

## AN ANALYSIS OF MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S NOTION OF *DA-SEIN*

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### **ABSTRACT**

One of the problems of philosophy is the meaning of Being. Over it various thinkers have postulated various ideas. And there have been serious, never-ending debates on the ideas, which stimulate more and more researches. Martin Heidegger is one of the philosophers whose idea on the subject is popular. For him, Being is *Da-sein*. Although this notion of Being has been widely criticized, especially due to the intensity of torture that its understanding wields, it doubtlessly presents an interesting existentialist perspective to interpretation of Being. This essay aims at applying analytic method of philosophic discourse to elucidate Martin Heidegger's notion of *Da-sein* as Being. And that is motivated by the need to render a simplified narration of the whole gamut of the concept, especially to intending students of the philosopher and other readers who find his original works torturous or completely impossible to understand.

*Keywords:* *Being, Da-sein, Heidegger.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Having been constrained by space elsewhere – where I discussed Heidegger's quest for meaning of Being - to delve into his analysis of *Da-sein* as Being, I am obliged to complete the discussion in this essay. That means that this essay is an appendage to the first one, which is entitled "An Expository Analysis of Martin Heidegger's Quest for the Meaning of Being." In the other essay, I elucidated the motivations underpinning Heidegger's quest for meaning of Being, the circumstances surrounding his publication of *Being and Time*, the purpose of the book and the author's overall fundamental ontological preoccupation. Just as this essay, the first one was also articulated with the presumption that it is necessary to make available an understandable piece of literature on some of Heidegger's important subjects, especially to intending students of the philosopher and other readers who find his original works

difficult or completely impossible to understand (as is always the complain from readers).

In this essay, I attempt to analyse Heidegger's notion of *Da-sein* in consistence with his professional guide that the question of Being or existence is a question about the character of *Da-sein*. Accordingly, to answer the question "what is Being?" (with an intention to distill the meaning of the subject), Heidegger says that the appropriate question to ask is: what is *Da-sein*? Or, more ontologically, what does it mean to be *Da-sein*? It is this way of asking the question about meaning of Being or *Da-sein* that, in Heidegger's view, would lead one into the crux of the analysis. This essay, therefore, applies analytic method of philosophic discourses to explain Heidegger's notion of *Dasein* – in all its average everyday characters.

## THE BACKGROUND

Given the question "what is *Da-sein*?" it would first be discovered that the term has a literal German translation, which means "being-there" or "there-being" or being-at-present. From my first essay on Heidegger's quest for meaning of Being, it is to be recalled that the philosopher had read from Aristotle that the leading sense of Being throughout history of philosophy was "being in the sense of true" or "presence" (*Anwesenheit*). And, taking that to mean "unconcealedness," he set out – through phenomenology method – to render what makes a thing manifest as it is or what is (at) present. In *Da-sein*, therefore, Heidegger promptly identified human *being* with the literal word: "presence" – as a departing point from original history of the problem of being. What this means is that human *being* is the presence or *presentness* of mankind. For it is in that presentness that it (mankind) finds the possibility of inquiring about Being or formulating and asking questions about existence and seeking answers for them.

Presence can be understood in two ways, namely, to be 'present-at-hand' and to be 'present-to.' These are explained a little later in the essay as a basic way of interpreting the character of *Da-sein*. Presently, however, I continue with the explication of the literal meaning of the term *Da-sein*. Accordingly, Sheehan (184) guides that the "Da" of *Da-sein* can be profitably translated not only as 'there' but also as 'open.' This means that *Da-sein* is not only a 'there-being' of presence, but also an 'open-being'. The openness is to be understood as 'the possibility of taking-as' and thus as a pre-intellectual bareness to Being, which is necessary for human beings to encounter beings as beings in particular ways (e.g., practically, theoretically, aesthetically). The "sein" of *Da-sein*, on the other hand, translates as

'having-to-be' or 'being in constant process,' which differs from 'occasional or contingent' presence.

This dual character of *Da-sein*, when conjoined, leads to its characterisation as *the having-to-be-open*. In other words, according to Sheehan, *Da-sein* (i.e. human being) cannot help but be constantly open. This connotes a helpless *a priori* structure of human existential constitution. It is not an exercise of will, which individuals operate with a meaning-making capacity of taking-other-beings-as this or that entity (according to their decision). *Da-sein's* openness is that which informs its vague average understanding of entities whenever it comports itself to the question, and no matter how dim the entity inquired may be.

Because *Da-sein's* presence entails a kind of Being toward which it always comport itself in one way or another to ask questions and seek understanding, it (*Da-sein*) exists. Its presentness makes it an existent or *existenz* (as Heidegger calls it in German). "In existing," according to Vallega-Neu, "*Da-sein* occurs... as a transcending beyond beings into the disclosure of being as such, so that in this transcending not only its own possibilities of being [our first route] but also the being of other beings [our second route] is disclosed" (12).

Vallega-Neu goes on to explain that 'Existence' translates as *ek-sistence* in German. And this means 'a standing out.' Hence, *Da-sein* always stands out. This occurs in the two ways. First, *Da-sein* stands back or 'out' from its own occurrence in the world and observes itself. This underscores the reason why human beings are capable of asking and answering questions about themselves. It is the reason why individuals introspect. Second, *Da-sein* stands out in an openness to and an opening of Being. This is why human beings ask and answer questions about fellow human beings. It is the reason for contemplations about the world in general. Ultimately, analysis of *Da-sein*, if it must be meaningful, is to entail analysis of structures of its existence.

As *existenz*, Heidegger (*Being and Time*, 27 and 32) says *Da-sein* is a distinctive kind of entity. And this is in comparison with other entities such as stones, trees, animals, and so forth, other than itself. *Da-sein's* distinction with other entities occurs in a number of ways. First, it has ontical priority over other entities. This means that it has fixed properties, which it can be described – as this or that entity – just as other entities. But it is distinct from other entities and comes before them in terms of its fixed properties because its being has a determinate character of existence. Second, it also has ontological priority over other entities. This means that, over and against other entities, it has the capacity to assess and understand its general everyday structure of existence as an inquirer of Being. Other entities are not so endowed. With such distinctive capacity it therefore

comes before other entities because existence is determinative for it. Third, *Da-sein* has a dual primordial ontico-ontologically priority over other entities. This means that its existence involves understanding the Being of other entities apart from itself.

*Da-sein* has all those priorities over other entities because it is the only entity that thinks (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism* 193-194). Other entities do not think. It is as though that *Da-sein* typifies its inquiry about its being and other beings, with a view to meaning-making. Thinking is the attribute that accords Being existence.

It is important to note that Heidegger's conception of *Da-sein's* "thoughtfulness" is radically different from that which obtained in traditional philosophy. 'Thought,' for Heidegger, is not synonymous to the traditional rationalism of Aristotle, Rene Descartes (I think, therefore, I am), or Henri Bergson and beyond (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 61). For, in such traditional conception of thought, thinking involves logical causing or derivation of actions or relations, where effects are contingent upon the relations or cause generated by the activity (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism* 193-194). 'Thinking' in that sense often has a subject that engages in the activity, which is different from the object that it thinks about. Hence, the subject's aim is always to derive attributes of its object of thought (or contrive such attributes where it cannot derive them) as a separate entity from the object. Hence, the subject is always at a distance from its object of thought.

For Heidegger, thought does not *cause* actions or draw logically pure deductions from clear, distinct and eternal *a priori* principles concerning an object. Thought is an activity in itself. *Da-sein* acts in thought – because "thinking acts insofar as it thinks" (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism* 193-194). There is no subject-object dichotomy. This is because *Da-sein* is a unitary phenomenon with its thought. *Da-sein* is thought and thought is *Da-sein*. Thinking involves a transcendence which accomplishes the relation of Being to the essence of man. In view of this, Heidegger says "all working or effecting lies in Being and is directed towards Being...thinking brings this relation to Being solely as something handed over to it from Being" (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism* 193-194).

Coming to the two kinds of presence whose discussion was earlier suspended in order to concentrate on delineating literal meanings of *Da-sein*, we find another set of distinguishing characters of *Da-sein* from other entities: 'present-to' and 'present-at-hand.' Accordingly, while *Da-sein's* *existenz* involves a presence that is 'present-to,' the being of other entities involves a presence that is 'present-at-hand.' As present-at-hand, other entities are *existentia*.

In its present-to *Da-sein* engages in active existence – creating itself, legislating, editing, organizing and re-organising the world – through questioning. But present-at-hand *existentia* entities just lie around the world in a passive way of existing. As inquirers, only *human* beings are able to encounter the question of what it means to be. More specifically, it is human beings alone who (a) operate in their everyday activities with an understanding of Being and (b) are able to reflect upon what it means to be. This is why Heidegger says “*Da-sein* is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being that Being is an issue for it” (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 32). In Wheeler’s explanation, while inanimate objects merely persist through time and while plants and non-human animals have their lives determined entirely by the demands of survival and reproduction, human beings are the nuclei of lives laying themselves out (6). *Da-sein* constitutes the world. And it utilizes *existentia* to achieve this objective. Hence, present-at-hand entities are utensils for *Da-sein*’s self-creation and world-constitution.

As an entity, *Da-sein* is not to be understood as ‘a biological human being’ or ‘a person’ as such because such thinking identifies Being with fixed properties. It is, rather, to be seen as a territory where Being makes meaning (Unah, *Heidegger’s Existentialism* 23) or “a way of life shared by the members of some community” (Haugeland 423). It is in this sense of human being as *Da-sein* that Heidegger himself thinks of a language existing as an entity, i.e. as a communally shared way or territory of speaking. As a territory of being, *Da-sein* is a dynamic personality. It can be what it is not and not be what it is. “The mode of being of the human being is not given. It is in question. In other words, “there is a basic elusiveness in defining human reality because man is a possibility” (Unah, *Heidegger’s Existentialism* 58).

But, one way to understand *Da-sein*’s Being is to view it from one’s personality, the “self,” oneself or *mineness*. Heidegger encourages this way of personal assessment of Being because he says that we ourselves are *Da-sein* – the entities to be analysed (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 67). “The Being of any such entity is in each case *mine*” (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 67). We are the ones who comport themselves towards their Being. We are the ones whose Being is an issue for its very Being. Hence, the *mineness* of *Da-sein* institutes that discussions about it should always proceed with personal pronouns such as “I am...,” “you are...,” *et cetera*.

Since *Da-sein* is in each case mine, the *mineness* can be in one way or another. I can be this or that, in accordance with my decision. Hence *Da-sein* is given to possibilities. It is in each case its own possibility (Heidegger, *Being and*

*Time* 68). And because *Da-sein* is 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. But only insofar as it is essentially something which can be authentic – that is, something of its own – can it have lost itself and not yet won itself.

As modes of Being, authenticity and inauthenticity both become grounded in the fact that any *Da-sein* whatsoever is characterised by mineness” (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 68). Heidegger, therefore institutes another trait for distinguishing *Da-sein* – authenticity and inauthenticity. And these are modes of existence, which I myself exhibits. Authenticity is about being true to my Being as mine, while inauthenticity is being untrue. Inauthenticity involves denying my Being. Heidegger guides, concerning interpretation of inauthenticity, that “...it does not signify any ‘less’ Being or any ‘lower’ degree of Being. Rather it is the case that even in its fullest concretion, *Da-sein* can be characterised by untruth – when busy, when excited, when interested, when ready for enjoyment” (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 68).

Beyond the foregoing traits distinguishing *Da-sein* as *existenz* from other entities or *existentia*, there are others that elucidate its essential structure of existence – as that which further distinguish it from *existentia*. In its average everyday existence, for instance, *Da-sein* is essentially a being-in-the-world. As a being-in-the-world it is also a being-with-others. It exists as the two modes of being because it epitomises Care. As Care it temporalises existence in such a way that its existentiality lies in constant anticipatory resoluteness. I turn next to explain in some brief detail each of these structures of *Da-sein*’s existence.

### **DA-SEIN AS BEING-IN-THE-WORLD**

Being-in-the-world is Heidegger’s neologism for traditional ontological terms like “subject” and “consciousness,” which used to be used to describe man as the meaning-maker of the world. Given traditional ontological subject-object dichotomy and their concomitant difficulties in processes of meaning-making, Heidegger chose to replace the traditional terms with the new one. He considered the new one to be dynamic in that it has the capacity to overcome the difficulties of the traditional ontologies by treating human being as a unified territory that involves meaning itself.

Against Edmund Husserl, for instance, who spoke of consciousness as an outward moving vector – always being conscious of something, which its intentional apparatus directs – Heidegger holds that consciousness is not just conscious of something outside, it is (for the most part) of itself. It is conscious that it is consciousness.

Be that as it is, Heidegger's articulation of *Da-sein's* 'Being-in-the-world' as its essential structure of existence announces his recognition of the fact that *Da-sein* – as an existent – must exist in some place – the world (*Being and Time* 80). *Da-sein* inhabits the world. But because the phenomenon of being-in-the-world has the tendency to be misunderstood in traditional mode of knowing (where one object could be thought of "being-in" another object), Heidegger chose to break the neologism apart to explain how it concerns human *being* in ontological capacity. Accordingly, Heidegger educates that:

What is meant by "Being-in"? Our proximal reaction is to round out this expression to "Being-in" "in-the-world," and we are inclined to understand this Being-in as "Being in something"...as the water is "in" the glass, or the garment is "in" the cupboard. By this "in" we mean the relationship of Being which two entities extended "in" space have to each other with regard to their location in that space...Being-present-at-hand-along-with in the sense of a definite location-relationship with something else which has the same kind of Being, are ontological characteristics which we call "categorical" (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 80-81).

Such categorial mode of 'Being-in,' according to Heidegger, belongs to entities other than *Da-sein*. 'Being-in' of *Da-sein's* being-in-the-world," for Heidegger, is an existential description of *Da-sein's* essential state of dwelling in the world. By this, *Da-sein's* Being is identical with the world. It is the convening of *Da-sein* and the world. For every *Da-sein*, there is an equi-primordial arrival with the world. There is a helpless thrownness of it into the world, which can be explained only by dwelling in the world in some familiar way. To dwell in a house, for instance, is not merely to be inside it spatially. It is, rather, to belong there; to have a familiar place there. It is in this sense of familiarity with the world that Heidegger says *Da-sein* is (essentially) in the world – in terms of dwelling.

Being-in-the-world, for *Da-sein* lies in the essence of having to do something or be concerned with something in a familiar way. In Heidegger's words, it is like:

...producing something, attending to something and looking after it, making use of something, giving something up and letting it go, undertaking, accomplishing, evincing, interrogating, considering, discussing, determining...All these kind of ways of Being-in have concern (Bersorgen) as their kind of Being (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 81).

Hence, human Being-in-the-world is a totality of involvement with activity of existing (Dreyfus 333).

Heidegger says of Being-in-the-world that *Da-sein* has two primary possibilities which it can manifest. These are 'present-at-hand' and 'ready-to-hand.' As 'present-at-hand,' *Da-sein* has the tendency to consider itself or other entities in the world as objects, in a way that obscures *Da-sein's* Being as Being-in-the-world. This makes *Da-sein* capable of forgetting its fundamental nature as an existent and choosing to treat itself as any other categorial entity. As 'ready-to-hand,' on the other hand, *Da-sein* exists in its elements – i.e. the way which everyday *Da-sein* always is (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 96). In this mode, *Da-sein* does not treat itself or other entities as objects in the world. Rather, it is immersed in the project of existing. *Da-sein* acts in a way that utilizes other entities as equipment required for the project of existing instead of thinking of them as entities that are isolable from the world. Since ready-to-hand Being-in-the-world does not obscure *Da-sein*, Heidegger says ready-to-hand mode of Being is more primary and truer to *Da-sein's* nature. It is in this mode of Being that *Da-sein* is concerned about the world; always being involved with projects or some activity – interacting with equipment as means to accomplish tasks.

While being occupied with activity of existing in the two different modes of Being-in-the-world though, one question that needs to be answered is: "who is it that *Da-sein* is in its everydayness with?" (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 149). Responding to this question introduces another essential structure of *Da-sein*. And that is "Being-with-others." I turn next to analyse that.

### DA-SEIN AS BEING-WITH-OTHERS

To Heidegger, when everyday *Da-sein* engages in activity or project of existing (as a ready-to-hand, which is without obscurity and is truer and primary to its nature as Being), it is immersed in a world of concern as a 'workshop' within which tasks are performed. In the immersion, *Da-sein* encounters "others" in one form or another. *Da-sein* can encounter others directly as part of its environment – perhaps a feature of a project such as the person who sells *Da-sein* a book (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 153). Or, it can allude to others in the equipment it uses in the "workshop" of existence – such as the person who wrote the book or who owns the bookshop (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 153-154). The point is that *Da-sein* as ready-to-hand 'Being-with' experiences others in its activity of existing as fellow *Da-seins*. *Da-sein* is never solitary. 'Being-with' involves relating with other *Da-seins*, who are also *there* with their Being (i.e. there-being) in the activity of existing. In fact, 'involvement-with-the-world' or 'dwelling-in-the-world' or, even 'familiarity-with-the-world' as essential states of Being-in-the-world entails

interacting with other *Da-seins* in the world. Hence, *Da-sein's* Being-in-the-world involves Being-with-others (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 155). It is in this understanding of *Da-sein's* Being-in-the-world that existence primarily involves solicitude for persons.

*Da-sein* exists because others are there to interact with it. It cannot exist in isolation from others. This runs contrary to traditional ontological thinking, which holds that existence involves the "I" who thinks (e.g. "I think, therefore, I exist). To hold the traditional position is to say that *Da-sein* is an isolable entity of present-at-hand; its Being would be obscured as essential Being-with.

Heidegger further enlightens that *Da-sein's* solicitude for persons are of two modes. These are indifference and positive ((Heidegger, *Being and Time* 158). In indifferent mode of solicitude for persons, we pass by one another in such a way that we do not matter to each other. Heidegger says that this is the "deficient" mode of solicitude. However, the deficiency does not connote the negativity of insufficiency. It is rather a mode of Being where everyday *Da-sein* "maintains itself proximally and for the most part in the deficient mode of solicitude" ((Heidegger, *Being and Time* 158). What Heidegger is telling us is that "although we fundamentally share a world with others, we are mostly indifferent to them as we go about the businesses of our daily lives: we walk past them, we drive by them, we talk past them and ignore them in our everyday concern with projects" (Hass 85). On the second hand, in positive solicitude we encounter others in two ways: leaping-in and leaping-ahead (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 158-159). The term "positive," too, is not to be taken as a connotation for something "better" than the indifferent mode. Rather, it is ways in which *Da-sein* actively (and not passively) behaves toward others. When *Da-sein* leaps in for another *Da-sein*, it takes over the other's project and thus throws the other out of the project (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 158). It is a mode of Being which *Da-sein* dominates the other such that it results in the other (the latter) depending on it (the former) for existence. In Hass' further examples, this mode of Being occurs "when say, one student writes a paper for another student, or when one person does all the talking for another in a social situation (Hass 85). In leaping-ahead, on the other hand, *Da-sein* exists in such a way that allows other *Da-seins* to see its activity or project as a possible project of theirs. This mode of Being involves modeling. In leaping-ahead, Heidegger says one *Da-sein* "helps the other become transparent to himself...and free for [the project]" (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 159). Conclusively, it as these two modes of Being-with that everyday *Da-sein* exists as Being-in-the-world.

### DA-SEIN AS CARE

With the two essential structures of *Da-sein's* existence explained above, a basic state of its Being is also inadvertently broached. And that is Care (*sorge*) (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 237). Particularly as a Being-in-the-world, *Da-sein's* everyday state of existence is as Care. This is because *Da-sein* is constantly preoccupied with activities of existing.

Existence is an activity. It involves a lot of struggles. To be in the world and with others – successfully – requires work. For Heidegger, that work, activity or struggle to exist is what constitutes Care for *Da-sein*. It is not the common affectionate attention given to phenomena by people. The difference is that the common affectionate care can disengage from its object of attention, especially when it has expended its limits, but care as activity of existing continues through and through – without any limits to expend – until death. Indeed, *Da-sein's* capacity for affectionate attention to phenomena is a mere expression of an aspect of its general Care character. It is one of the ways in which it acts to exist.

*Da-sein's* care or activity of existing is about familiarity (which characterises Being-in-the-world as explained earlier) that is influenced by three unified moments, which are fundamentally present with it (*Da-sein*). These are: how it finds itself (*Befindlichkeit*), its understanding (*Vesterhen*) and its fallenness (*Verfallen*).

As *Befindlichkeit*, *Da-sein* always finds itself already-in-the-world. It is always being surrounded with factual situations. Heidegger uses the word thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) to express this condition of *Da-sein's* being. Hence, *Da-sein* as a Being-in-the-world always finds itself thrown into situations that are, in some sense, already there. And that means that *Da-sein* is never the ground (or cause) of the situations. The situations are always unsolicited (most radically at birth). In fact, the situations always become the ground in which *Da-sein* 'finds' (discovers or realises) itself. This awareness of the situations always put it in a mood (*stimmung*), especially anxiety. Hence, *Da-sein* is always anxious. Anxiety, then, is *Da-sein's* mood, which its factual thrownness always conditionalises it to express as a familiar activity of existing or care.

As understanding (*Vesterhen*), on the second hand, *Da-sein's* Being-in-the-world is constantly preoccupied with possibilities. It is always ahead-of-itself or being-already-in-(the world) or being-alongside-entities (and caring-for-others). In always being-ahead-of-itself, *Da-sein* always actively comports itself toward possibility of possibilities. Philosophically, this involves transcendence. In transcendental understanding, *Da-sein* always expresses deeper structure of

freedom which Heidegger later articulated as openness. Accordingly, it always projects itself into its possibilities which lay ahead of itself, to develop itself and make meaning of life and the world. It is *Da-sein's* meaning-making capacity, involved in its project of self-development, that Heidegger calls interpretation. This means that *Da-sein* is always engaged in activity of interpretation. This is the way it exists as care – i.e. as understanding, which interprets itself, life and the world.

As fallenness (*Verfallen*), on the third hand, *Da-sein's* Being-in-the-world is a brut everyday experience. This is the level at which the moments of *Befindlichkeit* and *Vesterhen* imperceptibly operate with meaning. In other words, *Da-sein's* everydayness presents a clearing for it to realise that it is constantly in situations of thrownness and, thus, constantly attempt to develop itself meaningfully by projecting into several possibilities that make (interpretative) meaning to it. The struggle to make life meaningful in spite of the difficulties of the factual thrownness that it finds itself puts *Da-sein* in constant activity of existing that characterizes it as care.

#### DA-SEIN'S CARE AND TEMPORALITY (TIME)

Having shown in the analysis above that *Da-sein's* Being-in-the-world involves a unified phenomenon of the three moments that characterise its basic structure of care (*sorge*), the next problem for its Being is to interpret it (the Being) in terms of Time. From the appendage to this essay – which is the first part introduced earlier – it is stated and analysed that one of the criticisms against traditional research into problem of Being is its incapability to make sense of Time in relation to existence. And this is due to their scientific treatment of Being and Time. Heidegger, however, took up the responsibility of changing that impression and sustaining the validity of discussions on problem of Being by making Time an integral part of Being.

A critical study of the three moments of *Da-sein's* structure of Care, therefore, would reveal that Heidegger grounded them in Time itself. Time, Heidegger writes, “is the transcendental horizon with which man tacitly understands and interprets Being in terms of its own temporal being” (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 39-41). That which grounds the unity of the caring-structure or Being of *Da-sein* (the Being of human being) is, therefore, Temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). Each structural moment manifests what Heidegger calls a temporal ecstasy. While *Befindlichkeit* (*Geworfenheit*) – the already-in-the-world – manifests the phenomenon of the past or the having-been, *Vesterhen* or the ahead-of-itself manifests the phenomenon of the future, and *Verfallen* or the being-alongside

manifests the phenomenon of the present. These demonstrate, therefore, that human beings are temporal beings (Heidegger, *Being and Time: Introduction* 61-63). We reach out toward the future while taking up our past and, thus, yielding to our present activities. Or, in Unah's clearer view, "... every man reaches out to the future (existentiality), to the not-now on the ground of what has-been (facticity) in our current engagements, in our making present (fallenness)" (Unah, *On Being* 96).

In all of these, my curiosity reveals that Heidegger grants some special attention to the phenomenon of the future. The future has priority over the other two temporal phenomena. This is because the future constitutes the temporal moment for possibilities. Indeed, Heidegger says that the phenomenon of the future characterises *existence* itself. This is why he treats it with so much passion in his *Da-sein-analytik* of temporality. Again, for want of space, this essay cannot delve into this special aspect of Heidegger's *Da-sein-analytik*. It is rather carried out somewhere else.

## CONCLUSION

This essay used analytic method of philosophic discourses to explain Heidegger's notion of *Dasein* – in all its average everyday characters. And this was in consistence with the philosopher's professional view that the question of meaning of Being is a question about the character of *Da-sein*. When the question "what is Being?" is raised, Heidegger says that it is synonymous to the question "what is *Da-sein*?" or, more ontologically, "what does it mean to be *Da-sein*?" And it should be asked and answered as such – i.e. concerning *Da-sein*. This is because the question about the meaning of *Da-sein* is that which leads to the crux of analysis of Being. That is what this essay accomplished.

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