propriety as mineness, this alienation is described in terms of inauthenticity (the German *Uneigentlichkeit* captures the idea better than the English) – I can get into a state such that dimensions of my existence, or my existence in general, are owned over or expropriated to something else. I can be disowned of my own existence. I can *be* in ways in which I do not own up to my existence. Yet, inauthenticity cannot entail that the structure of propriety, constitutive reference, or mineness characterizing Dasein has been eliminated or severed. It must remain intact if 'inauthenticity' is to describe Dasein at all, otherwise the alienation involved in inau-

⁸ *SZ* 42/68.

⁹ *SZ* 53/78. Or again, authenticity and inauthenticity 'are both grounded in the fact that any Dasein whatsoever is characterized by mineness' (*SZ* 43/68).

¹⁰ *SZ* 41/67.

thenticity could make no sense – it would not be *alienation*.

This also means ‘the inauthenticity of Dasein does not signify any “less” being or any “lower” degree of being.’¹¹ When one is more inauthentic, the structures constituting one’s existence are not different ones than when one is more authentic, they are merely modulated into states of greater alienation or disownment (as Heidegger puts it: ‘even in the mode of inauthenticity, the structure of existentiality lies *a priori*’).¹² It is *because* Dasein’s existentialia can modulate through different states with respect to propriety or mineness that authenticity and inauthenticity are possible. Thus, we can say ‘Dasein is mine to be in one way or another,’ and I *am* in ways that are either more or less authentic.¹³ Of particular importance in this picture will be ways Dasein interprets and understands its own existence and the impact this has on its existential structure of futural projection into possibilities disclosed through its understanding. ‘Because Dasein is in each case essentially its own possibility, it *can*, in its very being, “choose” itself and win itself; it can also lose itself and never win itself; or only “seem” to do so.’¹⁴ Dasein can be ‘something of its own’ (authentic), and only because of this ‘can it have lost itself and not yet won itself.’¹⁵

Perhaps the best-known register in which Heidegger explores Dasein’s inauthenticity is our lostness or absorption in ‘das Man’ or ‘the “they,”’ together with a correlated state of existence: our ‘self’ (‘Selbst’) configured not as our own, but as a ‘they-self’ (‘Man-selbst’).¹⁶ My discussion of inauthenticity will focus on this, though I maintain that the logic of inauthenticity I distill is equally true of other

registers in which Heidegger treats this topic – for instance, historicity and temporality. Heidegger’s term ‘the “they”’ (which could also be translated with the neuter ‘one’) refers not to this or that other Dasein or group of Dasein, but to the impersonal masses, the anonymous ‘they’ of ‘that’s what they say,’ or ‘they’re all wearing that this spring.’ Among other features of the ‘they,’ the ‘they’ functions as a ready-made network of discursive meanings or interpretations of the world, of things in the world, and, crucially, of ourselves.

This presents two initial problems. (1) Since the ‘they’ is not any particular Dasein or group of Dasein, its ready-made interpretations lack mineness, both (a) with respect to the factual specificity involved in my existence as opposed to that of someone else and (b) with respect to the fact that its interpretations lack the cohesive integration built on constitutive reference relations that make up the unity or wholeness of Dasein – i.e., its network of interpretations is not existentially mine or yours or anybody’s. (2) The network of meanings or interpretations provided by the ‘they’ are generalized, simplified, or have a character of ‘averageness,’ as Heidegger puts it.¹⁷ Like a pair of pants sewn to fit anyone of roughly similar size and shape who happens to walk into a store to buy them, these interpretations will fit into the hermeneutical life of any number of people who might adopt them. Though in an existential context, the problem is similar to that of the logic of a categorial system like Aristotle’s in which a genus marked by a specific difference supplies a definition and identity (e.g., rational animal) for any number of individuals that fall under it but cannot properly account for the individual

¹¹ SZ 43/68.

¹² SZ 44/69.

¹³ SZ 42/68.

¹⁴ SZ 42/68.

¹⁵ SZ 42–3/68.

¹⁶ SZ 114/150 and 129/167, italics removed.

¹⁷ SZ 127/164, italics removed.

differences that make Socrates *Socrates* and not Plato or Alexander.

Now, one might think the threat posed by the ‘they’ can be easily avoided, all one must do is refuse to adopt its interpretations. However, the problem is not so simple. As being-in-the-world, we never live divorced from the world; and since that world is also a with-world (*Mitwelt*), we never live divorced from others or from the public sphere throughout which the ‘they’ is saturated. From birth, we are already absorbed in and navigating the world partially in terms of the ready-made networks of meaning provided by the ‘they.’ As ‘thrown,’ we discover that our own interpretations and understanding of the world are always already shaped by those of the ‘they.’¹⁸ Heidegger refers to this as our ‘fallenness’ into the they.¹⁹

Our fallenness into the ‘they’ (and correlated inauthentic ‘they-self’) are possible because Dasein’s existence bears an irreducible structural reference to and constitutive correlation with other Dasein, be they encountered directly or encountered indirectly through traces they leave in the world. Heidegger calls this Dasein’s ‘Mitsein’ or ‘being-with.’ It is both the case that the artifacts we find in the world bear ‘an essential assignment or reference’ to other Dasein (a basketball bears reference to players, makers, and watchers for whom it is equipment) and that Dasein’s existence is *in-a-world* shared (a *Mitwelt*) with others similarly *in-a-world*.²⁰ Put more starkly, ‘being-with is an existential constituent of being-in-the-world. ... So far as Dasein *is* at all, it has being-with-one-another as its kind of being.’²¹

Since we always exist thrown into a shared world and our concerns and projects are wrapped up in the networks of meaning belonging to it (and to the ‘they’ haunting it), the interpretations populating our understanding are largely governed by that shared world. To the degree that we are wrapped up in the discourse of the ‘they,’ we interpret the world in terms the ‘they’ provides. ‘We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* [*man*] take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; ... we find “shocking” what *they* find shocking.’²² Our interpretations, our pleasure, our concerns, and our understanding have thus been owned over to the ‘they.’

More pressingly, in these circumstances our interpretations and understanding of *our own existence* have been owned over to the ‘they.’ ‘One’s own Dasein, like the Dasein-with of Others, is encountered proximally and for the most part in terms of the with-world with which we are environmentally concerned. When Dasein is absorbed in the world of its concern – that is, at the same time, in its being-with towards Others – it is not itself.’²³ Or again, ‘Dasein, as everyday being-with-one-another, stands in subjection to Others. It itself is not [Nicht es selbst ist]; its being has been taken away by the Others.’²⁴ When I interpret and understand my own existence in terms of the discourse of the ‘they,’ I do so inauthentically. The crucial consequence is that since interpretation and understanding are not merely ephemeral faculties of a representational mind but essential structures of my very existence, when I interpret and un-

¹⁸ SZ 135/174.

¹⁹ SZ 175/220.

²⁰ SZ 117/153.

²¹ SZ 125/163. Or again: ‘“The Others” already are there with us in being-in-the-world’ (SZ 116/152, italics removed); ‘Being with Others belongs to the being of Dasein. ... as being-with, Dasein “is” essentially for the sake of Others’ (SZ 123/160); and ‘Being-in is *being-with* Others. Their being-in-themselves within-the-world is Dasein-with [Mitdasein]’ (SZ 118/155).

²² SZ 126-7/164.

²³ SZ 125/163.

²⁴ SZ 126/164, italics removed.

derstand myself through the discourse of the ‘they,’ I *exist* in an inauthentic state. I exist in a state of alienation from myself. I constitute an *alienated self* defined through the meanings supplied by the ‘they.’ Heidegger thus calls this the ‘they-self.’

The ‘they-self’ does not (initially) result from one having previously been authentic and then going astray. It is the self we *first* constitute. Contrary to the popular notion, there is no original self lost to the ‘they.’ Inauthenticity, as a modulation of the logic of propriety or mineness belonging to Dasein, is the predominant field from which authenticity must be won. Authenticity, in this scope, is a modification of the ‘they-self’ – a process of dismantling alienation, gradually appropriating one’s existence, and hermeneutically revising one’s state of existence in terms of the concrete factual singularities belonging to it and the futural possibilities one projects for oneself. In Heidegger’s words, ‘authentic being-one’s-self [Selbstsein] does not rest upon an exceptional condition of the subject, a condition that has been detached from the “they”; it is rather an existentiell modification of the “they” – of the “they” as an essential existentielle.’²⁵

A core problem involved in inauthenticity is its effect on the web of possibilities we circumspectively, futurally project for ourselves and, in turn, the possibilities we in fact pursue. Of course, for Heidegger futural projection is a structure of Dasein’s existence, a futural distension of that existence. The futural possibilities I understand myself to have result from how I understand my own existence. More sharply, the *existential state* of my futural projection structure is determined by my understanding of myself at any given time, together with my factual conditions. If I inauthentically hypostatize myself and understand my existence to be defined by some particular role

or trait, for instance, I project for myself possibilities I understand to be available for such a thing: by understanding myself as a painter, I project the possibilities I imagine a painter to have; I exist in the image of a painter. ‘Painter’ becomes a term of identity around which my existence is organized. The temporal effects of this are well-known: I constitute a self under the false impression that I am a thing fully (or largely) present, identical through time; my temporal transcendence becomes bound to a false present; my ecstatic temporal structure becomes configured in a state of alienation under the image of time as a linear sequence of ‘now’ points, and so on.

Since we first and foremost exist absorbed in the ‘they,’ adopt the interpretations it supplies, and thus constitute a ‘they-self,’ we understand ourselves in terms the ‘they’ prescribes. We thus project futural possibilities the ‘they’ defines for us. The problem, of course, is that the discourse of the ‘they’ is incapable of authenticity because it carries no mineness in senses (1a) and (1b) above and it is by necessity structurally general, lacking Dasein’s factual singularity (there is a logical overlap here with Deleuze’s concern with generality vs repetition in *Différence et répétition*).²⁶ In addition, the ‘they’ is historically configured in terms of – as Heidegger sees it – the fundamentally flawed historical ‘epoch’ of metaphysics in which we purportedly live. The combined result is that the networks of meaning or significance we articulate in the world, our circumspective navigation of the world, and our projection of futural possibilities for ourselves are delimited by the ‘they.’ They are inauthentic or constitute a state of alienation for us. One has lost track (or never gotten track) of one’s own existence by being wrapped up in the ‘they-self.’

Famously, Heidegger argues that anxiety – especially anxiety in the face of our own death

²⁵ SZ 130/168, italics removed.

²⁶ Deleuze, Gilles, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993).

– can help us gain greater authenticity, gradually re-appropriating our existence. When one is anxious, the navigability of the world begins to break down. We become halting and lose track of how things are supposed to work. The brightness of the world and its networks of meaning begin to fade and, in pronounced cases, collapse. Our care about the future recedes, and with it the possibilities we project. When we are anxious, the world fades to gray, our projects dissipate, and we are stuck with little more than our reflexive encounter with our own existence. Indeed, anxiety is rooted in that encounter; we are anxious *about* our own existence. This becomes felt most sharply, perhaps, when recognizing our own impending death. When the abstractness of our usual discourses about death break down, we are left to confront the concrete death we will undergo. It is suddenly vivid that at every moment death is there for us, behind the shining world; it might break through at any time, and we know it *will* sometime.

Because anxiety disrupts the meaning of the world, it disrupts the grip the discourse of the ‘they’ has on our understanding and interpretation of (1) the world and (2) our own existence. One is forced hermeneutically to rethink oneself and one’s world, and in this process one’s impending death looms large. My death is a possibility singular for me, a possibility that brings into relief the mineness or constitutive reference my structure of futural projection has to the other features of my existence. It reveals my possibilities *as mine*, and it helps me discover which possibilities in fact *are* mine.

In those possibilities is a fork in the road: I can encounter my impending death and flee the anxiety it produces, taking refuge in distractions or inauthentic interpretations of my being as something that does not need to contend with death (death happens sometime, but never now; I will live again after my death; and so on). Or, I can own up to my death and pursue a trajectory of possibilities that confront

and interrogate my existence, hermeneutically reconfiguring or modulating its state in light of my concrete facticity and the existential analytic I pursue. I can gravitate to states of greater authenticity by continuing along this trajectory, gaining ownership of my existence by hermeneutically owning up to my facticity, projecting authentic possibilities, and disassembling inauthentic or alienated images of myself. I can develop a grounded understanding of myself in terms of the existence I in fact have. In doing so, I develop a grounded state or mode of *existing*.

This, however, is where the picture of authenticity and inauthenticity becomes more complex. So far it might seem that they are like the two directions in a tug-of-war, authenticity increasing as one is winning, decreasing as one is losing. In this picture, authenticity – *Eigentlichkeit* – seems to be gained by incrementally recuperating or bringing one’s existence back into line with the propriety of mineness, gaining a state or mode of greater ownership of one’s existence, or minimizing the alienation from propriety exemplified by the ‘they-self.’ Inauthenticity – *Uneigentlichkeit* – seems to move in the opposite direction, being the increase in one’s existential state of alienation from the propriety of mineness, becoming a false, alienated version of one’s *proper* self. If authenticity, in this bi-directional view, is a recuperation of one’s existence aiming to minimize alienation from propriety, inauthenticity is transmutation of propriety into states of alienation.

This is no doubt true. However, I would like to suggest it is only part of the picture. It is a first stage in sorting out the nature of authenticity and inauthenticity. But a second stage is necessary, one that entails coming to terms with the constitutive intertwinement of authenticity and inauthenticity. In the first stage, the tug-of-war remains subject to an inauthentic image of Dasein’s existence; namely, that inauthenticity is not itself a constitutive struc-

ture of *that very existence*. In the second stage, the constitutive contribution of inauthenticity must be recognized such that becoming authentic includes affirming inauthenticity as an authentic part of one's existence. Let us turn to that now.

Authenticity and inauthenticity are grounded in Dasein's mineness, the logic of propriety extending throughout its existentialia. It is rather straightforward to show that inauthenticity is logically and ontologically dependent upon authenticity – alienation is not alienation without a tie or reference to that from which it is alienated. In some cases, that reference is contingent: one can be alienated from a loved one without being dependent on that loved one to be who one is. In the case of Dasein's existential alienation, though, the reference is structural and constitutive. Inauthenticity only is what it is through a constitutive structural reference to that from which its state of alienation is alienated: structural propriety in Dasein's existence. With no propriety and no constitutive reference to that propriety, existential alienation as inauthenticity could not *be* at all: proper to alienation is propriety, proper to inauthenticity is authenticity, or, as Heidegger puts it, 'inauthenticity is based on the possibility of authenticity.'²⁷

It is less straightforward, though no less true, that this reference relation works in the opposite direction, as well: authenticity bears a constitutive structural reference to inauthenticity. This can be shown in two steps. First, Dasein is being-in-the-world and the world is one not merely of things, but also of other Dasein. Part of Dasein's constitution is its being-with (*Mitsein*) others in a shared, with-world (*Mitwelt*). This is an irreducible structure of Dasein's existence; without it Dasein is not Dasein. Second, inherent to the with-world is the generic mineness-less discourse of the 'they.' We bear a constitutive exposure to the

'they' and our own discursive life is inextricably entangled in its discourse. The networks of significance through which I interpret and understand myself and the world, and in terms of which I disclose my futural potentiality-for-being, are codetermined by and continuous with the networks of significance of the 'they.' The discourse of the 'they' cannot be avoided or eliminated, it forms a structural feature of Dasein's very existence. The logic of mineness, whether inflected as propriety or alienation, extends throughout Dasein's existential structures, including its openness or exposure to the 'they,' at which point it fades into the generic discourse of the 'they.' Said differently, the logic of propriety making authenticity possible bears a constitutive structural reference to irreducible alienation from propriety (here in the form of the 'they') making inauthenticity possible.

This means not only that (1) authenticity and inauthenticity are codependent, each bearing a constitutive structural reference to the other and (2) they are of a unified logic of propriety and alienation that runs through Dasein's existence, but also (3) it is not simply contingently, but structurally impossible for Dasein to become fully authentic or inauthentic. To put the third point more starkly, I exist such that no matter how successful I am in becoming (stage 1) authentic, my existence extends through structures of inauthenticity that interminably problematize my authenticity and rearticulate my existence in terms of the alienation they involve. Neither authenticity nor inauthenticity can become ultimately reconciled with the other. They are like two gravitational wells in my existence, between which I am stretched and continuously torn apart. Thus, a logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability holds between them. But this means this logic is itself an essential structure of my existence, one I must become aligned with in my effort to

²⁷ SZ 259/303.

become more authentic.

Two points remain to be made here. First, if the popular idea of self-discovery entails becoming one's authentic self in the sense of getting back to a state of settled authenticity, discovering and getting in line with one's core authentic traits or identity, then the Heideggerian picture shows this to be mere fancy. As he describes it, the existential analysis of the self results in 'volatilizing the real "core" of Dasein.'²⁸ Not only is there no such thing as a stable identity or core of traits anchoring a possibility of pure authenticity, but authenticity itself is co-constituted by inauthenticity. Getting back to one's authentic self includes discovering that that self harbors irreducible inauthenticity. Until death, one's existence interminably bifurcates into patterns of authenticity and inauthenticity. Self-discovery reveals that I can never reconcile myself with myself authentically. The self I constitute is fundamentally *irreconcilable*.

Second, if authenticity entails owning up to one's existence, incrementally gaining ownership and a fuller, better-grounded understanding of it, then we must confront the second stage of authenticity for Dasein. Dasein's existence is articulated by the logic of mineness, modulated into both propriety and alienation, authenticity and inauthenticity. But this means alienation and inauthenticity are no less part of one's existence than propriety and authenticity. Grounding one's self-understanding in one's actual existential constitution and developing a better-grounded, less alienated state of existence entails doing so in terms of the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability. The alienation at stake here is one not from propriety (one direction in the tug-of-war), but from the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability *itself* – from the process of being torn asun-

der along lines of propriety and alienation (the bi-directional tug-of-war as a unified, irreconcilable whole). Inauthenticity in this second stage must be rethought in terms of ways one constitutes images of one's existence in terms of something one is not: a reconciled, stable identity or authentic self. Authenticity, in contrast, means disassembling the images of stable identity one develops for oneself, images that occlude or cover over the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability.

2. Propriety and alienation in the structure of being as event

Through the late 1920s, Heidegger's philosophical program remained largely in line with the idea that ontology can be done only through the existential analytic of Dasein, as outlined in *SZ*. Because of this, his ontology was necessarily bound to the phenomenological method. Around 1930, however, a major shift in his thought began to occur, first evident especially in the 1930 lecture 'Vom Wesen der Wahrheit.'²⁹ In this shift, Heidegger begins superseding the ties of ontology to Dasein and, remarkably, begins a rigorous process of articulating features of being he suggests are not *grounded in* Dasein's existence, but are prior to and *grounding for* Dasein. Philosophically, this is a move to an ontological realism or commitment to the existence of features of being not contingent upon Dasein to be. I have argued elsewhere that this change is a defining feature of Heidegger's famous 'Kehre' or 'turn' and marks the transition out of his early period.³⁰ As William Richardson's classic *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* shows, this also correlates with a transition beyond phenomenology to a post-phenomenological

²⁸ *SZ* 117/153.

²⁹ Heidegger, Martin, 'Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,' in [GA9] *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976), 177–202.

³⁰ See Bahoh, James, *Heidegger's Ontology of Events* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

method of philosophizing.³¹

While Richardson focuses on other dimensions of this shift, I have argued it is no surprise Heidegger moved beyond phenomenology because his core method is diagenic radical science (vs ‘positive sciences’), not phenomenology.³² *SZ*’s move to secure the ground for ontology in Dasein’s existence was a radical scientific one, problematizing the terms in which ontology had been traditionally understood by rethinking their ground. This necessitated a phenomenological methodology, which was then carried out in *SZ* and related early texts. But phenomenology was a temporary methodological maneuver in the service of radical scientific ontology. Beginning in the early 1930s it was superseded (though not negated) because it had opened methodological access to structures of being that are diagenically and ontologically prior to the sphere of phenomena describable by phenomenology. Heidegger’s methodology progresses beyond phenomenology to articulate these structures.

In this context, of particular importance are his arguments proposing that for ontology to sufficiently overcome the erroneous historical framework of ‘metaphysics’ inherited from the Western tradition, being (now *Seyn* or *beyng*) must be rethought as *Ereignis* or event. This task goes hand-in-hand with another, rather surprising, claim: because, Heidegger argues, when we try to understand being in terms of Dasein’s existence or even on the basis of its *relation* to Dasein, we artificially determine being in terms of the beings it grounds, being must be rethought in a way *independent* of its relations to beings (including Dasein). ‘Beyng

can no longer be thought on the basis of beings but must be inventively thought from itself.’³³

Or again:

There is no immediate difference between *beyng* and beings, because there is altogether no immediate relation between them. Even though beings as such oscillate only in the appropriation [*Ereignung*], *beyng* remains abyssally far from all beings. The attempts to represent both together, already in the very manner of naming them, stem from metaphysics.³⁴

Heidegger’s use of the term ‘*Seyn*’ or ‘*beyng*’ in place of ‘*Sein*’ or ‘being’ signifies this shift. In texts like GA65, he thus sets out to articulate the structures of *beyng* as event, where these structures are diagenically prior to and independent of Dasein. Dasein, however, is dependent upon them – they ground Dasein and the worlds of beings in which Dasein exists. In GA65, the structure of *beyng* as event is articulated especially in terms of three conceptual registers: the essence of truth, ground (*Ab-grund*, *Ur-grund*, and *Un-grund*), and what Heidegger calls ‘time-space.’ At work in all three are basic processes of *beyng* as event described in terms of the hyphenated ‘*Er-eignis*’ or ‘appropriation’ and ‘*Enteignis*’ or ‘expropriation.’³⁵ In short, these are differential processes by which two correlated structures of *beyng* as event are generated: ‘*das Eigentum*’ or ‘the domain of propriety’ and structural alienation.

It is impossible to explore all these ideas here, so I will focus on stating the main elements rel-

³¹ Richardson, William J., *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), *passim*.

³² *SZ* 10/30. For this argument, see Bahoh, James, *Heidegger’s Ontology of Events* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 36–44.

³³ GA65 7/8.

³⁴ GA65 477/375. The first sentence in this passage is meant as a critique of the ontological difference.

³⁵ While cognates of the term ‘*Enteignis*’ appear only twice in GA65, the structural process they describe is active throughout the text.

evant to the event's structures of propriety and alienation. The unified logic of these structures, I shall suggest, forms a pre-personal ground for the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between Dasein's authenticity and inauthenticity. This helps us understand how Dasein is grounded in beyng as event, according to Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy. Of particular importance will be the way GA65 (1) uses the notion of selfhood in a pre-personal form, (2) deploys a new concept of difference, and (3) enables us to understand the event's structures of propriety and alienation.

First, a perpetual concern of Heidegger's is the alienation Dasein has suffered from being (or beyng) due to the errancy of the historical epoch in which we live – that of metaphysics. Part of the task of reworking ontology by thinking beyng as event is to resolve this alienation or to reground Dasein in the event. Beyng as event serves as a ground for many things, including Dasein and the worlds in which we encounter other beings. But the nature of this grounding can be rather unclear. I maintain we can help clarify by briefly attending to the notion of selfhood Heidegger uses in GA65.

The process of becoming regrounded in the event entails reclaiming selfhood in a certain and unusual sense ('humans once again come to *themselves* and win back selfhood [Selbstsein]').³⁶ It is unusual for two main reasons. First, as with SZ, there is no metaphysical 'self' plausible for Dasein in this picture, only a self existentially constituted. Second, the selfhood at stake in GA65 is pre-personal: 'selfhood is more originary than any I or thou or we.'³⁷ It is a diagenically prior structure of beyng as event. Dasein's task of becoming re-grounded or coming again to *oneself* entails rearticulating oneself in terms of this pre-personal selfhood. How, though, should we understand

this? Luckily, Heidegger provides a key: 'the origin of the self is the domain of what is proper [Eigen-tum],' the event's structure of propriety.³⁸

To make sense of this, we must take a step back to establish an important point regarding the concept of difference (*Unterschied* and, in a certain sense, *Entscheidung*) active in GA65. In SZ, the main concept of difference was that of the ontological difference – the difference between being and beings. The ontological difference plays a crucial methodological role in preventing ontology from conceptualizing being in terms of beingness (*Seiendheit*), i.e., the character of beings *as beings*, which Heidegger takes to be a defining topic of metaphysics. In GA65, he aims to rethink being in a way independent from beings, and this requires a reconceptualization of difference. Despite Heidegger's best early efforts, GA65 suggests that the ontological difference retains in being traces of beings because it conceptualizes being in terms of being's *differentiation from* beings. Beingness remains inscribed in our conception of being, which thus remains metaphysical. A defining part of the problem is that – even if unintentionally – the ontological difference treats being and beings as two pre-determined items the difference between which is then defined on the basis of those items. This, moreover, retains an essential attribution of *identity* to being, an identity projected into being as a result of the errant metaphysical commitment to understanding beings in terms of identities self-same through time.

Part of Heidegger's solution is to problematize the ontological difference and thereby force a revision of our conception of being. Since identity is a prime characteristic in terms of which metaphysics understands *what is*, Heidegger undermines identity by prioritizing difference. More precisely, he deploys a concept

³⁶ GA65 31/27.

³⁷ GA65 320/253, italics removed.

³⁸ GA65 319–20/253, italics removed.

of difference that is ontologically prior to and generative of identity, and he assigns this difference to being as event. If the ontological difference is that between being and beings, GA65's recalibrated methodology designed to think being as independent from beings drives Heidegger 'to the question of the *origin* [*Ursprung*] of the "ontological difference."³⁹ This is a major development in Heidegger's philosophical program, but one rarely recognized in existing literature. The task, I have argued elsewhere, is to develop a genetic account (i.e., one explaining the onto-genesis) of the difference between being and beings based on a concept of pure or originary difference. That is, the genesis of the difference between these two 'things' must be explained in terms of a difference that is not between two things at all, a difference prior to any things that can have differences between them.

Though I will not go into that process here, what is crucial is that this originary difference forms the heart of being as event. Using an originary differential, dynamic concept of 'decision,' he characterizes it as the '*Entscheidungswesen des Seyns*' or '*decisional essence of being*.'⁴⁰ In GA71, he describes it as 'der Unterschied als das Sichunterscheiden (Ereignis)' or 'the difference as self-differentiating (event).'⁴¹ More precisely, the logic of originary difference forms the logic of being as event. As genetic difference, the complex structures of being as event must be understood to be generated as part of its logic. The three main registers depicting the structure of the event – truth, ground, and time-space – each require a genetic definition via the event's logic of difference. This goes well beyond what I can do here. However, at a level of perhaps even greater distillation, the event also bears structures of prop-

riety and alienation (which course through truth, ground, and time-space). An outline of these will bring us to our main goal, showing a way Dasein's logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between authenticity and inauthenticity can be grounded in being as event.

In the view GA65 develops, the logic of being as event (*Ereignis*) includes co-dependent processes of *Er-eignis* or appropriation and *Enteignis* or expropriation. What these processes generate are structures of propriety (*das Eigentum*) and alienation. How can we take this to work? As suggested, we must have recourse to an onto-genetic account provided by the event's logic of originary difference. This will sound rather abstract, but that is exactly the point. Heidegger's concept of event is used to articulate the logic of being in a way having recourse to no form of prime identity, and it takes a position diagenically prior to the beings and worlds it is suggested to ground. Thus, the differential logic of the event must at root be described purely in terms of difference and difference alone. As prior to any determinate entities, the only thing difference can differentiate is 'itself.' That is to say, the prime operation of originary difference is to differ from itself. We must take this to be the way eventual difference generates the other structures of being and becomes able to function as a ground for worlds of beings. As Heidegger puts it, what is at stake is 'the difference [*Unterscheidung*] as the essential occurrence of being itself, which differentiates *itself* [*sich unterscheidet*] and in that way lets beings arise in emergence [*Aufgang*].'⁴²

In short, difference differing from itself accomplishes appropriation and expropriation by generating structures of propriety and alienation from propriety. Difference would not

³⁹ GA65 465/366.

⁴⁰ GA65 455/359.

⁴¹ GA71 122/104. Heidegger, Martin, [GA71] *Das Ereignis* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2009). English: *The Event*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

⁴² GA71 127/108.

be difference if it coalesced to identity with itself. Rather, it must refuse to be identical. By differing from itself, difference distends and thereby self-determines. It generates an intensive structure, i.e., one marked by tension immanent to difference. But this determination cannot be structurally uniform: on the one hand, (A) there is generated a dimension of difference *from which* difference differs and, on the other, (B) there is the element of difference that *differs* from it, withdrawing or receding. Because difference must refuse to become identical with itself, the element that recedes must necessarily exceed the dimension become determinate, fleeing along a line trailed by the intensive determinacy it generates. Let us call (A), the dimension of difference from which difference differs, 'differed difference' and (B), the element of difference that differs from it, 'differing difference.'

In the picture of GA65 the genesis of this differential distension or determinacy is appropriation or the genesis of a domain of propriety. How so? The structure of distension is generated by difference producing a constitutive structural reference, the defining factor for ontological propriety. Namely, *differed* difference gains a reference to the element of *differing* difference, the withdrawing action of which distinguishes the former from the latter, i.e., makes it what it is. This reference is the structure determining differed difference; it is what determines it as different from differing difference. In this case, what is most *proper* to differed difference is differing difference, since the latter enables the former to be. Differed difference thus constitutes a domain of propriety because it constitutes a structural reference of one aspect of originary difference to another. It is intensive because that reference is an immanent, constitutive binding of differed difference to differing difference. If we take a wider scope on this overall process, we can say that its generation of constitutive structural reference is eventual difference performing *appropriation* –

appropriating itself such that propriety is first produced as a structure of beyng. Once this basic form of propriety is established, it can become folded into derivative ontological structures, like those composing Dasein's existence.

What then of alienation from propriety? The very same operation of originary difference differing from itself necessarily generates alienation, and does so simultaneously to generating propriety. Alienation and propriety must in fact be the same structure, simply viewed from different positions within the logic of the event. Differing difference distinguishes itself from differed difference by refusing to be identical to itself. But this refusal is an expropriation of difference from itself: differed difference is expropriated from differing difference. And this expropriation constitutes a state of alienation. How so? From the perspective of differing difference, differed difference must become something other than it, transformed in a way no longer consistent with it. Namely, the withdrawing action of differing difference generates a structure of propriety as differed difference, i.e., a form of difference that has become determinate in a way that can no longer be called pure difference. It has become bound by its intensive structure. Moreover, differed difference retains constitutive reference to differing difference – the reference required for constituting alienation and not simply separation. Thus, the genesis of differed difference is the genesis of difference alienated from itself, a structural alienation inherent to the logic of beyng as event.

In this picture, propriety and alienation are constituted by the very same operation of beyng (event). They are the same structure, viewed from different positions within the genetic relations operative in the event. Evental propriety and alienation are thus co-dependent; to remove one would remove the other. And as constituted by the same differential operation, they are of a single logic.

3. Conclusion: the event and the irreconcilable self

In a limited scope, we can now propose an interpretation of how, in Heidegger's post-*Kehre* work, Dasein is grounded in being as event. I would like to close by doing just that. This grounding relation can be established through the continuity Dasein's mineness has with the event's structures of propriety and alienation. Dasein's mineness is elaborated through its logic of co-constitutive propriety and alienation from propriety, which gives rise to states of authenticity and inauthenticity. In the logic of being as event, we find a more originary, pre-personal, generative form of propriety and alienation. In the view of GA65, that logic of the event forms the most basic logic of determinacy; it thereby articulates the being of any derivative things grounded by it, things like the existentialia of Dasein. We thus should understand Dasein's mineness to be a derivative, complicated form of those structures of the event, and we should take mineness's logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability to be a result of the co-constitutive irreconcilability intrinsic to the event's structures of propriety and alienation.

With respect to our hopes to become more authentic, this connection between Dasein and being as event provides an enriched picture. In the context of SZ, we saw that after the first stage of Dasein's authenticity, one must attend to the second: that according to which one owns up to and becomes grounded in the co-constitutive logic of (stage 1) authenticity and inauthenticity. This second stage reveals that Dasein's mineness is not reducible to propriety; it must be a unified logic of propriety and alienation from propriety, one according to which Dasein can modulate into varying states of authenticity and inauthenticity. There is an irreconcilability between the two, but the two are nonetheless co-dependent. In this picture, authenticity means owning up to and

becoming grounded in the structure of our existence, such that we are attentive to the logic of co-constitutive irreconcilability between authenticity and inauthenticity. And if, as Heidegger's later work argues, our existence is grounded in being as event, from which we have become alienated, our task of becoming more authentic goes beyond focus on our own existential structure, it also includes rearticulating ourselves in terms of the logic of the event. Nonetheless, since the logic of the event is a logic of difference, one that self-determines in contradistinguished and irreconcilable propriety and alienation, regrounding ourselves in the event provides no original stable self or recuperated identity. Insofar as we cover over that irreconcilability by constituting states of existence organized around images of a stable, original self, we slip into stage 2 inauthenticity: we exist in a state of alienation from the turmoil of alienation and propriety. The authentic self is thus the irreconcilable self, grounded in the logic of the event, dismantling images of a true original self with which we might someday become reconciled. There is perhaps a peace that comes with this, but the peace of release from bondage under images of a true self.

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Received: 29 October, 2021.

Accepted: 6 December, 2021.

Financial statement: The scholarship for this article was conducted at the author’s own expense.

Competing interests: The author has declared no competing interests.

How to cite: Bahoh, James. “The irreconcilable self in Heidegger’s logic of authenticity and event.” *Inscriptions* 5, no. 1 (January 2022): 74–89.

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