RESOLUTENESS AND THE POLITICAL: FROM HEIDEGGER'S *BEING AND TIME* TO EARLY MARCUSE AND ARENDT'S *VITA ACTIVA*

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ABSTRACT

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Martin Heidegger's notion of resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*) is the core of *Being and Time* (1927) and stands at the center of his political thought. Despite this significance, much of the literature on Heidegger either ignores the importance of resoluteness, understands it as an ethical concept, or rejects it as a harbinger of his later support for National Socialism. Resoluteness is vitally significant for social and political theory because it accounts for the meaning of political agency as action that aims to transform the world. Presenting resoluteness as a mode of disclosure reveals that resoluteness is not a phenomenon of the individual or will, but rather a condition for the possibility of being a political agent.

Part One provides a close reading of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness to show how it can be read as a political concept. In Chapter One, I argue that the predominant conception of Heidegger's thought in Anglo-American philosophy (i.e., by pragmatists like Hubert Dreyfus and Richard Rorty) overlooks the importance of resoluteness by viewing action solely as purposive activity. However, in Heidegger's conception of disclosure, purposive activity occurs within an already established world of significance and therefore, cannot be its own foundation. Resoluteness cannot have a purpose beyond itself, because it grounds the significance of the world within which purposive activity is meaningful. In Chapter Two, I substantiate my claim by developing resoluteness as a mode of world disclosure. In contrast to mainstream interpretations of *Being and Time* that read resoluteness as an ethical concept (i.e., self-individuation), I argue

that for Heidegger, the counter-concept to publicness is not the individual, but community, which requires us to understand world disclosure as shared by a people.

Part Two establishes that resoluteness has influenced both social and political thought through an examination of how two of Heidegger's students, Herbert Marcuse and Hannah Arendt, appropriate the concept. Though both Marcuse and Arendt distance themselves from Heidegger's thought, as I show, resoluteness has an indelible influence on each of their theories of action. In Chapter Three, I argue that the early Marcuse's conception of radical social action, which became influential for the New Left movement in the 1960s, is based on his attempt to synthesize Heidegger's notion of resoluteness with a Marxist revolutionary conception of history. Marcuse argues that the possibility of radical action requires Heidegger's analysis to incorporate material factors such as gender and socio-economic status.

Arendt counters that because power depends upon the ability of people to act in concert, it transcends the material factors with which Marcuse takes issue. As I show in Chapter Four, Arendt rejects the materialist conception of history Marcuse embraces, yet similarly bases her conception of political action on resoluteness, revealing the foundational significance of Heidegger's thought. However, I argue that Arendt's pluralist notion of political agency highlights a problem with Heidegger's understanding of community as a uniform whole, which fails to consider the communicative process between diverse political agents. Despite this criticism, in Chapter Five, I argue that Heidegger's notion of world disclosure makes a valuable contribution to social and political philosophy by establishing the notion of non-instrumental, world-constitutive action as the basis for political agency.

To my father,
Thomas Johnson

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INTRODUCTION

Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* has been widely influential for social and political philosophy in 20th Century European thought. It provided a foundation for the philosophical revitalization of Marxist revolutionary thought for Herbert Marcuse, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, while also influencing Hannah Arendt's non-Marxist conception of the political. *Being and Time* has guided social and political thought extending beyond Heidegger's students and contemporaries. Jacques Derrida declared it to be an event that confronted philosophy with its own limits. Jean-Luc Nancy's thematization of sociality as the origin of thought in *Being Singular Plural* takes its bearings from Heidegger's notion of being-with.[1] In *Heidegger, Art and Politics,* Lacoue-Labarthe attempts to come to terms with Heidegger's involvement in National Socialism by examining the relationship between aesthetics and politics in his thought.[2] Finally, Heidegger's existential conceptions of guilt and destiny have provided impetus for Roberto Esposito's interrogation of the nature of community in *Communitas*.[3]

On the surface, *Being and Time*'s influence on social and political thought seems unlikely, since Heidegger did not intend it to be a social or political theory. It did not understand political association as a contractual subordination of individual wills to a sovereign power, or expose class relations in political economy. Heidegger's investigation into fundamental ontology

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[1] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, Meridian, Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000).

[2] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics : The Fiction of the Political* (Oxford, OX, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA: B. Blackwell, 1990).

[3] Roberto Esposito, *Communitas : The Origin and Destiny of Community*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009).

in *Being and Time* contained neither a utopian vision of the state nor principles of justice. In fact, Heidegger claimed that as an investigation into the meaning of being, fundamental ontology was necessarily prior to any inquiry concerning the theoretical 'nature' of man, such as psychology, anthropology, ethics, and political science.[4] In short, many of the classical problems that have come to characterize social and political philosophy are jettisoned from the investigation in *Being and Time*. Why, then, would it come to have such a wide-ranging influence on social and political thought?

According to Herbert Marcuse, whose critical analysis of advanced industrial society would be important for the New Left movement in the 1960s, *Being and Time* "seems to represent a turning point in the history of philosophy: the point at which bourgeois philosophy unmakes itself from the inside and clears the way for a new and 'concrete' science."[5] Early in his career, Marcuse believed that *Being and Time* had demonstrated that historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*] is a "fundamental determination" of human existence. Echoing Marx's critique of Feuerbach's materialism, Marcuse claimed that bourgeois or idealist philosophy had only understood action abstractly, that is, independent of the concrete historical situation that determines its specific meaning. For a time, he believed the notion of resoluteness in *Being and Time* overcame this abstract conception of action, offering new insight into the historical necessity of revolutionary action.

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[4] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (New York: Harper, 1962), SZ 16/37. Subsequent references to this text are given in text. Page references to *Sein und Zeit* (SZ) are given first, followed by the page number for the Macquarrie and Robinson translation. Where I have felt the need to give German terms that they have omitted, I have added these in parentheses, and kept the translator's references in brackets.

[5] Herbert Marcuse, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," in *Heideggerian Marxism*, ed. Richard Wolin and John Abromeit (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 10-11.

Hannah Arendt's political theory would also examine the relationship between action and history from the perspective of resoluteness. Arendt is much less explicit about the influence the ontological perspective had on her thought, yet it seems to have provided an impetus for her critique of the Western philosophical tradition's debasement of the *vita activa*, i.e, the active life. Much as Heidegger believed that the traditional definition of man as "*animal rationale*" had concealed a more original conception of human existence (SZ 48-50/74-75), Arendt charged the tradition with privileging the *vita contemplativa* over the *vita activa*, mistakenly viewing human activity as fabrication, that is, merely as an instrumental means for the achievement of some end. The ecstatic-temporal dimension of Heidegger's notion of disclosure offered an original perspective on the meaning of action outside of this theoretical framework, which can be seen in Arendt's belief that the faculty of action is "ontologically rooted" in natality.[6]

Marcuse and Arendt's attempts to re-consider the meaning of action in light of resoluteness in *Being and Time* are compelling, because while they find common ground in Heidegger's conception of freedom as resoluteness, Marcuse embraced Marx's materialist conception of history, while Arendt did not. Marcuse sought to synthesize Heidegger's insight into historicity as the "essence" of human existence with the early Marx's materialist conception of history, which understands the totality of human existence as society (*Gesellschaft*), that is, a totality in which the division of labor places its existence in contradiction with itself. However, Arendt defends the notion of community against the materialist conception of history. Despite this difference, Marcuse and Arendt are united in their criticism of the emphasis Heidegger placed on the individual's isolated anticipation of death, and expressed significant reservations

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[6] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Charles R. Walgreen Foundation Lectures. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 247.

about its ability to grasp the plurality of human existence. In an interview with Frederick Olafson, Marcuse expresses his concern that this emphasis "plays well on the fears and frustrations of men and women in a repressive society—a joyless existence: overshadowed by death and anxiety; human material for the authoritarian personality."[7] Similarly, Arendt claimed that "since action is the political activity par excellence, natality, and not mortality, may be the central category of political, as distinguished from metaphysical thought."[8]

I argue that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness understands community, and not isolated individualism, as the authentic form of *Dasein*'s existence and is the core concept in Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Despite their criticisms of Heidegger, Marcuse and Arendt develop key aspects of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness in *Being and Time* and do not abandon it altogether. By examining their critical reception of resoluteness, I aim to bring to light some political implications of Heidegger's early thought.

I establish this claim in two parts. The first part focuses on resoluteness as a distinguished mode of disclosure. A close reading of the notion of disclosure in Division I and II shows how resoluteness modifies the "average everyday" way that the world is disclosed. I argue that the modification of the everyday mode of disclosure in resoluteness is a condition for the possibility of the political, and leads to a conception of community whose unity is given by its historical situation. In the second part of the dissertation, I evaluate the reception of Heidegger's conception of the political in Marcuse's and Arendt's appropriation of resoluteness. Here I show that both Marcuse and Arendt follow Heidegger's conception of resoluteness in understanding action as world constitutive, and not merely as a means towards an already established end.

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[7] Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview," 170.

[8] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 9.

I

The central task of fundamental ontology in *Being and Time* is to work out the meaning of being through an interpretation of *Dasein* (literally, "being-there"). The term '*Dasein*' distinguishes the human being from all other beings and marks it as the proper focus of ontological investigation. Fundamental ontology begins with an interpretation of this special entity because *Dasein* alone is related to its being. In other words, *Dasein* discloses a world of significance and understands its being from out of that world—its being is always an issue for it. For the most part, *Dasein* finds itself there, alongside a world that matters to it. Against the tendency of the Western philosophical tradition to forget this ontological difference and determine the essence of man as a rational animal or created in the image of God, Heidegger insists that *Dasein*'s being is neither fixed nor determined (SZ 49/75). Ontologically prior to any such determination of *Dasein*, he maintains that its being confronts it as a question; to emphasize *Dasein*'s character as possibility, Heidegger says "*Dasein is its disclosedness*" (SZ 133/171).

The disclosure of the world, which makes up the being of Dasein's 'there', corresponds to Heidegger's characterization of *Dasein* as a thrown project whose existence is always a Being-with others; it is constituted by three aspects: "states-of-mind, understanding, and discourse" (SZ 180/224). Through a state-of-mind, or attunement, *Dasein* is delivered over to its past, thrown into a specific comportment towards the world as it has been. On the other hand, Heidegger regards understanding as *Dasein*'s projection of its being into the future.[9] The disclosure of the world is further constituted by discourse, or language, which Heidegger holds to be

[9] It is important to note that Heidegger's understanding of projection does not require that *Dasein* actually 'represents' the possibilities it strives towards. *Dasein*'s existential possibility is not an end that it represents to itself and means to achieve. He says, "the character of understanding as projection is such that the understanding does not grasp thematically that upon which it projects—that is to say, possibilities" (SZ 145/185).

equiprimordial with states-of-mind and understanding. This highlights the fact that Heidegger's notion of disclosure should not be understood as a representation of objects for an isolated, individual subject; rather, the significance of the world is only disclosed insofar as the intelligibility of *Dasein*'s relation to the world can be articulated for others. Put differently, disclosure is only possible for a being that is essentially being-with-others.

Having briefly presented the central features of *Dasein*'s basic structure as disclosedness, which is the primary task of fundamental ontology, it must be noted that in *Being and Time*, Heidegger introduces two primary modes of disclosure. *Dasein*'s typical disclosure of the world in average everydayness existence he names 'fallenness', while 'resoluteness' is an interruption of this customary disclosure in which *Dasein* is revealed to itself as a self that only exists in community with others, that is, as a possibility that can be explicitly taken over. In his 1935-1936 essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger remarks, "The resoluteness which is thought in *Being and Time* is not the decisive action of a subject, but rather the human being's [*Daseins*] opening up from out of its captivity by beings into the openness of being."[10] Given that, this dissertation emphasizes the passive dimension of this self-appropriation by focusing on how the structure of disclosure in fallenness becomes modified in resoluteness. Resoluteness reveals a passive dimension to freedom; a moment in which the past leaps ahead of *Dasein* and discloses new possibilities for existence, new ways of being *Dasein*. Part One of the dissertation shows how the ontic givenness of *Dasein* in fallenness is founded upon the ontological analysis given in the second division of *Being and Time*, presenting a comprehensive picture of Heidegger's fundamental ontology in two chapters. In this way, the first part of the dissertation aims to

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[10] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Off the Beaten Track*, ed. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 41.

demonstrate how resoluteness might be read in this passive sense, suggesting that it is better understood as a condition for the possibility of responsibility than as a voluntaristic self-assertion. This thesis requires me to revisit the major concepts of *Being and Time* in order to think about resoluteness from a more comprehensive perspective than is usually found in the literature on what I regard as a central topic for understanding the social and political implications of Heidegger's thought.

The first chapter explores Heidegger's analysis of fallenness as a mode of disclosure in which *Dasein* is "*fascinated* by the world with which it is concerned" (SZ 61/88). Fallenness is a specific mode in which the world is usually disclosed to *Dasein*, which Heidegger understands in terms of fear (state-of-mind), interpretation (understanding), and idle talk (discourse). Here, the character of *Dasein*'s own existence as a possibility is formally indicated, but nevertheless closed off to it as such. The everyday self avoids the decision to take over its possibility as its own. In this everyday comportment, *Dasein* is not itself, but the anonymous and indistinct 'One' [*das Man*]. This chapter shows that in the average everyday mode of disclosure, *Dasein*'s possibilities for existence are determined by its concerned engagement with the world. Fallen into the public world that is customarily its concern, *Dasein* evades its own self-disclosure, thus avoiding the possibility of taking a stand on its own existence and becoming accountable for oneself.

The first chapter further shows that pragmatist readings of *Being and Time* ignore the central role of resoluteness and consequently, misconstrue the problem of action. Hubert Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-World* represents the pragmatic view, according to which " 'mindless'

everyday coping skills" are taken to be the basis for the intelligibility of the world.[11] While Dreyfus correctly shows how Heidegger's position challenges the traditional epistemological model of subjectivity and could be applied to a pragmatic theory of knowledge, he fails to see how the average everyday intelligibility of the world is grounded in resoluteness. If the goal of fundamental ontology is to work out the meaning of being through a phenomenological interpretation of *Dasein*, the investigation must reveal *Dasein* as a phenomenon, which Heidegger defines as "*that which shows itself in itself*" (SZ 28/51). To show *Dasein* 'in itself', fundamental ontology must account for how, given that *Dasein*'s existential possibilities are customarily determined by its absorption in the public world that it shares with others, it could be uniquely related to itself and determine its ownmost, authentic possibilities. Thus, while Dreyfus is technically correct when he states, "*Being and Time* seeks to show that much of everyday activity … can be described without recourse to deliberate, self-referential consciousness," he nevertheless misses the point.[12] The meaningfulness of everyday activity depends precisely upon the sort of self-relation he claims Heidegger's position rejects. The intelligibility of the world that is disclosed in everydayness, I suggest, is not grounded in "background coping skills," as Dreyfus claims, but rather in *Dasein*'s resolute projection of its being into the future, that is, in the self-relation that is accomplished in resoluteness, which grasps the self as an effect of community.

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[11] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 3. It should be noted that Dreyfus revises his 1991 position, however, in doing so he understands resoluteness as "masterful" coping with the world, which overlooks what I take to be the central aspect of Heidegger's resoluteness, namely, that the disclosure of the self is not just "better," but the a priori source of the meaningfulness of action. See ———, "Can There Be a Better Source of Meaning Than Everyday Practices?," in *Heidegger's Being and Time : Critical Essays*, ed. Richard Polt (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

[12] ———, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, 58.

The second chapter explores the central features of this self-relation by showing how Heidegger claims *Dasein* overcomes its fallenness and takes a stand on its own existence. Resoluteness makes *Dasein* intelligible to itself as a whole—thus, as a phenomenon—through a modification of the everyday disclosure of the world. I explain that in resoluteness, *Dasein* ceases to be absorbed by the world and becomes revealed to itself, by presenting it as a mode of disclosure constituted by anxiety (state-of-mind), being-towards-death (understanding), and conscience (discourse). Interpreting resoluteness in this way allows me to distinguish resoluteness from how we typically understand "making a resolution," since the latter carries a connotation that it is important to avoid. Resolutions are commonly understood as a promise to oneself; a commitment to act or refrain from acting in a certain way. When making a New Year's resolution, for example, one vows to exercise regularly or give up eating chocolate in the coming year. Resoluteness would then refer to the strength of one's will to achieve a self-established goal that it has determined of its own accord. Heidegger explains, however, that such willing is derivative of *Dasein*'s being as care (SZ 182/227). Resoluteness is not a phenomenon of the will. It does not aim to achieve a goal. Resoluteness is a responsibility to the call of conscience. What I am responsible for is not only myself, but myself as being-in-the-world, which means a self that stands in essential relation to the other. The resolution calls the self out of its dispersal in everydayness by disclosing it as something that one may choose or decide to take over. Fundamental ontology regards the possibility of such a self-disclosure as a condition for *Dasein*'s determination of its own possibilities.

In this way, the Chapter Two argues against critics who have sought to demonstrate that the philosophical position expressed in *Being and Time* is a harbinger of Heidegger's subsequent

embrace of National Socialism. Jürgen Habermas, Ernst Tugendhat, and Richard Wolin have suggested that Heidegger's account of resoluteness lacks any normative foundation according to which the legitimacy of the ends that one is resolute for could be determined. For example, Wolin criticizes resoluteness in *Being and Time* as "devoid of any normative content" and hence, he claims that it "takes on an entirely arbitrary character … unamenable to evaluation according to more general, publicly accessible standards."[13] Heidegger's critics have suggested that when he demonstrated his support for Adolf Hitler, the resolute choice that in *Being and Time* was indefinite was given a concrete determination in the will of the Führer.[14] Thus, as Tugendhat pointedly explains, "Heidegger's Nazism was no accidental affair … a direct path led from his philosophy—from its derationalized concept of truth and the concept of self-determination defined by this—to Nazism."[15]

Heidegger's account of truth on the basis of resoluteness is neither indeterminate or purely arbitrary. The self-disclosure demonstrated in Heidegger's account of resoluteness is ontologically prior to reason. Stephen Crowell has suggested that it might be seen as a condition for the possibility of normative self-determination. Heidegger's analysis of conscience, Crowell

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[13] Richard Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 52-53.

[14] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes, "Resoluteness 'exists' only as a resolution [Entschluss] which understandingly projects itself. But on what basis does Dasein disclose itself in resoluteness? On what is it to resolve? Only the resolution itself can give the answer" (SZ 299/345). In an appeal to "German Students" in support of Hitler's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, Heidegger encourages them to "let not propositions and 'ideas' be the rules of your being [Sein]. The Führer alone is the present and future German reality and its law" and strengthen their "will to follow [Gefolgschaftswille]." See Martin Heidegger, *The Heidegger Controversy : A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 47. Another critic of Heidegger, Farías explains, "Heidegger was proposing to the students that they replace their ideas and principles by the vigor and will of Hitler. ... Not only is the Führer the 'criterion' of this choice; he has become the agent of historical possibility itself." See Víctor Farías, *Heidegger and Nazism*, ed. Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 158.

[15] Ernst Tugendhat, *Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination*, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986), 217.

claims, "explains how *one's* reasons can be *my* reasons. For Heidegger, conscience is not itself a kind of private reason but an ontological condition for distinguishing between external and internal reasons."[16] While I am inclined to agree with Crowell's claim that in resoluteness, *Dasein* takes responsibility for the projection of its being into the future, and thus is concerned with the normativity of norms, I am skeptical that we can regard the sense of responsibility that it connotes as 'rational' in any way besides a loose justificatory sense of the term. On my reading, the ontological priority of the structure of resoluteness to reason highlights how human action is determined by an ever-changing historical situation that claims us even prior to our adherence to normative laws. "Dasein's freedom," as Mark Tanzer writes, "is not voluntaristic, but is self-restrictive … [it] possesses both active and passive aspects."[17] To highlight this passive dimension, the second chapter shows that when understood in light of Heidegger's notions of historicity, fate, and destiny, what determines resoluteness is not primarily an abstract law to which one submits, but rather the historical situation of *Dasein*.

In summary, the first part of the dissertation shows that Heidegger's interpretation of *Dasein* understands the constitution of the self according to two modes. The authentic self is formally indicated by its fallenness into the public world, which typically avoids self-responsibility since it does not distinguish itself from the others. Through resoluteness, the authentic self becomes responsible for itself by taking a stand on its existence and determining its ownmost possibilities. By situating resoluteness within the problematic of fundamental

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[16] Steven Galt Crowell, "Conscience and Reason: Heidegger and the Grounds of Intentionality," in *Transcendental Heidegger*, ed. Steven Galt Crowell and J. E. Malpas (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2007), 53. Nikolas Kompridis similarly suggests that Heidegger's notion of disclosure "provides the impetus and the basis for an enlargement of the meaning of reason ... in the direction of transformation, illuminating reason's capacity both to transform our practices and our sensibility, and, in turn, to be transformed by them." See Nikolas Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure : Critical Theory between Past and Future* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 38.

[17] Mark Basil Tanzer, *Heidegger : Decisionism and Quietism* (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2002), 111.

ontology, I will claim that resoluteness is not merely self-assertion, but rather explains how the self is both *delivered over to* and *responsible* for its historical situation. Having developed the fundamental ontological interpretation of *Dasein* in this way, I proceed by considering how, from this foundation, Marcuse and Arendt found this historical conception of action to be the origin of social and political life and consider the extent to which Heidegger's conception of resoluteness supports their conclusion.

II

Marcuse and Arendt's conceptions of action not only make it apparent how little the interpretation of resoluteness as voluntaristic decisionism fits with Heidegger's fundamental ontological approach, they also sustain significant critiques of it.[18] Neither Marcuse nor Arendt should be regarded as disciples who have unreservedly embraced Heidegger's thought; both have challenged what they take to be his failure in *Being and Time* to seriously address the meaning of human action in history. The second part of the dissertation examines the extent to which the notion of history underlying Heidegger's resoluteness should be understood in a material sense, as Marcuse's early work suggests. Turning to Arendt's analysis of the relation between action and power shows how resoluteness could respond to Marcuse's objection that it must adopt a materialist conception of history. This part explores how the notion of resoluteness in Heidegger's fundamental ontology provided a foundation for social and political thought in three chapters, which show how Heidegger's notion of resoluteness was appropriated by both

[18] Here I take issue with Wolin's claim that Marcuse and Arendt "have yet to disentangle the intellectual threads that precipitated his Nazi involvement." See Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Children : Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 19-20. The second part of the dissertation shows that Marcuse and Arendt develop (rather than abandon) Heidegger's notion of resolute action in *Being and Time,* but also pose significant challenges to it.

Marcuse's attempt to unite the phenomenological analysis of Dasein with a materialist conception of history (Chapter Three) and Arendt's conception of natality (Chapter Four). The fifth chapter returns to the analysis of resoluteness in the first part of the dissertation in order to critically examine Marcuse and Arendt from the perspective of Heidegger's conception of the political in *Being and Time*.

The third chapter shows that although Marcuse's early reception of *Being and Time* was relatively uncritical, his attempt to unite the analytic of *Dasein* with a philosophical Marxism concerned with radical action, significantly challenged the conception of history at the basis of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness. According to Marcuse, Heidegger had failed to understand history materialistically, and his analysis of resoluteness, therefore, is blind to the economic power structures that produce the crisis in the average everyday existence of *Dasein*. The 'fallen' mode of disclosure that Heidegger had said to be characteristic of the average everyday existence of *Dasein*, for Marcuse only describes the false conditions of life within a historically contingent mode of production, namely, advanced capitalist society. Marcuse insists that the resolute act is "not just a 'modification' of existence as it has been—it is a shaping anew of all spheres of public life."[19] Marcuse regards this revolutionary act of *Dasein* as the meaning of philosophy, which he calls "the making visible of truth."[20] This chapter presents Marcuse's early attempt to reinvigorate an orthodox Marxism that had predominantly neglected the unity between theory and practice in Marxian theory by promoting a definition of concrete action as

[19] Marcuse, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 16.

[20] ———, "On Concrete Philosophy," 34.

revolutionary praxis.[21] I consider the extent to which Heidegger's existentialism can be united with Marcuse's Marxism, and as he claims, "must allow the concrete historical situation, its concrete 'material content,' to work its way into the analysis."[22] Marcuse's later critique of fundamental ontology as a "bad abstraction" is anticipated by this emphasis he placed on a materialist understanding of history.[23] I argue that this charge is disingenuous, since Marcuse is inconsistent on this point, and that resoluteness leads to an understanding of radical action as an action of a whole community. Accordingly, the material conditions of society are transcended in the moment of resoluteness and are not as essential to the radical act as Marcuse claims.

Chapter Four explores how Arendt's notion of natality rejects the materialist conception of the role of action in history, and shows how the perspective of fundamental ontology might understand the relation between power and action without adopting a materialist perspective. Against Heidegger's emphasis on the anticipation of death, Arendt holds that much more than being concerned with the end of life, action is rather the possibility of being a new beginning. Natality grounds this distinctly human capacity for action, which in her view, is the foundation of political life. "The organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together," she explains, is the proper "space" of the *polis*.[24] As such, the *polis* is not this or that city-state, but a potentiality that may be actualized in the power of human beings to act in concert. This power that holds together the public realm is not realized in isolated anticipation of one's death,

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[21] Douglas Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 58. Kellner observes, "Marcuse believed that Marxism was solidifying into a rigid orthodoxy, dogmatically committed to metaphysical materialism and economic reductionism ... Marxists who stress laws of history devalue human practice and the significance of human action as revolutionary praxis."

[22] Marcuse, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 20.

[23] ———, "Postscript: My Disillusionment with Heidegger," 176.

[24] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 198.

but only through cooperative action together with others. Because power is the ability of people to act in concert, in Arendt's view, it is "to an astonishing degree independent of material factors, either of numbers or means."[25] Action thus reveals, or discloses 'who' a people takes themselves to be even when it strives to achieve "an altogether worldly, material object."[26] This chapter shows how Heidegger's notion of resoluteness could respond to the demand to incorporate a materialist perspective of history by focusing, as Arendt does, on how an agent is disclosed in action. In addition, I explore where Arendt departs from the perspective Heidegger offered in *Being and Time*, primarily in her communicative conception of power. Here I find that Arendt's notion of plurality improves upon Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* as a uniform agent, leading to a more communicative conception of intersubjectivity as the basis for political action.

The fifth chapter concludes the dissertation by summarizing my results with respect to Heidegger's conception of the political and pointing towards possible areas for future research. I argue that Heidegger's contribution to thinking about the political should not be reduced to his involvement with National Socialism.

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[25] Ibid., 200.

[26] Ibid., 183.

PART ONE:

RESOLUTENESS IN *BEING AND TIME*

Heidegger's conception of resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*) in *Being and Time* stands at the center of both progressive and conservative receptions of his political thought. This concern with the specific direction a *polis* should take, however, is founded on a more basic question that progressive and conservative views already presuppose, i.e., what is the political? Presenting resoluteness as a mode of disclosure reveals that resoluteness is not a phenomenon of the individual or will, but rather a condition for the possibility of the political.

In Part One, I provide a close reading of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness and the significance of resoluteness as a political concept. Heidegger views resoluteness as a distinctive way in which *Dasein* embraces its relation to the world, itself, and others, and encounters its own possibilities of existence. Resoluteness is a "moment of vision" in which *Dasein* owns its existence and takes a stand on its existence as a whole. The primary issue for Heidegger's ontological investigation is not the specific decision one makes in resoluteness, but rather the existential conditions that make possible and shape *Dasein*'s decisions about its being as such. That is, Heidegger's conception of resoluteness accounts for its *a priori* basis—the conditions for the possibility of taking any stand on existence.

Heidegger formulates the integral relation between resoluteness and disclosedness when he says, "Resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*) is a distinctive mode of Dasein's disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*)" (SZ 297/343). Accordingly, resoluteness must be articulated according to the

(entire) basic structure of disclosure. Resoluteness is a distinctive way of: (a) being attuned to the world, (b) projecting oneself within an understanding of the world, and (c) discoursing about the meaningfulness of being. In order to understand the meaning of resoluteness in *Being and Time*, then, *Dasein* must be interpreted as the equiprimordial unity of attunement, understanding and discourse, which together account for *Dasein*'s opening up to the meaningfulness of the world as a whole and projection of itself as a possibility within that world. These moments of disclosure are important for understanding the political because only an entity that is constituted so as to disclose its world in this way can be political. Our task is to understand the basic structure of disclosure so that the form of community that "leaps ahead" of *Dasein* and liberates its possibilities in the mode of resoluteness can be distinguished from the average, everyday mode of disclosedness in which *Dasein* is dominated by the anonymous and indistinct *das Man* (the they, one, or anyone), a form which Heidegger calls publicness (*die Öffentlichkeit*).

In Chapter One, I argue that the focus on Heidegger's conception of everydayness in Anglo-American philosophy (e.g., by pragmatists like Hubert Dreyfus and Richard Rorty) ignores the central importance of resoluteness for his conception of world disclosure. For Heidegger, action is only purposive activity in an inauthentic sense and cannot be its own foundation because it takes place within an already established world of significance. Resoluteness calls attention to the foundational moment of that world in the political. Through the lens of resoluteness, in Chapter Two, I argue that the political is the foundational moment of a community and only when it has no strategic purpose can it be free. In contrast to mainstream interpretations of *Being and Time* that read resoluteness as an ethical concept (i.e., self-individuation), I uncover the political dimensions of resoluteness by developing Heidegger's

notion of community as the authentic counter-concept to the inauthentic public mode of disclosure.

In Part Two I argue that resoluteness formed the basis for Heidegger's students Herbert Marcuse's and Hannah Arendt's rethinking of the meaning of human action. After presenting Heidegger's notion of resoluteness as a mode of disclosure, in Chapters Three and Four I will evaluate Marcuse's and Arendt's conceptions of action to show that they view action as world-constitutive rather than merely instrumental, which I claim derive from Heidegger's conception of resoluteness.

CHAPTER ONE

EVERYDAYNESS AND THE PUBLIC

The pragmatists lay claim to the single-most influential interpretation of Heidegger's thought in Anglo-American philosophy. Hubert Dreyfus[1] and Richard Rorty[2], among others, hold that Heidegger's conception of understanding implies a pragmatic theory of truth according to which practical, purposive activity constitutes the meaningfulness of entities in the world. This interpretation receives its strongest formulation and defense in *Heidegger's Pragmatism,* in which Mark Okrent argues that the central insight of Heidegger's conception of disclosure lies in the logical priority it gives to practical over cognitive understanding, which Okrent terms the "priority of the practical."[3] Okrent's reading of Heidegger's conception of understanding in *Being and Time* is in some respects illuminating, but he fails to grasp Heidegger's modification of the concept in Division II, which emphasizes the essential finitude of *Dasein*'s understanding in the projection of its being into the future. Dreyfus similarly overlooks Division II, and his fascination with the master craftsmen's handiness with equipment misses the point of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness. The image of resoluteness should not be Larry Bird's skill on

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[1] See Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. Dreyfus claims that the analysis of resoluteness was "abandoned by Heidegger himself." Accordingly, his commentary is limited to the articulation of *Dasein* in the mode of fallenness and rejects the "existentialist" themes he claims occupy Division II, like "anxiety, death, guilt, and resoluteness" (vii).

[2] Richard Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others*, Philosophical Papers (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[3] Mark Okrent, *Heidegger's Pragmatism : Understanding, Being, and the Critique of Metaphysics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 131.

the basketball court, but rather the precarious situation of a rebel on the eve of the revolution, uncertain whether her actions will succeed or fail.

By elucidating Heidegger's basic conception of disclosure, it will be found, against the pragmatic reading, that the mode of understanding in resoluteness is not a means to the end of any specific goal, and a resolute actor cannot grasp what will come of its action. To see how the resolute mode of disclosure is not a form of purposive activity, but the basis of Heidegger's conception of political unity, it is first necessary to understand Heidegger's thesis that *Dasein*'s disclosure of the world is the ground of the ontological conception of truth. By describing all essential moments of disclosure and explaining how these are unified in *Dasein*, I characterize the average everyday mode that resoluteness modifies.

Disclosure: *Dasein* and the Other

Heidegger holds that the disclosure of the world is never an isolated occurrence for an individual subject, either in the mode of average everydayness or resoluteness. In chapter IV (¶25-27) of *Being and Time,* he claims that being-with (*Mitsein*) and *Dasein*-with (*Mitdasein*) are co-essential to the disclosure of world. This is a crucial point for this study of resoluteness because as a distinctive mode of disclosure, resoluteness implicates all moments of disclosure. Accordingly, resoluteness must be understood as a unique way in which *Dasein* is determined in being-with the other, apart from the average, everyday mode that Heidegger calls *das Man* (They). Heidegger refers to this as the "historizing (*Geschehen*) of the community (*Gemeinschaft*)," which projects a common destiny (*Geschick*) that guides in advance the individual's freedom in its resolution for a particular fate (SZ 384-5/436-7). It will be important

for my conception of resoluteness to stress that the counter-concept to *das Man* is *not* the isolated, individual self. Rather, resoluteness discloses *Dasein*'s fate as contained within the destiny of a community. Hence, for Heidegger, the community precedes the self and provides the basis upon which any differentiation is possible; the self is a mode of community.[4] Before community can be grasped as the authentic form of being-with, however, I need to establish the everyday form of being-with, which Heidegger calls publicness (*Öffentlichkeit*).

In the epigraph to *Being and Time,* Heidegger identifies his overarching task as "to work out the question of the meaning (*Sinn*) of Being and to do so concretely" (SZ 1/19). This question calls for an analysis of that entity for whom being appears, which Heidegger calls *Dasein*: "that entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being" (SZ 7/27). *Dasein* is the fundamental entity to be analyzed because the openness or meaningfulness of being is grounded in its disclosure of the world. Two important consequences follow from this. First, *Dasein* is essentially immersed in a world of its concern and thus, never a world-less subject. Accordingly, the meaning of being can only be found in *Dasein*'s disclosure of the world, not above or beyond the world. All beings that show up for *Dasein,* then, must be situated within this context—the sphere of *Dasein*'s concern. Second, as the entity who discloses the world, *Dasein* is ontologically unique—it alone is opened up to the meaning of being. *Dasein* is not fixed in its existence as other entities in the world are. Unlike plants, animals, and inanimate objects of nature whose existence can be understood categorically —as present-at-hand things—*Dasein* confronts its existence as a question. This difference limits the scope of possible meaning to those beings that show up within the disclosure of the world to

[4] For a fascinating etymology of the Latin "*communitas*," see Esposito, *Communitas : The Origin and Destiny of Community*.

Dasein and marks *Dasein* as the proper entity to be analyzed in response to the question of the meaning of being.

Because it is not decided in advance, *Dasein*'s being "is an *issue* for it" (SZ 12/32). For example, an acorn has already been decided to become an oak tree. But in each moment of its existence, *Dasein* is opened up to an infinite number of possibilities with which it is essentially concerned. No such concern can be found in other natural entities whose being has been decided in advance. For this reason, Heidegger designates the meaning of *Dasein* as care:

> The formally existential totality of Dasein's ontological structural whole must therefore be grasped in the following structure: the Being of Dasein means ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world). This Being fills in the signification of the term "care" [*Sorge*], which is used in a purely ontologico-existential manner. (SZ 192/237)

Heidegger's formulation of the structural whole intended in the designation of *Dasein* as care anticipates the basic structure of disclosure, which will be elaborated in the following sections on attunement, understanding, and discourse. As concerned with its possibilities for being, *Dasein* exists ahead of itself and the expectation of these possibilities shape the way in which it encounters the entities in the world. In other words, *Dasein* always has some *understanding* of itself, and it is from this understanding that the world has significance to *Dasein*. I noted above that as a being-in-the-world, the meaningfulness of being is not to be found above or beyond the world. The possibilities with which *Dasein* is concerned must come from the world in which it has already existed, that is, the past. In addition to understanding, then, *Dasein*'s designation as care entails an *attunement* to the way in which *Dasein* has been. Finally, the extent to which *Dasein* is intelligible in its being-alongside the entities it encounters in the world is expressed in *discourse*, which is the articulation of the meaningfulness of being-in-the-world.

The structure of care must be taken as a totality; hence, *Dasein* is never ahead-of-itself without already-being-in-the-world. For Heidegger, the structure of care underlies not only the possibility of theorizing about the world, but also—and this will be important for considering the pragmatist account of understanding in the next section—the various ways in which we engage with the world in practical activity:

> Care, as a primordial structural totality, lies 'before' ["vor"] every factical 'attitude' and 'situation' of Dasein, and it does so existentially *a priori*; this means that it always lies *in* them. So this phenomenon by no means expresses a priority of the 'practical' attitude over the theoretical. When we ascertain something present-at-hand by merely beholding it, this activity has the character of care just as much as does a 'political action' or taking a rest and enjoying oneself. 'Theory' and 'practice' are possibilities of Being for an entity whose Being must be defined as "care." (SZ 193/238)

Heidegger suggests here that because care is the foundation of being-in-the-world, even political action can be grasped as a form of care. We can understand both practical, purposive activity and theorizing as forms of care. But this should not be taken to mean that *Dasein*'s care for its existence is purely a form of practice. *Dasein*'s care for its existence is the basis upon which being can have significance. It is only from out of this meaningfulness, which must be taken as a condition of purposive activity, theory, and political action that *Dasein* can take up practical relations towards the world.

While *Dasein* is the condition for the possibility of the meaningfulness of being, this should not be understood metaphysically, as if *Dasein* is the cause of the meaningfulness of being. For example, though light illuminates all entities in the world and makes them visible to us, it does not cause their existence. Similarly, *Dasein*'s disclosure of the world, its openness to being, should not be thought of as an ability that it possesses, even though its existential structure is constitutive of any encounter with a meaningful world. *Dasein,* then, is like the *lumen naturale* that allows the world to show up as meaningful, which Heidegger claims characterizes the

existential-ontological structure of *Dasein* (literally, "being-there") who "is in such a way as to be its 'there' " (SZ 133/171). Heidegger's insistence on the unity between *Dasein* and its 'there'—that is, the world that is disclosed for it—rejects the traditional metaphysical division between the subject and object of knowledge. As a being-in-the-World, *Dasein* encounters its being *there,* alongside a world it it is concerned with.

Heidegger argues that traditional definitions of the human being have neglected this difference by understanding the human as a rational animal or as made in the image of God. These definitions led investigations of the meaning of being astray by misunderstanding that entity for whom being appears as a present-at-hand thing endowed with some special quality, such as reason or divine origin. *Dasein* is not the sort of being that can be determined in terms of these kinds of categories. Even if *Dasein* might exist in these ways at special moments, Heidegger claims that these categories do not characterize the way it exists proximally and for the most part. For him, *Dasein* is distinguished from other entities because its being is an issue for it—its kind of being is care—and not because of some property or quality it possesses. Accordingly, *Dasein* cannot properly referred to as a "what" the way other entities can, because it is not a particular instance of a universal type. *Dasein* is not determined by fixed categories. For this reason it is to be addressed as a "who" and not a "what."

Because *Dasein* is to be understood as a "who" and not a particular instance of a universal type, translating it as "person" would be misleading. John Haugeland argues that "person" is a "count noun," which refers to a quantifiable category.[5] He likens *Dasein* to a disease (such as the flu) to distinguish *Dasein* as a non-quantifiable sort of being:

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[5] John Haugeland, "Heidegger on Being a Person," *Noûs* 16, no. 1 (1982): 19.

> A person is like an occurrence or "case" of *Dasein*—except that one doesn't catch it, let alone get over it. *Dasein* is not a species of which we are specimens, a type of which we are tokens, a feature which we have, a spirit which is in us, a condition which we are in, or even a whole of which we are parts (though that's closest). People are to *Dasein* as baseball games are to baseball, as utterances are to language, as works are to literature. *Dasein* is the overall phenomenon, consisting entirely of its individual "occurrances" and yet prerequisite for any of them being what it is. English lacks a convincing word for this relation; so I will settle for saying that a person is a *case* of *Dasein*.[6]

Even if we can count the number of persons who have a case of the flu, there are never "x" number of flu(s) in the world since no instance of the virus is ontologically unique. Otherwise, we would not identify the particular instance as the flu. Like the flu, *Dasein* is not a count-noun. While there could be "three hundred persons" in the crowded lecture hall or at the football game, the same cannot be said of *Dasein.* There are not a certain number of *Daseins* in a crowded lecture hall, because *Dasein* is not the sort of being that can be counted without regarding it as something that it is not. Heidegger argues, "Even to come across a number of 'subjects' becomes possible only if the Others … are treated merely as 'numerals' ["Nummer"]" (SZ 125/163). The relation of *Dasein* to the other is not the same as a relation between members of a common category, and explains in part why this ontologically distinct entity must be understood existentially and not categorically (SZ 118/155).

Habermas fails to make this distinction, which leads him to claim that *Dasein*'s relation to the other is constructed from out of individual itself, and as such, it regards the other as merely a projection of itself. He writes:

> In *Being and Time*, Heidegger does not construct intersubjectivity any differently than Husserl does in the *Cartesian Meditations*: Dasein as in each case mine constitutes being-with in the same way that the transcendental ego constitutes the intersubjectivity of the world shared by myself and others. Consequently, Heidegger cannot make his analysis of being-with fruitful for the question of how the world itself is constituted and maintained.[7]

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[6] Ibid., 20.

[7] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity : Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987), 149-150.

Habermas thinks *Dasein* as "in each case mine" means that it is ontologically prior to others. However, Heidegger inverts this priority: the historical community is a condition for there to be anything like mineness or authentic existence. Echoing Habermas' critique, with a more positive appraisal of the possibility that fundamental ontology can contribute to social theory, Theodore Schatzki maintains that the early Heidegger "analyzes not sociality *per se*, but instead the sociality of individual existence."[8] Indeed, if for Heidegger the other was merely taken to be a moment of an individual *Dasein*, this would fail to do justice to the social constitution and maintenance of the world. But as I have maintained with Haugeland above, Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* in the mode of everydayness should not be seen as an account of individual *Dasein,* as *Dasein*'s relation to the other must be distinguished from the kind of relation that members of a category share. The individual "person" must be taken as a case of *Dasein* in the same way that a baseball game is an instance of baseball.[9]

Against Haugeland, Dreyfus claims, "Dasein designates exclusively entities like us, that is, individual persons."[10] Dreyfus suggests that 'human being' is an even better translation for *Dasein*, since it refers to "a way of being that is characteristic of all people or to a specific person —a human being."[11] This translation has the advantage of accessibility, but by translating *Dasein* as 'person' or 'human being', Dreyfus takes the human way of being as equivalent to the sum of individual humans. Reading *Dasein* as referring to the whole of which many particular *Daseins* are a part is misleading because *Dasein* is not reducible to the sum of its parts. What Heidegger

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[8] Theodore R. Schatzki, "Early Heidegger on Sociality," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 245.

[9] Haugeland, "Heidegger on Being a Person," 20.

[10] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, 14.

[11] Ibid.

means by *Dasein* should rather be thought as that in virtue of which any individual *Dasein* is able to be what it is. Haugeland nicely captures this with his example of the relation between individual utterances and language, or works and literature.

Haugeland's conception of *Dasein* takes seriously Heidegger's insistence that the disclosure of the world does not occur for an isolated 'I' and that *Dasein* can only be a self as a mode of its being-with-others. Just as *Dasein* is never a bare subject without its world, neither is its world isolated from the other. This point will be important in Chapter Two's consideration of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness as a mode of disclosure. In the everyday mode of disclosure, however, the other is encountered within the context of a world in which it is, for the most part, intelligible to us in some way. For Heidegger, this otherness is not a mental property posited through a subjective act of judgment: "The Others who are thus 'encountered' in a ready-to-hand, environmental context of equipment, are not somehow added on in thought to some Thing which is proximally just present-at-hand; such 'Things' are encountered from out of the world in which they are ready-to-hand for Others—a world which is always mine too in advance" (SZ 118/154). *Dasein* is not related to the other because they share some common property, such as a soul or mind, but rather in virtue of the world that holds them in common. being-with, therefore, does not simply mean that *Dasein* is a being-in-the-world and that others are there as well. In its environment, *Dasein* encounters entities that are distinct from both present-at-hand and ready-to-hand entities like equipment because they are not things to be used, like a coffee mug or piece of clay. *Dasein* discloses the other as another *Dasein,* that is, as *Dasein*-with. Being-with is the basis of *Dasein*'s relation *with* the other as an other *Dasein*.

Here, Heidegger makes a crucial distinction between the possible forms of caring for the other, which maps onto the difference between the inauthentic form of community, the public, and the community proper (*Gemeinschaft*). Habermas points to criticisms of this distinction in *Being and Time,* claiming that Heidegger misses the dimension of unconditionality, socialization, intersubjectivity and shared norms that would have enabled him to be critical of Fascism.[12] The distinction between community and public might appear to be anti-democratic, for it seems to scorn the sphere of public discourse in which a plurality of truth claims are raised, debated, challenged and everyone has an equal say. That Heidegger's conception of community is a pre-ethical, pre-legal form of *Dasein* does not make it blind to plurality. Rather than opposing democracy, Heidegger's conception of community is based on a relation to the other that is liberatory instead of oppressive. He argues that care for the other can take at at least two forms, namely, leaping in (*einspringen*) or leaping ahead (*vorausspringt*) (SZ 122/158). The basic difference between these forms might be captured in the proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." In leaping in for the other, *Dasein* "feeds" the other for a day, stepping in for the other's concern for its own existence. *Dasein* unburdens the other of her immediate need and makes her dependent on *Dasein.* Here *Dasein* commands the other by substituting itself for the other's care for its own existence. Heidegger describes the public form of *Dasein*'s everyday existence as a form of subjection to an indefinite other, namely, *das Man* (the they, one, or anyone). On the other hand, *Dasein* can relate to the other in the form of leaping ahead, in which *Dasein* frees the other in its care for her own existence, as in teaching the other to fish. In leaping ahead, *Dasein* addresses

[12] Jürgen Habermas, "Work and *Weltanschauung*: The Heidegger Controvery from a German Perspective," *Critical Inquiry*, no. 15 (1989): 439.

the other's need by freeing her for her care. *Dasein* recognizes the other in her capacity to decide her own existence, and the other is able to take this decision up as a project for herself. Accordingly, the public form of co-existence as *das Man* can be juxtaposed with the community, which should be conceived as a relation to the other that is not imposed, but which the other takes upon herself as a task.

It is important to note here that *Dasein* does not gain its authenticity by fencing itself off from the other. The opposite of *das Man* as the everyday form of *Dasein* is not a self-sufficient, isolated individual; it is instead the community. Resoluteness is not the negation of *Dasein*'s being-with, but a transformed relation to the other that takes the form of leaping ahead. This transformed relation is a condition for the political insofar as a *polis* is conceived as a unity that members are not simply subject to, but can take upon themselves as a project they regard as their own. Political unity can only be achieved as care for the other in a way that leaps ahead of their concern for their own existence. Unity that aims at domination instead of liberation is not political, but rather the negation of politicality. Accordingly, Arendt describes totalitarianism as "the most radical denial of freedom."[13]

That *Dasein*'s authentic form of existence should be seen as community, as opposed to the inauthentic form of the public, has been suggested by Graeme Nicholson and Jean-Luc Nancy. Nicholson argues that Heidegger's political misstep in support of National Socialism can be characterized by his identification of the commune with the nation, which can be seen in his coupling of the people (*Volk*) with the community (SZ 384/436). This identification is

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[13] Hannah Arendt, "On the Nature of Totalitarianism: An Essay in Understanding," in *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1994), 328. See also ———, "Understanding and Politics (the Difficulties of Understanding)," in *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1994).

strengthened in his 1933 rectoral address supporting the *Führer* as the bearer of the national will.[14] But as I will argue in the next chapter, the people (*Volk*) should be read here as a condition for the possibility of the nation, as the unity of a people is already presupposed by the idea of a nation. I agree with Nicholson that it would be a mistake to link the commune of *Being and Time* with the nation, as Heidegger does in 1933-35,[15] however, I think Heidegger avoids the association here by understanding the people as unified by their historical situation, which is a prior condition of any idea like national identity. The historical situation of human existence constitutes the unity of the commune. This was influential for both Marcuse and Arendt. Nancy has also pointed out the relation between *das Man* as the improper form of *Dasein* and the community or people as its proper form, arguing that Heidegger fails to explain how to achieve the movement from the improper to the proper form.[16] But the assumption that *Dasein* could once and for all overcome the improper form of being-with by instituting its proper form fails to appreciate the dynamism between everydayness and history, or the public and the commune. The everyday form of being-with, in which the public leaps in for *Dasein,* is not vanquished through a community's resoluteness for alternate possibilities of existence, even if everydayness takes on a new meaning in light of such moments.

In the everyday mode of disclosure, *Dasein* is not an individual self, for its being-in-the world is constituted in being-with others. According to Heidegger, *Dasein* itself is one of the others: "By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me—those over against whom the 'I'

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[14] Graeme Nicholson, "The Commune of *Being and Time*," *Dialogue* 10, no. 4 (1971): 725.

[15] For example, see Martin Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," in *The Heidegger Controversy : A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991). Also, ———, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 199.

[16] Jean-Luc Nancy, "The Being-with of Being-There," *Continental Philosophy Review* 41, no. 1 (2008): 9.

stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does *not* distinguish oneself —those among whom one is too" (SZ 118/154). For the most part, *Dasein* is not unique, but a part of *das Man*. We read the same books, form the same opinions, eat at the same restaurants, drive the same car as the other. So, although the other can be distinguished from *Dasein*, it is to be understood as one with whom *Dasein* concerns itself in everydayness.

Commentators frequently argue that Heidegger's account of *Dasein* as being-with fails to provide an adequate basis for social theory on the grounds that it cannot explain important differences that exist between individuals, like race, gender, and socio-economic status. For example, Marcuse remarks, "*Dasein* is for Heidegger a sociologically and even biologically 'neutral' category (sex differences don't exist!)."[17] I will return to Marcuse's critique of Heidegger in Chapter Three, but here I will suggest that any theory attempting to comprehend difference must have some conception of that which its different members hold in common despite diversity of sex, race, and class. Short of this unity, one cannot claim to theorize the whole to which they all belong. While significant differences exist between members of a society, premised on their status as parts of a whole, these differences must be articulated on the basis of that which they hold in common. Otherwise, it would not make much sense to call them different. Furthermore, given that for Heidegger the moment of the political does not arise when *das Man* leaps in for the other and determines its possibilities for existence, we should note that leaping ahead of the other entails the recognition of the other as another *Dasein*, and precisely not the elimination of difference that characterizes *das Man*.

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[17] Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview," 167.

Understanding

Having considered the importance of *Dasein* and its relation to the other for Heidegger's conception of disclosure, I now turn to the first of its three constitutive moments: understanding. As a mode of disclosure, resoluteness entails a specific mode of understanding. Above I established that Heidegger conceives understanding as a form of being ahead of oneself, or projecting one's future possibilities. Pragmatists argue that Heidegger views understanding as based on practical, purposive action, which Okrent terms "the priority of the practical,"[18] and William Blattner has more recently called "the primacy of practice."[19] Okrent's account of understanding in *Being and Time* has been enormously influential for the reception of Heidegger's thought in Anglo-American philosophy, particularly within the field of philosophy of mind. His analysis anticipates Dreyfus' interpretation of disclosure as "absorbed coping" with the world,[20] and Rorty's claim that the central pragmatist tenets follow from the fact that like Dewey, Heidegger wants to "de-intellectualize" understanding by showing that even the search for detached theoretical truth cannot be separated from the context of practice.[21] In this section, I argue that the prevailing pragmatist reading of Heidegger's conception of understanding as constituted by purposive activity misconstrues the problem of action that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness highlights. As I show in the next chapter, that for which *Dasein* is resolute—action in the proper sense—is not a goal that can be achieved, that is, it is not a means towards an end.

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[18] Okrent, *Heidegger's Pragmatism : Understanding, Being, and the Critique of Metaphysics*, 131.

[19] William Blattner, "Ontology, the a Priori, and the Primacy of Practice," in *Transcendental Heidegger*, ed. Steven Galt Crowell and J. E. Malpas (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007). See also ———, "The Primacy of Practice and Assertoric Truth: Dewey and Heidegger," in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, ed. Mark A. Wrathall and J. E. Malpas (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000).

[20] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. See especially Chapters 4 and 5.

[21] Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others*, 32.

Purposive activity is at best an improper sense of action that rests upon the everyday mode of understanding in which *Dasein* unreflectively makes sense of its world as *das Man* does. In this section, I turn to Okrent's reading of Heidegger's conception of understanding in order to show that the pragmatist account misunderstands Heidegger's conception of possibility as an end to be achieved, is limited to the improper or inauthentic mode of understanding, and narrowly focuses on the role of understanding in disclosure to the neglect of attunement, which is the focus of the next section.

Okrent attributes six claims to Heidegger's account of understanding in order to demonstrate that practical, goal-oriented action is the basis for cognitive understanding. To demonstrate that for Heidegger understanding is not purposive activity it is sufficient to focus on Okrent's first three claims, which aim to demonstrate the necessary relation between understanding and practical, purposive activity, which I argue distinguish it from the account of understanding in Heidegger's conception of disclosure. Okrent claims that Heidegger's account of understanding draws the following conclusions:

> (1) Understanding that something is such and such, or believing that some proposition is true, is impossible without understanding how to perform various actions or use various entities.
> (2) To understand how to do something, the one who understands must be capable of acting in order to reach an end. To act in order to reach an end, conversely, the being must understand how to do a range of things.
> (3) To act in order to reach an end is to act so as to reach some future possibility of oneself. To act in this way is what it means to have self-understanding. Therefore, self-understanding, acting purposively in order to realize ends, and understanding how to perform actions are always coextensive.[22]

Okrent offers such scant textual evidence for these claims that although he makes a strong case for the primacy of practice, it is difficult to see how they can be attributed to Heidegger. Nevertheless, Okrent claims that these conclusions follow from Heidegger's assertion that "to be

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[22] Okrent, *Heidegger's Pragmatism : Understanding, Being, and the Critique of Metaphysics*, 130.

a being that can understand things as tools and understand how to do things, that being must understand things and activities as 'in-order-to' and 'for-the-sake-of'."[23] To evaluate the textual basis of the primacy of practice thesis, I turn to Heidegger's description of the referential character of the world disclosed to *Dasein*.

Indeed, Heidegger's description of the environment closest to *Dasein* in its everydayness evokes practical activity. He compares it to the "work-world of the craftsman" (SZ 117/153). The craftsperson does not confront a collection of isolated things that are merely present, with no involvement in the work to be produced. Rather, for the craftsperson the totality of equipment in the workshop is understood as ready-to-hand for some purpose, which Heidegger calls its "in-order-to (*Um-zu*)" (SZ 68/98). For example, the potter's wheel, hands, and clay are all understood in their being as equipment in-order-to produce some work: a plate, vase, or mug. For the most part, the world that is disclosed for *Dasein* is similarly always already meaningful. *Dasein* does not encounter things that are present-at-hand and unintelligible in their being. Rather, the things *Dasein* encounters in its environment are generally understood in advance as ready-to-hand equipment. But Heidegger holds that *Dasein* is closest to the work the equipment is *for*, not the equipment as such. While the equipment is what first shows itself in Heidegger's analysis of world, it must only function properly and be unobtrusive to the work. It is relatively unimportant to the ontological determination of *Dasein* because "that with which we concern ourselves primarily is the work—that which is to be produced at the time … the work bears with it that referential totality within which the equipment is encountered" (SZ 69/99). The equipmental totality is united in its relation to the work to be produced. The potter's wheel,

[23] Ibid., 132.

hands, and clay are all ready-to-hand equipment in-order-to produce some work. But the work, in turn, refers to an additional entity that cannot be characterized as ready-to-hand equipment; an entity "for which, in its Being, that very Being is essentially an *issue*" (SZ 84/116-117). Whatever work is to be produced, according to Heidegger, must be for-the-sake-of *Dasein.*

Okrent uses this analysis of world to establish that for Heidegger, understanding is practical activity; arguing that such practical, purposive action directed towards ends is ontologically prior to cognition. Consider Okrent's first thesis above, which holds that to understand a lump of clay or a potter's wheel *as* a lump of clay or potter's wheel requires some understanding of how to use them. To be sure, the master potter will have a much different understanding of these entities than someone without any conception of making ceramics. But while this person may not understand the clay as something to sculpt into a mug, they may understand it as something else, for example: a projectile to sling at the wall, or the potter's wheel as a jungle gym on which to climb. For the pragmatist, our understanding of the entities in the world is oriented towards the various uses we ascribe to them; the actions we can perform with them.

According to Okrent's second and third theses, practical understanding, that is, understanding how to do something, depends upon being capable of acting in order to reach an end. Such end-oriented action must intend some future possibility of oneself, and according to Okrent, this is Heidegger's meaning of self-understanding. The master potter understands how to sculpt a mug to the extent that she is successful in using her hands, the clay, and wheel, etc. in order to create a mug. However, since we might imagine a machine producing the same mug with even more consistent success yet do not attribute practical understanding to the machine or

say that it is acting purposively, in Okrent's reading of Heidegger, mere production alone is not sufficient for practical understanding. Okrent holds that Heidegger's for-the-sake-of "is a formal constituent of purposive action."[24] That is, for the sculptor to act purposively, her action must intend some future possibility of herself and act in order to achieve that end: whether to drink from the mug, give it as a gift, or sell it for income. Okrent carefully notes that for Heidegger, the end towards which the action aims is not definite, but only a possible end, by which he means that her successful action intends that some state of being would result.

Here, Okrent attempts to show that Heidegger's conception of understanding centers on practical activity directed towards self-determined ends. His reading relies primarily on the ready-to-hand character of the entities that constitute the intelligibility of the world for *Dasein* in the average, everyday mode of disclosure. But in reading the future possibility upon which *Dasein* projects itself as an *end* intended by *Dasein*'s activity, Okrent misconstrues a key characteristic of understanding in Heidegger's account, i.e., its character as projection. According to Heidegger:

> Projecting has nothing to do with comporting oneself towards a plan that has been thought out, and in accordance with which Dasein arranges its Being. On the contrary, any Dasein has, as Dasein, already projected itself; and as long as it is, it is projecting. As long as it is, Dasein always has understood itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities. Furthermore, the character of understanding as projection is such that the understanding does not grasp thematically that upon which it projects—that is to say, possibilities. Grasping it in such a manner would take away from what is projected its very character as a possibility, and would reduce it to the given contents which we have in mind; whereas projection, in throwing, throws before itself the possibility as possibility, and lets it *be* as such. (SZ 145/185)

Here, Heidegger makes clear that the possibilities *Dasein* projects itself upon should not be taken as ends towards which its activity is a means. *Dasein* does not have a goal or end state at its disposal, which would detract from the projected possibility its very character as possibility;

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[24] Ibid., 141.

something that in being-ahead-of-itself *Dasein* is not yet, and can never fully become. For Heidegger, possibility is not a state that may or may not result from one's actions. His comparison of projection to throwing evokes the sort of directionality a ball is given when released from one's hands, but whose final destination cannot be precisely determined in advance. Hence, *Dasein*'s projection of itself onto possibilities should not be seen as end-oriented action. Heidegger's conception of understanding must be distinguished from what Okrent calls purposive action because in projecting itself upon possibilities, the end of *Dasein*'s actions are not given in advance.

Heidegger further highlights the indeterminacy of possibility in action in the everyday mode of disclosure, in which the understanding sustains an essential ambiguity. Above, I established that *Dasein* is not isolated in its disclosure of the world, as the world is co-constituted with the other. For *Dasein*'s understanding in average everydayness, this results in a kind of overdetermination of the possible ways of discovering the world, encountering the other, and relating to oneself.

> When, in our everyday Being-with-one-another, we encounter the sort of thing which is accessible to everyone, and about which anyone can say anything, it soon becomes impossible to decide what is disclosed in a genuine understanding, and what is not. This ambiguity [Zweideutigkeit] extends not only to the world, but just as much to Being-with-one-another as such, and even to Dasein's Being towards itself. (SZ 173/217)

Because *Dasein*'s world is a public world in the mode of everydayness, it is permeated by countless determinations of the other. This calls into question the possibility of reaching a decision about what is genuinely *there* for *Dasein,* and consequently, of having the ends towards which *Dasein* acts in its possession. The possibilities upon which *Dasein* may project itself are so multifarious that its understanding of the world, the other, and itself remains held open in ambiguity. In everydayness, *Dasein* does not decide what possibilities genuinely belong to it and

which do not, but rather holds itself open to the innumerable possibilities offered by the anonymous, indefinite other, *das Man.* This must be kept in mind when, in a manifestly pragmatist spirit, Dreyfus writes, "We are masters of our world, constantly effortlessly ready to do what is appropriate."[25] On the basis of ambiguity as the everyday manner in which *Dasein* understands its world, we can only be ever ready to do what is appropriate precisely because we are *not* the masters of our world. That is, because the understanding remains essentially undetermined in the everyday mode of disclosure, we are constantly receptive to the manifold possibilities that *Dasein* does not have at its own discretion.

On the basis of the everyday mode of disclosure, the intelligibility of the world for *Dasein* must be characterized by its openness to infinite possibilities of determination. This must be distinguished from end-oriented action, on the basis of which the pragmatist interprets understanding as practical activity. Heidegger underlines the insufficiency of this reading in a lecture course (1929-30) given two years after the publication of *Being and Time*:

> That which is so close and intelligible to us in our everyday dealings is actually and fundamentally remote and unintelligible to us. In and through this initial characterization of the phenomenon of world the task is to press on and point out the phenomenon of world as a problem. It never occurred to me, however, to try and claim or prove with this interpretation that the essence of man consists in the fact that he knows how to handle knives and forks or use the tram.[26]

The intelligibility of the world in average everydayness, Heidegger points out here, is not the conclusion of the analysis of disclosure. To see the sense in which the intelligibility of the world becomes a problem, I turn to his analysis of resoluteness in the next chapter. This move from Division I to Division II of *Being and Time* is one the pragmatist conception of the understanding as practical activity does not make, for it is limited to Heidegger's analysis of the significance

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[25] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, 103.

[26] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics : World, Finitude, Solitude*, Studies in Continental Thought (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 177.

structure that orients the everyday intelligibility of the world. Importantly, *Dasein* is not merely receptive to the significance relations that constitute the world. Rather, the world is disclosed for *Dasein* as a unified whole. This does not only mean that knives and forks can be grasped as equipment for eating a meal, but that such an activity is part of a further significance that determines all possible significance relations. This further significance is some future possibility or potentiality for being that *Dasein* has not yet become and that it projects for itself on the basis of its attunement to the world as a whole. The specific significance relations are understood as parts of a whole that ultimately point to *Dasein*'s potentiality as an entity whose existence matters for it. The way in which *Dasein*'s existence matters to it is given by its attunement, to which I turn in the next section.

At this point, I have shown that Heidegger's account of understanding does not regard the possibilities upon which *Dasein* projects itself as ends to be achieved, as Okrent maintains. I further developed this claim by considering that Heidegger characterizes the everyday mode of understanding as maintaining itself in ambiguity. Although Okrent's conception of understanding is limited to Heidegger's conception of understanding in everydayness, Okrent's conception of understanding as purposive action is unsuccessful at appreciating the sense in which *Dasein*'s relation to the world, the other, and itself is overdetermined and hence, not at *Dasein*'s disposal. Finally, it should be noted that in focusing on understanding, Okrent overlooks an essential dimension of Heidegger's conception of disclosure in failing to account for the role of attunement. According to Heidegger, the structure of disclosure must be taken as a "unitary primordial structure of Dasein's Being" (SZ 130/169). Hence, any understanding of the world must entail some attunement (SZ 143/182). Turning to attunement contributes to our

understanding of the structure of disclosure as a whole, allowing further characterization of the receptive dimension of Heidegger's conception of disclosure.

Attunement

Attunement is a central aspect of Heidegger's conception of disclosure that together with discourse, is necessarily implied in any understanding of the world. Attunement refers to the specific way in which *Dasein* finds itself as a thrown being-in-the-world, which one discovers in having a mood or type of attunement. It constitutes the meaningfulness of *Dasein*'s relation to itself, the world, and the other. Accordingly resoluteness has to be conceived as a specific way of being attuned to the world; in other words, resoluteness requires a certain mood or way of finding oneself in the world. This complicates the standard conception of disclosure in terms of purposive activity by insisting that *Dasein* must be *receptive* to the intelligibility of the world in which it acts. *Dasein* does not choose or create its attunement to the world; it cannot will itself to have a mood any more than one can decide to be fearful, anxious, optimistic, or struck by wonder. If resoluteness is a condition for the political that depends upon a specific form of attunement, it follows that the political is not chosen or willed, but rather arises when *Dasein* finds itself as being-in-the-world in a specific way. This section lays the basis for my claim that resoluteness is a condition of the political by considering the role of attunement in Heidegger's conception of disclosure. I argue that what Heidegger calls attunement should not be seen as a fleeting, private feeling in the mind of an individual subject, but as a form of being open to the intelligibility of the world as a whole. Since attunement determines, in advance, *Dasein*'s encounter with the other and discovery of entities in the world, the everyday mode of *Dasein* in

the form of *das Man* has its own way of being attuned that structures how entities in the world and the other matter for it.

Because Heidegger rejects psychological interpretations of moods, it is important to say more precisely what he means by attunement or being in a mood. On his account, a mood is not something inside our mind or body that merely colors our private experience of things from time to time. Rather, attunement refers to the way in which *Dasein* finds itself in its submission to a world it did not make for itself. Heidegger mentions three characteristics of attunement. First, as mentioned above, attunement follows from *Dasein*'s character as care in that it discloses *Dasein* as *already*-being-in-the-world. Heidegger refers to this as "thrownness" (SZ 135/174). As thrown into the world, *Dasein* does not choose to be born male or female, during the ancient or modern period, a citizen of this or that nation (or any nation at all). These countless facts of *Dasein*'s existence are not just properties adhering to an otherwise abstract humanity, but a facticity that *Dasein* takes over as a being-in-the-world. This does not mean that *Dasein* is explicitly aware of its facticity or the way its being-in-the-world is conditioned by it. As we will see below, moods for the most part turn *Dasein* away from the facticity of its existence and towards the world.

Two related characteristics of attunement follow from this, that attunements disclose being-in-the-world *as a whole,* and that this structure is a condition for discovering any entity in the world as mattering *for Dasein*. Tolstoy captures this phenomenon in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. Upon learning that the nagging discomfort that sent him to the doctor may be very serious, Ivan begins to despair. Going home from the doctor's office, the same city that previously to reinvigorated him, now seems different. Tolstoy writes:

> Everything in the streets seemed dismal to Ivan Ilyich. The cab drivers looked dismal, the houses looked dismal, the passersby, the shops—everything looked dismal. And in light of the doctor's obscure remarks, that pain—a dull nagging pain which never let up for a

> second—acquired a different, a more serious implication. Ivan Ilyich focused on it now with a new sense of distress.[27]

In this example, what is important is how Ivan's dismay at the doctor's news that his condition could be serious changes *everything* in the world he encounters. Although in a certain sense it is Ivan who has changed and not the world, in taking up the facticity of his existence, the mood turns him away from himself and discloses the world in a new light. Ivan does not first discover everything in the streets to be dismal and then conclude that he is in distress. Ivan finds the world *as a whole* to be distressing, which allows him to discover all entities in the world as dismal. To clarify, Heidegger's claim is not that from time to time in our lives, we might come under the spell of an attunement, as this example suggests. *Dasein* always has some attunement, so even the other's disinterest in Ivan's impending death is itself one way of being attuned. Whenever *Dasein* discovers entities or encounters the other it does so within the context of a world that has already been disclosed as a whole and to which it has been delivered over. Things can only matter for *Dasein* because it is receptive to the structure of the world as a whole.

This receptivity to intelligibility is not merely a private experience in the mind of an individual. Attunements allow us to discover something about the world. Fear informs me that some things in the world are fearful. As an entity whose existence is a being-with, the range of moods in which *Dasein* can find itself are not only possibilities of one's own existence, but can be shared with the other. Following Aristotle's account of affects in *Rhetoric*, Heidegger claims a public (*das Man*) shares a common mood to which the political speaker or orator appeals:[28]

> Publicness, as the kind of Being which belongs to the "they" (Cf. Section 27), not only has in general its own way of having a mood, but needs moods and 'makes' them for itself. It is into such a mood and out of such a mood that the orator speaks. He must understand the possibilities of moods in order to rouse them and guide them aright. (SZ 138-139/178)

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[27] Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Illyich*, trans. Lynn Solotaroff (New York: Bantam Dell, 1981), 76-77.

[28] Bernhard Radloff, "Heidegger and the Question of Rhetoric," *Existentia* 11 (2001).

Because *Dasein* is primarily not an individual, but part of *das Man,* the way in which it finds itself in the world, discloses that world as a whole, and discovers the intelligibility of things in that world is not merely private, but first and foremost shared with others. Accordingly, Heidegger's conception of the public must be understood as having shared attunements. For example, the American public shares a common fear of the prevalence of mass shootings in movie theaters and schools. Policy makers have proposed changes aimed at curbing this threat. They do not necessarily agree on what policy changes are required; some seek reform in mental health services while others aim to restrict gun ownership. Even though they point to different things as the threat, for example, the mentally ill or gun owners more generally, their appeal is based on the public's shared fear. Public appeals are made from an attunement to a world held in common as a public rather than as isolated individuals.

Heidegger argues that for the most part this public form of existence determines our attunement to the world. How the world matters to us in the everyday mode of disclosure has been decided for us by *das Man*:

> The dominance of the public way in which things have been interpreted has already been decisive even for the possibilities of having a mood—that is, for the basic way in which Dasein lets the world "matter" to it. The "they" prescribes one's state-of-mind, and determines what and how one 'sees'. (SZ 169-170/213)

In everydayness, then, *das Man* leaps in for *Dasein* and determines the intelligibility of the world for *Dasein.* For this reason, the pragmatist interpretation of *Being and Time* generally reads attunement as referring to *Dasein*'s sensitivity to implicit cultural norms. For instance, Dreyfus claims that Heidegger's account requires a distinction between three types of attunements: "a world type (cultural sensibility); a situation or current world type (mood); and the specific directedness mood makes possible (affect)."[29] While this approach can be helpful for illustrating

[29] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World : A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, 170.

that an attunement is not a private experience in one's mind, but a way in which the world matters for a public, it nevertheless fails to account for the possibility of fundamental moods in which the status of the world as a whole becomes questioned. Not all attunements can be understood as public dispositions. Some moods, such as anxiety, arise when the world cannot be given a definite meaning.

Heidegger's distinction between everyday and fundamental moods is crucial to what I call political moments, in which the intelligibility of the world is subject for decision and *Dasein* is called to take a stand on its existence. Everyday moods such as fear exhibit concern about a specific entity in the world. Fear emerges in the face of something within the world that threatens us. We fear the prevalence of mass shootings, the coming storm that threatening to disrupt our morning commute, or the legislation that challenges union-negotiated labor conditions. The object of everyday moods, such as fear, is something definite in the world that matters to us in worldly terms, in what Heidegger calls a "context of involvements" (SZ 140/179). If it was not apparent that legislation, for example, could have a detrimental impact on something definite in the world like one's labor conditions, it would not be an object of fear. So, for everyday moods like fear, the threat and the thing under threat, about which we are concerned, are obvious. While attunements disclose things that matter to us in terms of the world, fundamental moods like anxiety, on the other hand, place the very structure of the world into question. The next chapter will consider anxiety in more detail, but it is important to note here that unlike everyday moods, with anxiety, that which threatens us is not something specific that can be understood in terms of the world, but rather is something about the world as a whole. The world cannot offer any way to respond to the threat perceived in anxiety because in these cases, the very structure of the world

becomes questionable and public norms fail to adequately address what we find threatening. Fundamental moods force *Dasein* to confront *itself* and not the world as that which is threatening. Here *Dasein* is called to take over the whole of its existence and take a stand on what its world means.

We must bear in mind, however, that the antithesis of *das Man* as the public form of *Dasein* is not the isolated individual, but the community. Accordingly, in taking over the whole of its existence, which is always with the other, as seen above, *Dasein*'s relation to these others, too, must be taken over authentically. The next chapter will claim that the authenticity of *Dasein*'s relation to the other is a form of leaping ahead of the other. I will show that through *Dasein*'s attunement to the world as a whole, *Dasein*'s freedom is limited by time, that is, a historical age to which *Dasein* is receptive and allows entities and others to show up as mattering for it in some way. For the most part how these matter has been prescribed by *das Man* such that *Dasein* is unburdened of taking up an original relation to the world. Fundamental moods, on the other hand, call us beyond the everyday intelligibility of the world. These will become crucial for understanding resoluteness as a mode of disclosure in which the world becomes questionable and cannot be determined by *das Man* but must be taken over by *Dasein* itself.

Discourse

Heidegger's conception of discourse (*Rede*) makes evident the interrelation between attunement and understanding. It demonstrates that the disclosure of being-in-the-world to *Dasein* is fundamentally shared and does not happen inside the "mind" of an isolated individual. According to Heidegger, "Discourse is the Articulation of intelligibility" (SZ 161/203-204).

Above I established that intelligibility is based upon *Dasein*'s attunement to a world that matters for it. The intelligibility and future possibilities of the world as a whole are for the most part determined by the public form of *Dasein*, namely, *das Man*, which closes off the disclosure of Being-in-the-world. But discourse also harbors the possibility of opening up the world in a more primordial way to allow an authentic relation with the other to develop. In this section I develop Heidegger's distinction between "hearing" and "keeping silent" as two kinds of discourse to show their correspondence to the forms of caring for the other namely, leaping in and leaping ahead. Here it will become apparent that Heidegger makes room for an authentic relation to the other and conceives this possibility as a transformation in the everyday form of discourse.

According to Heidegger, "Discoursing or talking is the way in which we articulate 'significantly' the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world. Being-with belongs to Being-in-the-world, which in every case maintains itself in some definite way of concernful Being-with-one-another" (SZ 161/204). I noted above that Heidegger considers two extreme forms of concern for the other, namely, leaping in and leaping ahead. Accordingly, discourse can take at least two different forms which pertain to different forms of caring for the other. In hearing, or listening to the other, the other has leapt in for *Dasein*'s concern with its existence. The everyday form of discourse, which Heidegger calls "idle talk" exhibits this form. Here *das Man* prescribes how being-in-the-world matters for *Dasein* and inhibits a genuine understanding of the world. This is distinct from keeping silent as a form of discourse in which *Dasein* leaps ahead of the other.

To show the relation between hearing and leaping in, I first need to consider how Heidegger can take hearing to be constitutive of discourse and see its connection to attunement and understanding. This can be seen when considering that what *Dasein* hears are not noises or

sense-data that are determined to have some signification through a mental act such as judgement. Whatever *Dasein* hears is always already understood. *Dasein* hears that the radio is too loud, the microwave timer alerting us that dinner is ready, or the wind blowing through the trees. Similarly, in hearing the discourse of another, *Dasein* does not simply listen to the words the other speaks. In fact, *Dasein* can discourse with the other without actually speaking, as when close friends share an understanding and talking out loud is unnecessary. *Dasein* hears what the discourse is *about*, which is something in the world. When we hear the phrase, "We are the 99%," for example, we do not merely hear the words being expressed; these are meaningless by themselves, abstracted from the intelligibility of the world they aim to articulate. What is heard through these words is the unequal distribution of wealth in our world or our solidarity with others against the 1% who hold the majority of the wealth. Hearing makes the *world* intelligible in a specific way and is only possible for an entity whose kind of being is being-in-the-world. *Dasein*'s openness to the intelligibility of the world as articulated in significations is a prior condition of language, in which the totality of significations is put into words.

Furthermore, discourse allows the development of *Dasein*'s relation to the other. As the example above presumes, hearing the discourse of another makes it possible for a co-attunement (*Mitbefindlichkeit*) to be shared (SZ 162/205). Of course, one might not agree with another's articulation if they do not find the world to be intelligible in the same way. Some may hold that the unequal distribution of wealth is a necessary and even beneficial feature of a capitalist economy that makes innovation possible, or aspire to be one of the 1%. In these cases, the intelligibility of the world that is articulated in discourse is not any less shared because one rejects, defies, or ignores the other. Heidegger argues these are privative modes of hearing the

other (SZ 163/206-207). Hence, disagreement nevertheless depends upon the possibility of hearing the intelligibility of the world that is articulated in the discourse of another. These privative modes may prevent a co-attunement from being shared, but positive forms of hearing are possible in which the articulation of intelligibility is accepted or merely followed. In either case, what is shared or not shared is the view of the world that is articulated in discourse.

Heidegger calls the form of discourse in the everyday mode of disclosure "idle talk" (*Gerede*). This is characterized as a kind of hearing in which *Dasein* merely listens to the intelligibility of the world articulated by the indefinite other, *das Man*. In idle talk, the other leaps in for *Dasein* and determines how others and entities in the world matter for it, without bringing *Dasein* into an original relationship with its world such that it could decide this intelligibility for itself. That food should be bought and sold at a market or labor sold to capitalists, for example, is not up for decision in everydayness. For the most part, *Dasein* does not question the meaning of food or labor, it is simply intelligible as the public says it is intelligible—as the sort of thing to be bought and sold. Here, discourse has been uprooted from the original articulation of intelligibility in *Dasein*'s own appropriative disclosure of the world that forms the ground of discourse. Instead, as Heidegger explains, "Things are so because one says so" (SZ 168/212). Idle talk forecloses the disclosedness of being-in-the-world and places *Dasein* in subjugation to the world and others. Here a co-attunement is shared, but *not explicitly,* for explicit sharing of a co-attunement depends on *Dasein*'s appropriation of the world's intelligibility in a certain way and not merely its acquiescence to the intelligibility articulated by the other. What the world is and how it should be understood, is for the most part given to *Dasein* by *das Man* such that it requires no further consideration. The public form of

disclosedness is constituted by norms and standards in which *Dasein* listens to *das Man* and unburdens itself of deciding its own relation to its world. This is certainly necessary for the everyday cohesion of a public. However, it is the antithesis of the moment when the public disclosure of the world breaks down and is subjected to decision in resoluteness, which I argue is the basis of Heidegger's conception of the political in the next chapter.

Before turning to Heidegger's conception of the political, however, it is necessary to see how *Dasein* can cultivate an authentic relation to the other and be brought into an authentic disclosure of the world in silence. Heidegger takes silence to be a possibility of discourse, which I argue corresponds to caring for the other by leaping ahead. In leaping ahead of the other, *Dasein* frees the other to take over her own concern for the world, to appropriate an understanding of the world for herself. Caring for the other in this way is demonstrated in silence, which Heidegger describes in the following way:

> To be able to keep silent, Dasein must have something to say—that is, it must have at its disposal an authentic and rich disclosedness of itself. In that case one's reticence [Verschwiegenheit] makes something manifest, and does away with 'idle talk' ["Gerede"]. As a mode of discoursing, reticence Articulates the intelligibility of Dasein in so primordial of a manner that it gives rise to a potentiality-for-hearing which is genuine, and to a Being-with-one-another which is transparent. (SZ 165/208)

Silence is a mode of discourse because it is a holding back from saying anything—a stone cannot keep silent because it cannot have something to say. Silence arrests the discourse of *das Man* and allows that which the discourse is about to be made manifest as it is, rather than being closed off by the customary way of understanding it. The check that silence places on idle talk is necessary for an original appropriation of that which the discourse is about to be heard in a genuine manner. In this way, an explicitly shared co-attunement to the world can develop that can be taken over by both *Dasein* and the other.

Showing the difference between hearing and keeping silent as two possibilities of discourse that demonstrate the unity of attunement and understanding, allows making sense of resoluteness as a mode of disclosure. Heidegger describes the everyday form of discourse as idle talk, in which *das Man* leaps in for *Dasein* by determining the intelligibility of its world and absolving it of the need to appropriate the world for itself. This characterizes *Dasein*'s existence in the public form of disclosure. However, keeping silent allows the world to manifest itself more genuinely and makes it possible to be with the other in the form of leaping ahead. Here *Dasein* relates to the other *as an other* and discourse can have an authentic relation to the world that allows it to take on an original meaning that *Dasein* has chosen for itself. We should note, however, that such an authentic appropriation of the world is still beholden to public intelligibility. Heidegger stresses:

> This everyday way in which things have been interpreted is one into which Dasein has grown in the first instance, with never a possibility of extrication. In it, out of it, and against it, all genuine understanding, interpreting, and communicating, all re-discovering and appropriating anew, are performed. (SZ 169/213)

This emphasizes that the possibility of rediscovering the world in an original manner through silence is always a modification of the public form of disclosure. The original interpretation of the world that authentic discourse makes possible is a refinement or adaptation of public intelligibility that *Dasein* accepts as its own. In the next chapter, the communal form of *Dasein* will be an adaptation of the everyday, public mode of disclosure.

Conclusion

For the most part, the intelligibility of the world and the possibilities for existence have been taken over by *das Man.* The everyday concern for the other can therefore be seen as a form

of leaping in, which characterizes the public form of *Dasein*'s existence as inauthentic to the extent that it is an understanding of the world imposed upon the other, and which impedes *Dasein*'s own appropriation of the world. However, leaping ahead is another possibility of concern for the other that allows *Dasein* to take over its existence, which enables the intelligibility of the world to be discovered anew. This authentic ground of the inauthentic public form of *Dasein*'s existence can be characterized as the community, which can be provisionally characterized as an an affiliation with the other that is owned, and not imposed, by its members for the facilitation of their mutual existence. To see how *Dasein* can take up an authentic concern for the other and thereby project itself upon its ownmost possibilities of existence, which I have referred to as a condition for the possibility of the political, it will be necessary to follow Heidegger's analysis to Division II of *Being and Time,* where resoluteness is established as a mode of disclosure differentiated from the average, everyday public mode of disclosure as elaborated in Division I.

CHAPTER TWO

RESOLUTENESS AS MODE OF DISCLOSURE

> "*Authentic Being-one's-Self* 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 existentiale*" (SZ130/168).
>
> "… *authentic* existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon" (SZ 179/224)

Chapter One established that in the average everyday mode of disclosure, *Dasein* is absorbed by the world with which it is concerned. In this mode, the intelligibility of the world and the possibilities for existence have already been established by the anonymous, undifferentiated subject of everydayness, *das Man*. The articulation of *Dasein* as a phenomenon, as it is *in itself*, which was the goal of the fundamental ontological investigation thus seems to have come to an impasse. On the basis of Heidegger's analysis in Division I, *Dasein* is grasped as a Being-in-the-world only in the abstract, public mode of existence without reaching the concrete disclosure of *Dasein* as an entity in itself. The everyday, public mode of disclosure prescribes the intelligibility of *Dasein*'s world and absolves *Dasein* of the need to take a stand on its own existence. Heidegger's analysis in Division II establishes the being of *Dasein,* as it is in itself, by determining the conditions under which the authentic self is disclosed in resoluteness. The resolute mode of disclosure opens *Dasein* to itself as the genuine basis of the significance structure of the world. This mode enables *Dasein* to be responsible for its own existence through the decision to project its existence on possibilities of existence *Dasein* has chosen for itself.

Resoluteness is often read as an ethical concept, but in this chapter, I argue that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness has profound implications for thinking about the meaning of the political. I view resoluteness as constituted by the authenticity of an individual *Dasein*'s relation to itself. Resoluteness should be seen as a political concept that grounds the unity of a people (*Volk*) in a pre-legal and pre-ethical shared tradition. Whereas I view ethical action to be concerned with one's responsibility for one's own existence—often times, but not necessarily—in relation to the other, the purview of political action is much wider. The difference is between protesting the war because it conflicts with one's personal beliefs, and uniting with others to act for the sake of a world in which armed struggle is not a daily reality. Unlike ethical action, political action does not only seek to transform one's self, but the existence of others as well, by transforming the world or framework under which existence is meaningful. The political actor is aware of her own future possibilities as prefigured in a community's understanding of possible forms of existence. Consequently, the very possibility of her own self-transformation requires a transformation in the full structure of being-in-the-world.

To show Heidegger's notion of resoluteness as the site of the political that makes possible such a transformation in the form of *Dasein* as a whole, I proceed by distinguishing resoluteness as a form of disclosure. The previous chapter explained the disclosure of the world as constituted by attunement, understanding, and discourse. Accordingly, as a mode of disclosure, resoluteness is characterized by anxiety (attunement), being-towards-death (understanding) and the call of conscience (discourse). Focusing on the political significance of these aspects, in this chapter, I argue resoluteness offers a compelling vision of political action as non-instrumental action that must be distinguished from action that has a known and expected goal.

Being-towards-death as Resolute Understanding

Heidegger's interpretation of *Dasein* in the first division shows that for the most part, *Dasein*'s possibilities are indistinguishable from those of everyone else. But on the basis of the interpretation of *Dasein* in terms of care, in which the significance of the world is understood through *Dasein*'s existing for the sake of some possibility of its existence that it has not yet become, the question remains whether Heidegger's analysis is adequate to describe the whole of *Dasein*. In other words, does *Dasein* ever become what it is? The question of whether any of the various ways for *Dasein* to be are uniquely its own, that is, its ownmost possibilities, motivates the second division. The notion of the self can have saliency only so long as *Dasein*'s possibilities for existence are its own, authentic possibilities. For Heidegger, *Dasein* becomes what it is in death; the whole of *Dasein* is given only in death. It is of utmost importance to specify the meaning of death for *Dasein*, given that the fundamental ontological sense of death regards it in neither the biological sense of the end of life, nor as an outstanding event in the world, but as a possibility—the possibility of no longer being-possible—towards which *Dasein* exists.

Given this apparent contradiction, much of the scholarship on Heidegger's conception of death has focused on its precise meaning. William Blattner offers a comprehensive account and solution of the problem that arises when death is conceived as both a possibility of *Dasein* and a possibility in which *Dasein* is unable to be.[1] Matthew Burch maintains that Heidegger's conception of death offers an account of deep deliberation that overcomes the "decisionism

[1] William Blattner, "The Concept of Death in *Being and Time*," *Man and World* 27 (1994).

critique" of his notion of resoluteness.[2] Unlike practical reflection in which I consider what actions may be required of me given some specific identity or purpose, in my anticipation of death this identity fails to claim me and I am forced to choose myself. In light of Heidegger's insistence that *Dasein* is isolated in death because the other cannot absolve *Dasein* of this possibility, it is unsurprising that scholarship should focus on death's relation to self-identity and the possibility of authentic existence. Most significant in Heidegger's conception of death, however, is the unique sense of temporality that emerges in being-towards-death and is common to all *Dasein* as *Dasein*. In grasping death as a phenomenon of *Dasein*, the issue is not *Dasein*'s self over and against all others, but how any *Dasein* can be in such a way that it can take up a relation to itself, bringing itself into an authentic relation with others *as itself*. The key issue for Heidegger is the way existence becomes intelligible to us beyond the instrumental, means-end significance of everydayness in being-towards-death.

In this section, I argue that as the form of understanding in resoluteness, being-towards-death discloses the finitude of *Dasein*'s ownmost possibilities. Such a disclosure forces *Dasein* to reject the notion of time as an infinite space in which action occurs. The finitude of temporality is crucial for understanding the meaning of resoluteness. That upon which *Dasein* resolves is only abandoned in death; accordingly that for which Dasein is resolute is never really achieved. Thus, resoluteness can have no significance in terms of the instrumental relations that characterize the everyday disclosure of the world. This conclusion is of paramount importance for thinking about the political, because it implies that the political is not a task that can be accomplished, but rather, something that must be continually repeated and reenacted. The

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[2] Matthew Burch, "Death and Deliberation: Overcoming the Decisionism Critique of Heidegger's Practical Philosophy," *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 53, no. 3 (2010).

principles of freedom and democracy established in the American constitution, for example, are not realizable goals; they cannot be accomplished once and for all. They only exist in the world to the extent that they are reproduced through our action. In the everyday mode of disclosure, the larger framework of meaning that guides our everyday activities is reproduced without deciding about that framework as a whole. The moment of resoluteness is the act of deciding or founding the framework. Because political action is not a means to an end, it would be completely misunderstood if one were to expect it to have a definite goal or purpose. Rather, the foundational moment of political action is indefinite; it requires repetition by the community. I will consider how this community should be understood in the section on historicity, but it is first necessary to establish the conception of temporality revealed by Heidegger's notion of death, and to consider what it discloses about the other.

We can start by noting that Heidegger's conception of death cannot be understood in biological terms—as a natural element of life—or as an event that happens to *Dasein*. Death cannot happen to *Dasein,* because when it occurs, *Dasein* is no longer *Dasein*. There is no *Dasein* for whom the possibility of death has become actual. Neither can death be merely the cessation of life if *Dasein* can understand its death, because to understand for Heidegger means to project oneself upon a possibility. Death has significance for *Dasein* as its own possibility towards which it exists. *Dasein* understands death by anticipating it, that is, by grasping it as a future possibility at the limit of its existence. Anticipation here does not mean that one expects it to arrive next Tuesday, for example. Death is not calculable; it arrives "like a thief in the night." For Heidegger, the possibility of death "knows no measure at all, no more or less, but signifies the possibility of the measureless impossibility of existence" (SZ 262/307). Furthermore,

although in anticipation *Dasein* is certain about the imminence of death, it never arrives so long as *Dasein* is *Dasein*. Because death is the impossibility of *Dasein*, strictly speaking it is not something that *Dasein* can be. *Dasein* ceases to be *Dasein* when death comes. In being-towards-death, *Dasein* runs toward that possibility, which however indefinite, tops all other possibilities and is for this reason its ownmost—death is certain but does not become actualized.

Unlike the everyday mode of disclosure, in being-towards-death, *Dasein*'s existence becomes intelligible as finite. It has no absolute beginning or end, but only beginnings and endings. Only when the finitude of any and all possibilities of existence is manifest to *Dasein,* can it choose the possibilities that are necessary to its being, the one that tops all other possibilities, and those which are merely accidental. Heidegger explains:

> When, by anticipation, one becomes free *for* one's own death, one is liberated from one's lostness in those possibilities which may accidentally thrust themselves upon one; and one is liberated in such a way that for the first time one can authentically understand and choose among the factical possibilities lying ahead of that possibility which is not to be outstripped. (SZ 264/308)

By disclosing the finitude of one's existence, the anticipation of death reveals that none of the possibilities upon which Dasein projects itself can wholly claim it. All possibilities must be given up in death; they are all, in a certain sense, accidental to *Dasein'*s being. But this realization does not have the effect of making the world devoid any significance. It is a condition of one's choice of some possibility over another. All possibilities would be equally significant if one did not have to give them up in death. The finitude of existence and being-towards-death make certain possibilities more important than others. Accordingly, death is a condition of the stand *Dasein* takes on its existence—its decision to choose one possibility over another—because its stand is maintained until the end of its existence.

The possibilities *Dasein* projects itself upon in anticipation of death will of course have to be given up, but only in death. Thus, *Dasein*'s stand on its existence is never achieved. Death is *Dasein*'s ownmost possibility; it is the only thing *Dasein* actually becomes. But in the temporal space between birth and death, that for which I am resolute until death takes on the character of indefiniteness by which we described death above. Heidegger claims:

> The *indefiniteness* of one's own potentiality-for-Being, even when this potentiality has become certain in a resolution, is first made *wholly* manifest in Being-towards-death. Anticipation brings Dasein face to face with a possibility which is constantly certain but which at any moment remains indefinite as to when that possibility will become an impossibility. (SZ 308/356)

The possibilities for which *Dasein* is resolved are held open until its death. For this reason, they are both certain and indefinite. The possibility is not certain because the conclusion has been properly deduced from logical premises, but because *Dasein* is opened up to a possibility of the world which *must* be (SZ 256/300). Nevertheless, the stand *Dasein* takes on its existence is indefinite because the possibilities for which it is resolved, the stand it takes on its existence, is fragile. On the one hand, *Dasein* may find itself unable to maintain the stance it takes on its existence. The possibility it has chosen in the face of death may no longer be possible. What is more, the possibility is indefinite because all such possibilities of the individual *Dasein* must be given up in death. The only thing that remains unclear or not yet defined is when death will make the resolution impossible.

In some sense, *Dasein*'s resolute possibilities can become infinite in such a way that not even death can take them from it, for example, in the way in which a heritage passes on the resolutions of a people to another generation. Heidegger introduces this possibility when he notes: "As the non-relational possibility, death individualizes—but only in such a manner that, as the possibility which is not to be outstripped, it makes Dasein, as Being-with, have some

understanding of the potentiality-for-Being of Others" (SZ 264/309). *Dasein* is not merely aware of its own possibilities of existence in anticipating death as a possibility, for the other is also thereby understood in its potential to take a stand on its existence. Resolutions can be shared with the other, even passed on to future generations. It is in this sharing of possibilities with the other that one can understand the way in which a community constitutes itself. This communal aspect of resoluteness will be further considered in discussing *Dasein*'s historicity, which clarifies that Heidegger has something like this in mind, and hence, that there is really nothing individualistic about his conception of resoluteness.

This section will conclude by considering what it contributes for thinking about the political. If resoluteness is a condition for the political and is a form of being-towards-death that defines the self in the stand *Dasein* takes on its finite existence, then the political can never be accomplished. The political stands ever ahead of *Dasein* as a task that will never be fulfilled. Political action is to be distinguished from actions oriented towards the accomplishment of a goal, for example in the task of building a table in which the wood, hammer, and carpenter are all taken to be means to an end. Political action does not aim strategically to achieve some goal, but is rather an end in itself. As such, political action is that in which all goal oriented action can ultimately be meaningful. Political action is certain of itself, in the sense mentioned above, not because it has a clear view of the proper means for achieving its ends, but because it is at stake in all strategic action. The political cannot be finished; it is a project with no foreseeable end.

Anxiety as Resolute Attunement

Dasein's resolute projection of itself into the future, however, is further determined by the way in which *Dasein* encounters itself as already having been, that is, its attunement to the world. In the previous chapter, the form of attunement in the everyday mode of disclosure was characterized by fear. Anxiety (*Angst*) is the form of attunement in the resolute mode of disclosure. Whereas *Dasein* is fearful in the face of an entity in the world, Heidegger claims that *Dasein* is anxious about being-in-the-world as such. Anxiety is a specific way in which the world as a totality matters to *Dasein*, that is, in the deficient mode of *lacking* any significance. In anxiety, the world no longer absorbs *Dasein* and is disclosed as that towards which *Dasein* flees in its average everydayness (SZ 189/233-234). Everydayness is a forgetfulness of the essential meaninglessness of the world's possibilities, which is manifest in view of death. In anticipation of this final possibility, the customary and familiar intelligibility of the world ceases to grip *Dasein*, who finds itself to be uncanny, or as "not-being-at-home" (SZ 188/233). Such anxiety is important for Heidegger's conception of resoluteness because it attests to the possibility that *Dasein* can accept a relation to death as its ownmost possibility, and is driven to take a stand on its existence by reinvesting the world with a significance it has chosen. Heidegger says anxiety "strives to exact resoluteness of itself" (SZ 308/356). *Dasein* can be resolute only because anxiety has disclosed the basic lack of any definite meaning underlying the structure of the world as a whole.

Commentary on Heidegger's notion of anxiety generally focuses on the significance of the concept for the authenticity of the self. Michael Gelven explains that "in dread [*Angst*] one cannot *avoid* one's self, though one can turn away from it. … It is the uncanny awareness of the

self as free to be either authentic or inauthentic."[3] Similarly, Blattner views anxiety to be a breakdown of self-identity in which one's embeddedness in community and the significance of the public world collapses.[4] In anxiety, one is confronted with the question, "Who am I?" but is unable to respond and therefore is disclosed to oneself as pure, individualized being-possible. J.M. Magrini claims "As anxiety is disclosing the insignificance of the world, authentic Dasein is reinterpreting the meaninglessness and impossibility of existence as revelatory."[5] Mark Tietjen argues that Heidegger's notion of anxiety is to be distinguished from Kierkegaard's: While the latter takes anxiety to be an indication that the individual is a synthesis of the finite and infinite, the former holds that anxiety allows *Dasein* to live authentically by grasping its finitude. I do not wish to dispute the importance of anxiety for the possibility of an individual's authentic existence, but these interpretations are limited by their focus on the individual's own self-relation, and fail to grasp its significance for Heidegger's conception of the political. Anxiety does not only make my own existence intelligible to me in a certain way, but alters my relation to the other, who is no longer leaping in for me. In other words, an attunement such as anxiety constitutes the intelligibility of *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world as a whole. Because *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world is always shared with the other, an attunement makes the other intelligible for *Dasein* in a specific way, that is, in its character as a possibility.

Anxiety is crucial for understanding the political, because it arises when *Dasein* is unable to understand itself in terms of the world or its public interpretation, and is opened up to the

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[3] Michael Gelven, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, Rev. ed. (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1989), 118.

[4] William D. Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time: A Reader's Guide* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 144.

[5] J.M. Magrini, ""Anxiety" in Heidegger's Being and Time: The Harbinger of Authenticity," *Dialogue* 48, no. 2-3 (2006): 85.

possibility of determining its own existence. Heidegger explains that in anxiety, *Dasein* is revealed to itself in its "*Being-free for* the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself" (SZ 188/232). When the intelligibility of that world ceases to absorb *Dasein*, it is forced back upon itself to decide who it is. This does not mean an individual's existence is revealed to be its own private project, but that *Dasein* discovers its own project as part of a larger historical project shared with others. As I will clarify in the section on historicity, the authenticity of the self can only be realized as part of a larger communal project. *Dasein* can only become an individual through the discovery of itself as a communal being.

Existence as such, and not merely as an individual *Dasein*'s personal existence, becomes intelligible as a possibility beyond the customary intelligibility of the status quo. In anxiety, *Dasein* cannot identify with the project of the community. It encounters its existence to be uncanny: not at home in the intelligibility of the world. Heidegger expressly links the uncanniness of *Dasein*'s existence to the political in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) in his claim that the Greek expression of the human being as the "strangest of all" (Sophocles' *Antigone*) lies at the heart of their conception of the *polis.* Though my reference to Heidegger's later text may seem odd given my explicit focus on *Being and Time*, it it is related to anxiety as a form of attunement that makes possible foundational acts as such as the political. In turning to Heidegger's notion of anxiety as the form of attunement in the mode of resoluteness, it is crucial to see how anxiety constitutes the community of those who take a stand on existence.

Heidegger analyzes anxiety as a form of attunement with respect to three crucial aspects that demonstrate its ontological uniqueness: (1) that in the face of which *Dasein* is anxious, (2) that about which *Dasein* is anxious, and (3) being anxious itself. Unlike fear, in which *Dasein* is

afraid in the face of a definite entity in the world, that in the face of which *Dasein* has anxiety is indefinite (SZ 186/231). The threat comes from nowhere in particular—*Dasein* is anxious in the face of the world as a whole. *Dasein* is anxious about the impossibility of projecting itself upon any possibility of being. *Dasein* is unable to lose itself in the significance structure of the world, and is disclosed to itself in its pure potentiality for being-in-the-world. In this respect, there is an important connection between anxiety and death because, as we have seen above, *Dasein* encounters death as the possibility of the impossibility of its existence, which is both certain and indefinite. Anxiety is unique because it can open *Dasein* to the limit of its existence and show that *Dasein*'s existence is to project itself upon possibilities. Finally, anxiety reveals to *Dasein* that it is not at home in the world. The world alongside which *Dasein* dwells is no longer familiar. *Dasein* does not care for the world and is unable to lose itself in it as in everydayness.

The unique temporal structure of anxiety is essential to resoluteness, even if it is not itself sufficient for the resolute moment of vision. Anxiety discloses *Dasein*'s thrownness as a possibility and not as a given fact to which it can only submit. Heidegger explains:

> Anxiety brings one back to one's thrownness as something *possible* which *can be repeated*. And in this way it *also* reveals the possibility of an authentic potentiality-for-Being—a potentiality which must, in repeating, come back to its thrown "there", but come back as something futural which comes towards [zukünftiges]. (SZ 343/394)

Anxiety relates *Dasein* to its past as its own projection upon one possibility instead of another. No longer lost in that possibility of existence, *Dasein* takes this possibility to be one possibility among others in which it could, but need not, lose itself. When *Dasein* is unable to project itself upon some possibility of its existence, it is opened up to the nature of projection itself as a decision that could have been decided otherwise, but which *has been* decided as such in each instance of its existence. Such a moment discloses to *Dasein* that it has already made a decision

about its existence and that such a decision will never wholly determine the being of *Dasein*—it can always fail to be lost in this possibility again—but must be repeated in each moment.

Anxiety is a necessary, but insufficient condition for resoluteness. By holding open the present and disclosing *Dasein* to itself as a possibility that must be repeated, anxiety opens *Dasein* to the possibility that the framework of being-in-the-world is contingent. In anxiety, we face that contingency as a contingency, whereas in everyday moods such as fear, we are not forced to face that something in the world that threatens us. According to Heidegger:

> But even though the Present of anxiety is held on to, it does not as yet have the character of the moment of vision, which temporalizes itself in a resolution. Anxiety merely brings one into the mood for a *possible* resolution. The present of anxiety holds the moment of vision *at the ready* [*auf dem Sprung*]; as such a moment it itself, and only itself, is possible. (SZ 344/394)

So long as anxiety lasts, *Dasein* holds its possibilities in abeyance. It cannot make a decision, but can only be confronted by possibilities that present themselves. The world cannot be given a determinate meaning. Only when *Dasein* discovers those possibilities that can genuinely be repeated, and which it can project itself upon as authentically its own, does it come into the moment of vision that is resoluteness and determine the meaning of the entities in the world from out of its self projection.

Why should anxiety, and not some other form of attunement, be given such prominence in Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein*? Might other attunements also disclose the world as world and *Dasein* to itself as a being-possible and hence also open *Dasein* up to the possibility of its ownmost existence? Heidegger seems to allow that this might be the case, but identifies fear and anxiety as special because of their temporal structure. The temporality of fear lies in the anticipation of a known possibility. One does not have fear in the face of something in the past, but of something yet to come. Anxiety, on the other hand, is grounded in having been. Nothing

threatening approaches *Dasein* in anxiety; it is anxious about having been thrown into the world. The world offers no essential meaning for *Dasein,* who is condemned to take up these possibilities. But, in anxiety, there is no possibility upon which *Dasein* can project itself. In a worker's strike, for example, *Dasein* cannot endure an unbearable status quo. The present of anxiety is persists because *Dasein* cannot lose itself in any future possibility of its existence and cannot go on with reproducing the past (SZ 344/394). Since fear and anxiety represent extreme possibilities of *Dasein*'s attunement, upon which other forms may be grounded, they should be considered fundamental. Accordingly, Heidegger argues that "even a phenomenon like hope, which seems to be founded wholly upon the future, must be analyzed in much the same way as fear" (SZ 345/395). He suggests that other ways of being attuned would presuppose the temporal structure indicated by these extreme possibilities, so the temporal structure of anxiety may be apparent in other forms of political moods.

Anxiety alerts *Dasein* to the uncanniness of its existence by disclosing that it is not decided in advance. This form of attunement is necessary for *Dasein* to take a stand on its existence and project itself upon some particular possibility as its *own* possibility, and hence for taking up an authentic self-relation. For Heidegger, this does not mean that one understands oneself as an individual in isolation from others. The self that can be authentically disclosed, however, is understood as existing with others who determine the possibilities it can project for the future. These possibilities are always communal. One cannot experience her possibilities as possibilities that only she possesses. For Heidegger, the possibilities of such a self-relation, in which *Dasein* cannot find itself at home in the world, is also a condition of the political as the enactment of a movement in the historical form of *Dasein*'s existence.

Heidegger expressly links the possibility of finding oneself to be uncanny, that is, not at home in the world, to the possibility of the political in the *Introduction to Metaphysics.* His explanation helps illustrate the trajectory of how he thinks about the role of an attunement, such as anxiety, for enabling foundational acts that go beyond the familiar, everyday ways of understanding the world:

> We are taking the strange, the uncanny <das Unheimliche>, as that which casts us out of the "homely," i.e., the customary, familiar, secure. The unhomely <Unheimische> prevents us from making ourselves at home and therein it is overpowering. But man is the strangest of all, not only because he passes his life amid the strange understood in this sense but because he departs from his customary, familiar limits, because he is the violent one, who, tending toward the strange in the sense of the overpowering, surpasses the limit of the familiar <das Heimische>.[6]

Because *Dasein* can never be completely absorbed in the significance of the world, as is evidenced by anxiety as a form of attunement, the customary and familiar limits of the world never wholly determine its existence. As such, the *Dasein* is violent in the sense that its being is not dictated in advance. In the uncanniness of anxiety, it becomes evident that human existence always goes beyond the familiar limits that it has prescribed for itself in an attempt to make itself at home in the world; it cannot be wholly determined by them. Such a movement is violent, because in surpassing the limit of the familiar, the act of creation that aims to establish a *new* home in the world cannot be justified in terms of these limits. Uncanniness both overpowers *Dasein*'s attempt to make itself at home, and urges it to make for itself a new home in the world. At issue in Heidegger's notion of anxiety is not only one's relation to oneself, but also the possibility of enacting a transformation in the meaning of human existence and hence, a condition for being political.

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[6] Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 150-151. See also *Hölderlin's Hymn "the Ister"*, Studies in Continental Thought (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 68-86.

That Heidegger has the political in mind here is made evident in his relation of the strange or uncanny to the Greek conception of the *polis* as the site of the movement of history:

> *Polis* is usually translated as city or city-state. This does not capture the full meaning. *Polis* means, rather, the place, the there, wherein and as which historical being-there is. The *polis* is the historical place, the there *in* which, *out* of which, and *for* which history happens. To this place and scene of history belong the gods, the temples, the priests, the festivals, the games, the poets, the thinkers, the ruler, the council of elders, the assembly of the people, the army and the fleet. All this does not first belong to the *polis,* does not become political by entering into a relation with a statesman and a general and the business of the state. No, it is political, i.e. at the site of history, provided there be (for example) poets *alone*, but then really poets, priests *alone*, but then really priests, rulers *alone*, but then really rulers. *Be*, but this means: as violent men to use power, to become pre-eminent in historical being as creators, as men of action. Pre-eminent in the historical place, they become at the same time *apolis*, without city and place, lonely, strange, and alien, without issue among the essent as a whole, at the same time without statute and limit, without structure and order, because they themselves *as* creators must first create all this.[7]

Here, Heidegger explains that at issue in the political is the act of creation that creates a new limit and a new order for existence, thereby effecting a historical movement in the form of human existence. This foundational act must be opened up by the historical situation itself. The establishment of this new "home" for *Dasein* is only possible for one who finds its existence to be uncanny, strange, and not-at-home. In moments in which the intelligibility of the world breaks down, the event of re-constituting a new significance arises. However, the act of establishing a new foundation is not something planned. Rather, the event in which the familiar intelligibility of the world collapses brings *Dasein* into the possibility of enacting a new foundation.

As the form of attunement in resoluteness, anxiety discloses *Dasein*'s being to itself as a being-possible. Because *Dasein* cannot project itself upon definite possibilities of existence in the moment of anxiety, it cannot lose itself in them. Since the world that is disclosed to *Dasein* in anxiety has the character of lacking any significance, it is open to receiving new signification on the basis of *Dasein*'s resolution. Hence, anxiety brings *Dasein* into a relationship with the world and itself that is necessary for resoluteness. However, *Dasein* is intelligible to itself solely as an

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[7] ———, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 152-153.

infinite possibility and is unable to project itself upon any definite possibility in anxiety. Resoluteness overcomes such impotence by disclosing a definite possibility for existence upon which *Dasein* can project itself. In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, the inability to find oneself at home in the world is at the heart of the act of creation that grounds the establishment of new limits within which *Dasein* can become at home in the world. This lead me to conclude that anxiety is a condition for the possibility of the political. But to explain how the possibility of this act of creation emerges from the moment of anxiety, I must turn to Heidegger's notion of conscience as a form of discourse that makes a definite possibility for being intelligible.

Call of Conscience as Resolute Discourse

The previous chapter identified the form of discourse in the average everyday mode of disclosure as idle talk, in which *das Man* prescribes the intelligibility of *Dasein* and the world. In its everydayness, *Dasein* understands itself and the world just as the other does; as merely conforming to social standards. To this extent, *Dasein* is not disclosed to itself *as a self* and does not take responsibility for the possibilities of its existence as its own possibilities. Heidegger's conception of being-towards-death, that is, the form of understanding in the mode of resoluteness, demonstrates that *Dasein* is individuated in anticipating its death, because the other cannot take over this possibility. Unless this moment of individuation can be confirmed in *Dasein*'s existence, however, it remains an empty ontological possibility. The possibility of *Dasein*'s individuation is attested by the call of conscience, which is the form of discourse in the mode of resoluteness. Heidegger interprets conscience as a call that summons *Dasein* beyond its customary absorption in the world as interpreted by *das Man,* and discloses *Dasein* to itself *as*

itself: "If Dasein is to be able to get brought back from this lostness of failing to hear itself, and if this is to be done through itself, then it must first be able to find itself—to find itself as something which has failed to hear itself, and which fails to hear in that it *listens away* to the 'they' " (SZ 271/315-316).

Critics of Heidegger's notion of conscience have argued that its implied conception of truth excludes the normative function of reason from one's self-relation. For example, Tugendhat claims Heidegger's notion of resoluteness attempts "to banish reason from human existence, particularly from the relation of oneself to oneself."[8] Echoing this charge, Richard Wolin claims that without some kind of criteria to distinguish an authentic call of conscience from an inauthentic one, it remains an untenable abstraction that calls into question the viability of fundamental ontology as a political theory.[9] Hannes Nykänen argues that since in Heidegger's view the self alone is made intelligible through conscience, his conception overlooks the way in which conscience discloses the other in the light of love.[10] In these views, Heidegger's individualistic conception of conscience excludes the kind of rational deliberation which alone must ground ethical or political action.

However, several scholars have argued that far from being averse to ethical action, Heidegger's notion of conscience is a condition for self-responsibility that grounds the very possibility of the ethical life. Frank Schalow argues that "fundamental ontology so completely incorporates a regard for *ethos* into its explication of Dasein's situatedness that *Being and Time*

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[8] Tugendhat, *Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination*, 215.

[9] Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger*, 40-46.

[10] Hannes Nykänen, "Heidegger's Conscience," *Sats - Nordic Journal of Philosophy* 6, no. 1 (2005).

qualifies as a search for the site of ethics."[11] Further, Steven Crowell suggests that for Heidegger, conscience is "an ontological condition for distinguishing between external and internal reasons, between a quasi-mechanical conformism and a commitment responsive to the normativity of norms."[12] In these views, Heidegger's notion of the call of conscience explains how *Dasein* can be disclosed to itself apart from *das Man*, opening up its relation to itself and enabling the self to become responsible for its existence. Independent of this kind of self-disclosure, *Dasein*'s normative activity would be mere compliance with societal standards and one could not explain how *Dasein* becomes an ethical agent by acting *in light of* such norms.

While these interpretations move beyond the dismissive charge that Heidegger's conception of conscience is opposed to the sort of rational deliberation that is necessary for ethical action, they do not go far enough towards understanding its political dimension. In this section, I argue that conscience is not only a precondition for ethical action, but for political action, as well. Although political action requires the self to take responsibility for its own existence, in which *Dasein* may find itself opposed to the social form of its existence, political action moves beyond the individual *Dasein* because it aims—whether explicitly or not—to transform the form of its being-with the other.

Developing the political character of Heidegger's conception of conscience in the manner described above requires rejecting the view that the call of conscience is merely indeterminate and contains no real content. The call is a strange form of discourse, for unlike the idle talk of

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[11] Frank Schalow, "The Topography of Heidegger's Concept of Conscience," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 265.

[12] Crowell, "Conscience and Reason: Heidegger and the Grounds of Intentionality," 55. See also ———, "Measure-Taking: Meaning and Normativity in Heidegger's Philosophy," *Continental Philosophy Review* 41, no. 3 (September 2008). And James McGuirk, "Husserl and Heidegger on Reduction and the Question of the Existential Foundations of Rational Life," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 18, no. 1 (2010). McGuirk claims Heidegger's grounding of intentionality in conscience responds to Husserl's failure to motivate the reduction.

everydayness, it is characterized by a form of listening in which something positive must become intelligible. Heidegger explains, "The call discourses in the uncanny mode of *keeping silent.* And it does this only because, in calling the one to whom the appeal is made, it does not call him into the public idle talk of the 'they', but *calls* him *back* from this *into the reticence of his existent* potentiality-for-being" (SZ 277/322). The call of conscience opens *Dasein* to the possibility of being itself by pushing the idle talk of *das Man* into insignificance. The call is speechless, and therefore outside of rational discourse. Wolin criticizes Heidegger's conception of the call of conscience on this basis:

> For the extremely abstract nature of the call, its wholesale lack of determinate content, raises grave doubts about its serviceability as a viable philosophical concept. Its status as an oblique, other-worldly emanation, its inscrutability to the faculty of human reason in its normal employment, cannot help but suggest that Heideggerianism, at a pivotal juncture, wittingly lapses into a type of secularized mystical fatalism. One can accept, in accordance with the strictures of existential analysis, his unwillingness to provide a concrete set of *ontic* directives for the category. That would be a task for the individual "Selves" in question, whose act of "decision" fundamental ontology must not usurp. However, this qualification should in no way immunize Heidegger from having to provide a rudimentary set of *existential* directives, in lieu of which the call cannot help but seem spectral and vacuous. For without some minimal measure of criterial determinacy, we are provided no basis for distinguishing an *authentic* "call of conscience" from an *inauthentic* one. [13]

Wolin claims that the call of conscience fails to be a useful philosophical concept because it comes from outside the conventional world and provides no criteria to distinguish an authentic call from an inauthentic one. Tugendhat anticipates this criticism when he says, "According to Heidegger, authentic choice is supposed to bring Dasein back from its lostness in the arbitrariness and contingency of the possibilities in which it actually finds itself. If this is to be the meaning of the choice, it requires a criterion."[14] But this demand for criteria altogether misses the point of Heidegger's conception of conscience, because the call discloses the self to *Dasein* in its differentiation from the other; as separate from *das Man*. As such, the call of

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[13] Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger*, 43.

[14] Tugendhat, *Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination*, 216.

conscience cannot admit of any criteria while still remaining true to the self's individuation. Furthermore, an *inauthentic* call of conscience is nonsensical on the basis of Heidegger's ontology. To be sure, one might still ask if there is any basis for *Dasein* to be assured that what it takes to be a call of conscience is not, in fact, the idle talk of *das Man*. But given that conscience calls the self out of its absorption in the world of *das Man*, there appears to be no criteria, outside of one's own affirmation of herself, according to which such assurance could be given—except that the self disclosed to *Dasein* fails to find expression in the conventions of *das Man.* However, it is misguided to expect criteria for the call of conscience because the nothingness that it discloses is inexpressible and can only be taken as self-evident. This should not lead us to conclude that the call of conscience offers no positive phenomenon, however. As Arendt has pointed out in relation to political freedom, conscience calls *Dasein* to action in the language of Shakespeare's Brutus: "That this shall be or we will fall for it."[15] Conscience calls one to action without knowledge of the outcome of the action. As we will see in a moment, the call of conscience makes *Dasein* guilty, and gives content to that which *Dasein* must do in resoluteness.

The silent call of conscience makes *Dasein* manifest to itself as nothing, that is, as having a significance beyond the totality of entities in the world (SZ 276-277/321). The self is disclosed at the limit of world and language, even if these are necessary for intelligibility of the self to appear. The self is that which can neither be wholly absorbed by the world nor made intelligible in the universal discourse of *das Man*. Nevertheless, Heidegger maintains that a positive phenomenon is evidenced by the nothingness disclosed to *Dasein* in the call of conscience:

> If in each case the caller and he to whom the appeal is made are *at the same time* one's own Dasein *themselves*, then in any failure to hear the call or any incorrect hearing of *oneself*,

[15] Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future, Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Viking Press, 1961), 151.

> there lies a *definite kind* of Dasein's *Being*. A free-floating call from which 'nothing ensues' is an impossible fiction when seen existentially. With regard to Dasein, 'that *nothing* ensues' signifies something positive. (SZ 279/324)

Here, it is inconsequential whether or not one is actually disclosed to oneself when one hears the call, which Wolin's demand for criteria to distinguish a real call of conscience from an impostor requires. The existence of the self is already supposed as a specific way in which *Dasein* can be in asking if what has become intelligible through the conscience is the "real" self or not. Given that in everydayness, *Dasein* is absorbed in the intelligibility of the world as determined by *das Man* and fails to encounter its self as its self, at issue is how, and as what sort of entity, this self can be disclosed for *Dasein*. The determinacy that Wolin expects from the call presupposes that for which Heidegger's conception of conscience is meant to provide a foundation.

The call of conscience makes *Dasein* intelligible to itself as being-guilty, understood in the existential sense. This is important for Heidegger's conception of resoluteness because it means that one cannot decide or plan to be resolute. Foundational political moments cannot be planned in advance. We cannot decide to have the revolution on Tuesday at 5pm. Heidegger claims:

> Indeed the call is precisely something which *we ourselves* have neither planned nor prepared for nor voluntarily performed, nor have we ever done so. 'It' calls, against our expectation and even against our will. On the other hand, the call undoubtedly does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes *from* me and yet *from beyond me and over me*. (SZ 275/320)

Dasein does not dream up its authentic possibilities for itself through an assertion of its will, as Wolin and Tugendhat suggest. The call is an event that cannot be planned on or prepared for, but which nonetheless summons the *Dasein* of everydayness to its ownmost possibilities from out of the uncanniness of its existence. The significance of this for understanding the political meaning of resoluteness is that the political moment, to the extent that it depends on the call of conscience, cannot be the goal of any of our actions because it cannot be plotted in advance.

That conscience does not give a set of directives or imperatives to fulfill, does not mean that it is devoid of content. Making oneself guilty gives content to what it is that the conscience calls one to do. In resoluteness, *Dasein* is brought into the finite awareness of its situation as one in which it can have no assurance of the future and cannot control guilt or innocence. Hence, the stand *Dasein* takes on its existence in resoluteness and holds for certain, but without any guarantee, may *not* be possible. Resolute for its ownmost possibilities, the call of conscience makes *Dasein* intelligible to itself in the possibility of its failure, that is, as potentially not-being this possibility. That *Dasein* is defined by this "notness" or nullity (*Nichtigkeit*) which pertains to its ownmost possibilities is the existential meaning of the guilt that conscience calls upon it to take over. Heidegger explains:

> Dasein is its basis existently—that is, in such a manner that it understands itself in terms of possibilities, and, as so understanding itself, is that entity which has been thrown. But this implies that in having a potentiality-for-Being it always stands in one possibility or another: it constantly is *not* other possibilities, and it has waived these in its existentiell projection. Not only is the projection, as one that has been thrown, determined by the nullity of Being-a-basis; *as projection* it is itself essentially null. … The nullity we have in mind belongs to Dasein's Being-free for its existentiell possibilities. Freedom, however, *is* only in the choice of one possibility—that is, in tolerating one's not having chosen the others and one's not being able to choose them. (SZ 285/331)

Dasein's existential guilt is a condition of freedom in a double sense. That *Dasein* exists as a thrown basis means it does not have absolute power over its existence. *Dasein* has not chosen the situation in which it finds itself, the community in which it exists, its biological characteristics, nor the fact of its impending death. These aspects which ground *Dasein* all pertain to the nullity that *Dasein* must take over to be who it is and take a stand on its existence. This decision to exist in some possibility or another always forecloses other possibilities. The projection of possibility, then, is essentially null, because any decision implies *not* making countless other decisions. Further, as *Dasein*'s projection, the possibility for which it exists in taking a stand on its existence is not determined by any intrinsic nature or rule for action. In taking a stand on its

existence, *Dasein*'s projection contains the possibility of *not* being, which Heidegger takes to be a condition of free action.

For *Dasein* to act freely in accordance with its conscience, it must take over the chance of its failure (guilt), and act without knowledge of the outcome and in spite of the possibility that its action may be unsuccessful. Heidegger's understanding of conscience as this reticent taking up of one's ownmost being-guilty makes *Dasein* responsible for an outcome it cannot predict in advance. This sense of guilt is depicted in an illuminating way by Kierkegaard's analysis of the paradox of faith through the story of Abraham's binding of Isaac. Called upon to sacrifice his beloved son, Abraham trusts in the goodness of God even when the commandment appears monstrous and evil. Abraham acts on a calling beyond the customary morality without knowing the outcome of his action, which for Kierkegaard makes him a true hero.

> If the one who is to act wants to judge himself by the outcome, then he will never begin. Even though the outcome may delight the whole world, it cannot help the hero, for he only came to know the outcome when the whole thing was over, and he did not become a hero by that but by the fact that he began.[16]

While Abraham is widely heralded as the father of faith for remaining obedient to God in the face of this test, his greatness does not lie in his certain knowledge of what would result from his action, but in his acting without knowing the outcome. In setting out for Mount Moriah where the sacrifice was to be made, Abraham cannot know that in the final moment God will save Isaac. It is in this sense that conscience calls *Dasein* to act for the sake of a possibility whose probability cannot be calculated in advance and is nothing like a "business procedure that can be regulated" (SZ 294/340). Action for the sake of a known outcome is conscienceless.

Crowell argues that *Dasein*'s taking over its ownmost possibility entails the practice of giving reasons for its action. According to him, "To take over being-a-ground, then—that is, to

[16] Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Sylvia Walsh (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55.

possibilize what grounds me—is to transform the claims of nature or society (what 'one' simply *does*) into first-person terms, into my reasons for doing what I do."[17] However, by re-inscribing the discursive aspect of conscience into the language of rationality, Crowell overlooks the fundamental incalculability of that possibility for which *Dasein* makes itself responsible. Such a possibility has been disclosed beyond the normative rules that determine the everyday disclosure of the world and thus, cannot be expressed in these terms. While Crowell is right that conscience may be seen as a condition for rationality, that is, that for which *Dasein* is resolute makes its world intelligible as equipment or means for that end, it must be pointed out that this ownmost possibility is not for the sake of anything and is therefore beyond the space of reason. Unlike the everyday disclosure of world in which *Dasein*'s actions are for other possibilities in the world (e.g., one works for the sake of bread), that for which one is resolute comes from beyond the world. The call of conscience—the summons to be resolute for any possibility of oneself—comes from beyond the world whose structure is defined in terms of these instrumental means-ends relationships. This does not mean that such a possibility is *irrational,* but only that it is outside the space in which reasons take their bearing. Reason may be placed in service to *Dasein*'s ownmost possibility, but the disclosure of such a possibility is not to be conceived in rational terms for the sake of anything but itself.

Furthermore, Crowell's conception of conscience in terms of first-person self-awareness ignores the way in which the other is implicated, and neglects the political character of resoluteness. Schalow offers a compelling account of how the reticent discourse of conscience

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[17] Crowell, "Conscience and Reason: Heidegger and the Grounds of Intentionality," 58. For Crowell's claim that Heidegger's conception of intentionality in *Being and Time* is based upon an account of first person authority, see ———, "Subjectivity: Locating the First-Person in Being and Time," *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 44, no. 4 (December 2001).

entails *Dasein*'s openness to the other and can be read politically. He says, "The power to listen prepares the self to respond to the most pressing demands of its existence and to take over its own possibilities. Thus, conscience displaces any pretence of self-control, and allows Dasein to receive guidance in proportion with its openness."[18] For Schalow, this openness to a higher meaning of the law beyond the conventions of the everyday disclosure of the world by *das Man* is embodied in actions of civil disobedience. As opposed to the deficient form of solicitude that "leaps in" for the other by subordinating the other to one's own possibilities as though they were merely equipment for that possibility (SZ 122/158), such acts entail a recognition of the other as other and seek to bring her into a free relationship towards her own authentic possibilities. Such recognition is a condition for dialogue. Schalow argues,

> In its care-taking endeavor, an individual acts to honor differences among members of society, in such a way that a greater social harmony can be achieved only at the expense of overturning existing social mandates. Such apparent dis-obedience does not defy law out of arrogant disrespect, but instead seeks a sterner commitment of responsibility (i.e., conscience) in order to cultivate an alternate vision of the good.[19]

The issue here is that the discourse of conscience enables *Dasein* to be committed to possibilities that are beyond the dictates of the status quo. Whereas Crowell takes this to be primarily a discourse in which one listens to oneself, Schalow makes a compelling case that for Heidegger, the commitment of responsibility is predicated on the ability to place oneself in question and thereby challenge the status quo.

Indeed, Heidegger's conception of conscience as the discourse of authentic disclosure insists not only that one's own *Dasein* is made intelligible in a different light, but that so, too, the other is understood in the possibility of her authenticity. He argues:

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[18] Frank Schalow, "Language and the Social Roots of Conscience: Heidegger's Less Traveled Path," *Human Studies*, no. 21 (1998): 147.

[19] Ibid., 149.

> authentic disclosedness modifies with equal primordiality both the way in which the 'world' is discovered (and is founded upon that disclosedness) and the way in which the Dasein-with of Others is disclosed. The 'world' which is ready-to-hand does not become another one 'in its content', nor does the circle of Others get exchanged for a new one; but both one's being towards the ready-to-hand understandingly and concernfully, and one's solicitous Being with Others are now given a definite character in terms of their ownmost potentiality-for-Being-their-selves. (SZ 297-298/344)

Conscience does not merely call *Dasein* into a new and authentic relationship with itself, but brings it into a relation with the other as one who is also not determined by the rules and norms of *das Man* and must likewise choose its existence. On this basis, the other can be appealed to in this possibility of making a decision about its being-in-the-world.

To summarize, Heidegger's conception of conscience as the reticent discourse of resoluteness—the authentic mode of disclosure—is not an empty concept even if it lacks specific criteria. I have argued that such criteria are inappropriate to the phenomenon of conscience, which is concerned with how *Dasein* makes itself responsible for such criteria in the first place. On the other hand, while the call of conscience can only be taken over by the self, it does not thereby seal off *Dasein* in a world of its own choosing or make it accountable only to itself for its own isolated existence. Heidegger stresses that resoluteness "first makes it possible to let the Others who are with it 'be' in their ownmost potentiality-for-Being, and to co-disclose this potentiality in the solicitude which leaps forth and liberates" (SZ 298/344). For Heidegger, the community form of *Dasein* is liberatory, unlike a society (*Gesellschaft*) composed of conflicting class interests. Resoluteness opens up the possibility of establishing an authentic relation with the other, which constitutes the meaning of political action by realizing freedom through a transformation in the structure of being-in-the-world as a whole. History can be understood in terms of resoluteness on the basis of such a movement in the structure of being-in-the-world as a whole.

Historicity as Resolute Being-with

Resoluteness opens *Dasein* up to the possibility of movement in the very form of its existence, that is, to a transformation in the structure of being-in-the-world with the other as a whole. On this basis, Heidegger recasts the problem of history against the historiological sciences' view of time as an already given space in which the human being exists. In the historiological sense, time is an infinite succession of moments: the present is the moment that exists, while the future is not yet actual, and the past has been actual but is no longer. The problem with thinking of history in this way is that time is abstractly conceived independent of *Dasein* and the specific way it temporalizes its being. If temporality characterizes *Dasein*'s being, as Heidegger claims, time is only concretely given in the way *Dasein* is shaped by its past and projects itself upon future possibilities of existence it has not yet become. Given that *Dasein* comports itself for authentic possibilities of existence it has chosen in anticipation of its death, *Dasein* is not historical merely because it exists within time, but because it is historical in its being. Heidegger understands *Dasein*'s historicality in terms of the temporal structure of resoluteness, that is, the way in which the possibilities of existence offered in the present are disclosed in light of the past and future.

The historicity of *Dasein* in terms of resoluteness offers the strongest evidence that an individual's self-relation is not the main issue for Heidegger's conception of resoluteness. Because *Dasein*'s being is a being-with others, the way an individual *Dasein* holds its self open for a self-chosen fate is determined by the historizing of the community of which it is a part, which Heidegger calls "the people." Any individual decision to understand one's self in a particular way is made possible by the community of people in which such a decision can

become meaningful. One's decision to be an instructor, priest, police officer, drug dealer, parent, etc. can only be made within the bounds of the community's understanding of itself in relation to the world. Hence, the resoluteness of the people for a common destiny constitutes the possible ways in which *Dasein* can be a self in relation to the other and is the authentic form of being-with the oether.

Heidegger's conception of a communal destiny that precedes the fate of the individual has become the focus of intense scrutiny in light of his subsequent support of National Socialism in 1933. Emmanuel Faye argues that Heidegger's displacement of the notion of the individual through his conception of a community of the people and communal destiny, is a key component of National Socialist doctrine.[20] Victor Farías claims that while the community's tradition that determines the fate of the individual is not embodied in any particular people, Heidegger's claim that the hero is the archetype for "the community's quest for self-identity" anticipates his subsequent support for Hitler.[21] Indeed, Karl Löwith recounts a meeting with Heidegger in 1936 in which the latter agreed that his support for National Socialism was based upon his philosophical beliefs, "and added that his concept of 'historicity' was the basis of his political 'engagement.' "[22]

In light of such criticisms, some have suggested that Heidegger's conception of historicity as a communal destiny cannot be squared with his own conception of authentic existence. Against Heidegger's view that the destiny of a community determines the fate of the

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[20] Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger, the Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933-1935* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 16.

[21] Farías, *Heidegger and Nazism*, 65.

[22] Karl Löwith, "My Last Meeting with Heidegger in Rome, 1936," in *The Heidegger Controversy : A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 142.

individual, Crowell argues, "There is nothing in the ontological structure of a community that corresponds to the liminal space of *Angst*, death, reticent guilt, and rebirth that, in existing authentically, constitutes self-responsibility."[23] In Crowell's view, resoluteness constitutes the meaning of selfhood, while Heidegger erroneously applies this notion to the constitution of a community. Crowell claims authentic historicality is based upon the first person perspective, that is, the way the individual takes itself to be responsible as the subject of its own existence. Short of such a first person perspective, what Heidegger refers to as the history of a community is, in Crowell's view, only a kind of narrative identity that is derivative of the individual *Dasein*'s authentic choice of its own existence. A community of people cannot choose their common existence authentically because there is no corresponding first person perspective that could decide what possibilities for existence are true to itself.

While Heidegger's conception of historicity should not be limited to the movement inherent in the temporal existence of an individual *Dasein,* neither does it necessarily lead to the totalitarian political view of National Socialism. Heidegger's conception of the people cannot be conceived in racial, ethnic, or nationalistic terms because such a conception of *who a people are* presupposes some conception of what it means *to be a people* that cannot be specified in those terms. Whatever way a people might be conceived—e.g., the 'German' or 'American', 'white' or 'black', 'homosexual' or 'heterosexual' people—first requires a conception of what it means to be so constituted as a people. For Heidegger, the unity of the people is to be understood on the basis of a shared heritage, that is, a common vision of the world that leaps ahead of *Dasein* and determines its being-in-the-world (SZ 383/435). The people should then be understood as those

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[23] Steven Galt Crowell, "Authentic Historicality," in *Space, Time, and Culture*, ed. David Carr and Chan-Fai Cheung (Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 70.

others with whom one's existence is an issue. One's community—the people—are those for and with whom an individual must make decisions about its existence. In everydayness, we repeat the common heritage and the structure of its world without concerning ourselves with the meaning of our relation to the other or the framework of the world as a whole. But in resoluteness, *Dasein* becomes concerned with the meaning of its coexistence in the world and establishes a new foundation from out of the old. *Dasein* is the happening or playing out of a communal project within a shared tradition.

Dasein's authentic possibilities for existence essentially depend upon their disclosure within a tradition held in common with others. This communal destiny takes precedence over the fate of the individual because it illuminates the possibilities for which *Dasein* can be resolute. *Dasein* is historical because its possibilities for existence in the world are connected to a community of others for whom its existence can be meaningful. So to be historical in Heidegger's sense is not merely to act for the sake of possibilities given by an individual *Dasein*'s own isolated existence, as Crowell suggests, but always to be acting with others for the sake of possibilities it holds in common with a community. Consequently, to be historical, *Dasein* does not choose only for itself, but with the whole community. Communities do choose authentically, however rare such moments may be, and that it is precisely in such political moments that transformations of *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world are fought and died for. A people's past can be the source of liberatory possibilities.

Turning to Heidegger's notion of historicity in terms of resoluteness, it is imperative to see how an individual *Dasein*'s choices about its existence are disclosed by the community in which its choices can be meaningful. We have said that the form of understanding in the resolute

mode of disclosure is being-towards death. But death does not disclose the possibilities for existence that are open to *Dasein*. Being-towards-death only confirms that whatever possibility for which *Dasein* would be resolved constitutes the whole of its existence in time; that the possibility *Dasein* projects itself upon must happen now—the time of resoluteness is finite—and that it is oneself who must project this possibility (SZ 383/434). If resoluteness makes it possible for *Dasein* as a whole to undergo a movement in the form of its existence, which means that it is not only oneself who chooses this possibility, then we must explain how such a new possibility for being is disclosed. What could be the source of such a transformative possibility if it comes to *Dasein* from beyond the everyday world but is not beamed down from heaven? Heidegger claims that the possibilities for authentic existence are disclosed by the heritage that thrown *Dasein* can authentically take over:

> The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself, discloses current factical possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over*. In one's coming back resolutely to one's thrownness there is hidden a *handing down* to oneself of the possibilities that have come down to one but not necessarily *as* having thus come down. (SZ 383/435)

The heritage that *Dasein* takes over harbors possibilities for existence outside the possibilities disclosed by the public form of existence, but which can nevertheless be repeated in the present. Not all possibilities contained in the heritage *Dasein* takes over will be able to be repeated genuinely. For example, it is conceivable that one might resolve to become a medieval knight, but this could not be a genuine choice, because the world in which such a decision could be meaningful has given way to the modern world. But other possibilities can be genuinely repeated, as can be seen in Martin Luther King's invocation of the Judeo-Christian heritage in support of civil rights, or Gandhi's appeal to the Jainist principle of *ahimsa* (to do no harm) in defense of non-violent opposition to colonial rule. In resoluteness, the present is disclosed in

terms of such a tradition and can be taken over authentically by adapting a tradition to the present.

As resolute, the possibilities for existence available to *Dasein* are grasped in their finitude, that is, are prefigured by a heritage. Heidegger refers to this as the fate *Dasein* takes over. This does not mean that the future possibility for which it exists is set in stone and cannot be changed, but that its possibilities have been guided in advance by certain preferences concerning the good inherited from the past and not easily overcome. But Heidegger claims that the destiny of a community's sense of this heritage presides over the fate of the individual:

> But if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with Others, its historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as *destiny* [*Geschick*]. This is how we designate the historizing of the community, of a people. Destiny is not something that puts itself together out of individual fates, any more than Being-with-one-another can be conceived as the occurring together of several Subjects. Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities. (SZ 384/436)

The fate of the individual—its resoluteness for its ownmost possibilities—is subordinated to the destiny of the community. The community can be understood as something like the body, which is greater than the mere summation of all of its individual parts. Hence, Heidegger's conception of resoluteness understands the community to be the form of the individual, which contains the possible ways of being a self and is not simply the average or sum total of all individual resolutions.

The community Heidegger conceives is not static, but changes through its appropriation of the tradition. The appropriation of tradition is authentic insofar as the community takes up the possibilities disclosed by the past that are genuinely repeatable for the sake of a new possibility of existence. Heidegger argues that the authentic repetition of the past adds something new to possibility it takes over from the past:

> But when one has by repetition, handed down to oneself a possibility that has been, the Dasein that has-been-there is not disclosed in order to be actualized over again. The repeating of that which is possible does not bring again [Wiederbringen] something that is 'past', nor does it bind the 'Present' back to that which has already been 'outstripped'. Arising, as it does, from a resolute projection of oneself, repetition does not let itself be persuaded of something by what is 'past', just in order that this, as something which was formerly actual, may recur. Rather, the repetition makes a *reciprocative rejoinder* to the possibility of that existence which has-been-there. But when such a rejoinder is made to this possibility in a resolution, it is made in a *moment of vision*; *and as such* it is at the same time a *disavowal* of that which in the "today", is working itself out as the 'past'. (SZ 385-386/437-438)

The resolute repetition of past possibilities of existence is not a repetition in the sense of a direct copy of the past. Instead, repetition discovers what could be called a more original sense of the past that has presently become lost and aims to establish a new foundation. For example, King could, in this sense, hold that the original meaning of civil rights put forward in the American constitution is not based upon the color of one's skin, but must apply equally to all. The reciprocative rejoinder here is a disavowal of the past through an insistence that the present has failed to enact its original potential, and hence, still appeals to a common heritage while testifying to a new possibility of a people's existence, namely, the extension of these rights to those who had formerly been denied them. Most compelling here is the way Heidegger regards tradition as necessary for continuity without taking it to be fixed in stone.

Crowell does not dispute that Heidegger believes resoluteness describes the manner in which a community historicizes its existence. Instead, he argues this position is untenable because a community cannot be resolute together if resoluteness is to be conceived as being anxious about its thrownness, anticipating its death, or hearkening to a call of conscience that summons it to project itself upon its ownmost being-guilty. He explains:

> Heidegger's failure to mark this distinction yields two illusions: first, that in choosing I am choosing for my whole community; and second, that what I can choose must somehow be a function of that very community. Neither of these claims is compatible with the structure of authentic historicality. First, that I must choose for my whole community (or "generation") is ridiculous on the face of it. And second, there is no interesting sense in which my possibilities are circumscribed by anything that can be called my "community." In the face of *Angst*, death, I can feel the need to "Journey to the East," to "light out for the

> Territories," to "sing the blues." In so doing I am not trying to become the cultural other—to "repeat" some possibility that was "actual"—but to hearken to what speaks to me, to engage it in a reciprocative rejoinder (*Erwiderung*), to seek a new way to be that will "true up" myself."[24]

Crowell's conception of authentic historicality leads to an absurd sort of ethics that is oblivious to the role of community in constituting the authenticity of the self. The act of singing the blues, for example, would have been inconceivable for our medieval knight, suggesting that certain cultural conditions must be in place for such a possibility to be imaginable. What speaks to the individual is informed by the sense of the good contained in the heritage a community takes up and makes such possibilities intelligible in the first place. Though this does not mean that my choice of an appropriate possibility for my own existence is a choice that I make for the whole community, we must insist that such a choice is made *with* the community—that space in which any possibility of an individual self can be comprehended.

Given the centrality that the community plays in constituting the authenticity of the self, Tom Rockmore is right to say that *Being and Time* as a whole culminates in the discussion of historicity.[25] Unlike Rockmore, I emphasize that Heidegger's conception of community as the form of the individual does not necessarily lead to a totalitarian political view. As historical, *Dasein*'s Being-in-the-world in its co-constituted with the other is not fixed, but can take on new significances that nevertheless remain guided by a common tradition. Historicality refers to the potential for transformation in form of *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world as a whole, so that the possibility for which it is resolved must come from outside the everyday understanding of existence and aim to bring about a new form of being-in-the-world. New possibilities for

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 47.

existence are neither arbitrarily given from a position outside of the world, nor are they confined to the possibilities offered by the everyday public form of *Dasein*.

Conclusion

In Part One, I have presented resoluteness as the central concept in Heidegger's *Being and Time*. By presenting resoluteness as a mode of disclosure, I have shown that while many limit this concept to the sphere of an individual's self relation, resoluteness should rather be grasped as a political concept. I have argued that on the basis of resoluteness, the moment of political action is an event in which the familiar intelligibility of *Dasein*'s world breaks down and a people finds itself compelled to erect a new foundation. Hence, political action arises when a people finds itself in a relation to the world and not brought about through their own agency. The political is a happening and cannot be understood in terms of action that can be achieved for the sake of another goal. That for which a people are resolute has no conceivable end, but is something towards which a people are called, beyond the means-end rationality of the everyday disclosure of world. On the basis of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness, the political is an end in itself that cannot be justified in terms of the everyday disclosure of the world. In the second part of my dissertation, I will examine how this conception of the political orients both Marcuse and Arendt's conceptions of political action.

PART TWO*:*

RESOLUTENESS AND THE POLITICAL

Part One established that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness in *Being and Time* should be read as a political concept, not an ethical one. By defining *Dasein* in terms of historicity, Heidegger understands the movement of history to be based on the finite temporality of resolute *Dasein* and unified by community. He conceives of community as a mode of being-in-the-world with others in which *Dasein* leaps ahead of the others, freeing them for their common existence in the world. The space in which this relationship appears can be called the *polis*. However, the conception of the political that emerges from Heidegger's notion of historicity rejects the Hegelian notion that history necessarily progresses towards some final, absolute end in all forms of human existence. The existential analytic shows that there is no final end towards which history necessarily progresses at each moment. On the basis of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness, there are only beginnings and endings to history. Political action is not a means for carrying forward the movement of history toward an absolute end. It is not an instrument for some purpose that lies outside of itself, but rather is the foundational moment of a community's vision of the world. This vision first establishes the significance structure of the world as a whole, as opposed to simply reproducing that structure as in the case of our everyday mode of existence in the form of the public. Hence, Heidegger rejects what Arendt calls the traditional view of politics in philosophy, according to which political action is merely strategic, and beneath the dignity of the philosopher's quest for timeless truth.[1]

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[1] Hannah Arendt, "Socrates," in *The Promise of Politics*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), 6. Also, ———, "Introduction *into* Politics," in *The Promise of Politics*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), 132-133.

In Part Two, I argue that both Marcuse and Arendt—Heidegger's students most influential for political thought in the U.S.—develop this notion of resoluteness and should inform the discussion of Heidegger's political thought. For some this is not a controversial claim. Richard Wolin has argued that both Marcuse and Arendt are so indebted to Heidegger's political thought that they reproduce its anti-democratic tendencies.[2] Andrew Feenberg argues that despite Marcuse's renunciation of phenomenology for a concrete social theory based in Hegelian Marxism, traces of Heidegger's influence can still be detected in Marcuse's later social thought.[3] On the basis of their own testimony, however, the only commonality between Marcuse (who was Marxist) and Arendt (who was decidedly *not*) might be their apprehension that Heidegger's philosophy can be an adequate basis for understanding the social or political character of our existence. Despite their efforts to distance themselves from Heidegger, I show that Marcuse's and Arendt's social and political thought remains indebted to Heidegger's notion of resoluteness in *Being and Time* and thereby, can help reveal its political implications. This will further confirm my claim that the authentic form of *Dasein*'s relation to the other in resoluteness cannot be seen as any kind of isolation from or domination of others—using the other as nothing more than a means to one's own ends. Resoluteness is φρόνησις, *phrŏnēsis,* thought, purpose, intention, insight, vision, judgment—the capacity to take on the perspective of all the others and act in concert.[4] Such a capacity is crucial for political action because it forms the space of community (*Gemeinschaft*), a relation to the other in which a plurality of human beings are free

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[2] Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Children : Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 171-172.

[3] Andrew Feenberg, *Heidegger and Marcuse: The Catastrophe and Redemption of History* (New York: Routledge, 2005), xi.

[4] Arendt connects this Greek notion to Kant's conception of judgment. See ———, *Between Past and Future, Six Exercises in Political Thought*, 221.

to appear to others as they appear to themselves. For Heidegger, the space of the community is distinguished from that of the anonymous anyone, the 'They (*das Man*)', the everyday form of co-existence in which *Dasein* is fallen into its world and unreflectingly reproduces the significance structure of the world that has been handed down to us.

Marcuse's social theory and Arendt's political thought develop in conversation with Heidegger's notion of resoluteness and are compelling in the context of Heidegger's political thought for at least two reasons. First, their reception of Heidegger is largely confined to *Being and Time,* at least in part because both were forced to flee Germany as the National Socialists came to power. Second, as I show, Marcuse and Arendt share similar views about the loss of freedom in modernity despite coming to different conclusions about Marx's materialist conception of history and the meaning of politics in the modern age, which saw two World Wars and the rise of totalitarianism. In Chapters Three and Four, I argue that Marcuse and Arendt develop the themes of historicity, action, and the distinction between labor and work, which I claim are anticipated by Heidegger's conception of resoluteness. To be sure, Marcuse and Arendt are anything but dogmatic Heideggerians. In fact, both have explicitly rejected what they see as individualistic, isolationist tendencies of Heidegger's resoluteness. In these chapters, I show how Marcuse's conception of radical action and Arendt's conception of the political can be read as responses to Heidegger's conception of resoluteness in *Being and Time*.

Marcuse's early writings (1928-33)—those most obviously influenced by Heidegger—develop the themes of history, action, and the relationship between labor and action in the realm of human freedom, showing how the notion of resoluteness could be read as a theory of social revolution. In his first publication, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical

Materialism" (1928), Marcuse argues that Heidegger's conception of history must become material, that is, incorporate into its analysis the concrete political-economic structures which shape the historical existence of *Dasein* as a being-in-the-world. When this material realm of historicity is taken into account, the unifying agent of history is not a community (*Gemeinschaft*) with a shared vision of the world coming together for the sake of a common purpose, but a totality of human existence divided against itself. Following Marx, Marcuse sees society (*Gesellschaft*) as a space of class conflict, where one does not appear to the others as one does to oneself (as in community with them), for both are locked in perpetual conflict with the other in a state of domination. Radical action aims to transform this state by acting against the status quo, through what Heidegger called a disavowal of the past "working itself out" in the present.[5] In "On Concrete Philosophy" (1929), Marcuse develops a foundation for a theory of radical action that would intervene in the movement of history and bring about a transformation in human existence, toward a world free of the unbearable character of existence in the global capitalist economic system and of the violent social oppression that allows it function. The Heideggerian impulse behind Marcuse's critique of capitalist society continues through his insistence that the concept of labor in capitalist economic theory lacks an ontological foundation in "On the Philosophical Foundations of the Concept of Labor in Economics" (1933). I argue that Marcuse's radical social theory develops Heidegger's notion of resoluteness. By exploring the themes of history, action, and Marcuse's claim that the tradition economic conception of labor must be redefined to include activity in the realm of freedom in these early writings, I show how Heidegger's conception of resoluteness influences Marcuse's social critique. This complicates a

[5] Marcuse, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 13, 33.

prominent conception of Marcuse's relation to Heidegger in the literature, which holds that the primary influence on Marcuse had always been Marx, and that Heidegger was but a brief interest for Marcuse, who was abandoned as soon as he discovered Marx's early manuscripts. For instance, John Abromeit claims that Marcuse's philosophy of technology, which saw the liberatory potential of technological development, has very little in common with Heidegger's anti-modern critique of technology.[6] Feenberg also takes this view, but with a different appraisal of Heidegger's phenomenology. He argues that many of the things Marcuse's critical theory strove to understand were offered by the phenomenology he left behind. The story is not so simple when seen from the perspective of resoluteness, I argue, because the Marx that Marcuse discovers in the *1844 Manuscripts* is a very Heideggerian Marx, whose redefinition of the human essence in terms of history, Marcuse claims, is the basis of Marx's social theory.

In Chapter Four, I argue that Arendt's conception of political action is also a development of the notion of resoluteness, though she rejects Marxian social theory and the materialist conception of history. I examine the themes of history, action, and her distinction between labor and work in Arendt's political thought. In addition to showing why Heidegger's conception of the political would oppose Marcuse's materialist conception of history, I argue that Arendt's conception of human freedom, which is the basis for political action, advances aspects of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness. For Arendt, political action is not a phenomenon of the will, but a capacity she calls "natality"—the possibility of being the beginning of something new. This rejection of an individualistic concept of action, her view that political action cannot be seen as a

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[6] John Abromeit, "Left Heideggerianism or Phenomenological Marxism? Reconsidering Herbert Marcuse's Critical Theory of Technology," *Constellations* 17, no. 1 (2010): 100-101.

phenomenon of the will should be familiar to us, for as we saw in Part One, Heidegger similarly rejected the notion that resoluteness could be grasped in terms of the will in *Being and Time*.

In the final chapter, I summarize my findings and argue that Marcuse and Arendt illuminate the contemporary relevance of Heidegger's political thought and should inform our understanding of the political dimension of *Being and Time*. I develop a conception of freedom based on resoluteness that notes its central concern with world-changing events. Chapter Five concludes by noting the limitations of my study and consider possible future avenues for research.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EARLY MARCUSE'S CRITIQUE OF RESOLUTENESS

> "[Heidegger] has determined the moment of decision —resoluteness—to be a historical situation and resoluteness itself to be a taking-up of historical fate. Against the bourgeois concepts of freedom and determination, he has posed a new definition of being free as the ability to choose necessity, as the genuine ability to grasp the possibilities that have been prescribed and pregiven; moreover, he has established history as the sole authority in relation to this 'fidelity to one's own existence.' Here, however, the radical impulse reaches its end."[1]

In this chapter, I establish the relevance of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness for social and political thought by turning to its influence on Herbert Marcuse's critical social theory. Reading resoluteness as a theory of radical action, the early Marcuse (1927-33) sought to synthesize Heidegger's phenomenological existentialism with the notion of historical materialism in Marx.[2] Marcuse's first published essay, "Contribution to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism" (1928) hailed *Being and Time* as "a turning point in the history of philosophy: the point at which bourgeois philosophy unmakes itself from the inside and clears the way for a new and 'concrete' science."[3] But this praise does not mean that he viewed the work as flawless. As I will show, Marcuse argues that Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* in terms of resoluteness, fails to grasp *Dasein*'s true historical "concreteness," i.e., its determination by production as the basis for history. Marcuse thinks Marx's historical materialism can help clarify

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[1] Marcuse, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 15.

[2] Here I follow John Abromeit's classification of three periods in Marcuse's thought in "Herbert Marcuse's Critical Encounter with Martin Heidegger 1927-33," in *Herbert Marcuse: A Critical Reader*, ed. John Abromeit and W. Mark Cobb (New York: Routledge, 2004).

[3] ———, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 11.

Heidegger's conception of history, and thereby contribute to an understanding of radical action. At the same time, Marcuse's synthesis requires a revision of historical materialism in Marx—specifically a reworking of Marx's prioritization of the material conditions of production over ideas.

Before turning to Marcuse's early critique of resoluteness, it will be helpful to consider the context in which he reads Heidegger. According to Douglas Kellner, Marcuse's "Heideggerian Marxism" sought to rescue the radical tendencies in Marx's thought and breathe new life into an otherwise decaying Marxist discourse.[4] Marcuse comes to Heidegger as a Marxist, and therefore his interest in Heideggerian phenomenology should not be seen as a rejection of Marx, but as a development of its basic position. To understand the early Marcuse's turn to Heidegger's phenomenology, we must ask: What would attract a Marxist revolutionary to Heidegger's *Being and Time*?

We can begin to see why Marcuse would be interested in Heidegger's political thought by considering that both Heidegger and Marx require a kairological view of time. They both reject the abstract view of time as only chronological, and nothing more than a quantitative sum of identical moments, which, for Marcuse, is the core of "bourgeois" thought. That Marx and Heidegger require a kairological view of time has been separately pointed out by commentators

[4] See Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*, 50-63. Kellner provides what is still the most comprehensive study of Marcuse's thought, in which he argues that Marcuse's initial interest in Heidegger's phenomenology was precipitated by Marcuse's experience of the "crisis of Marxism," i.e., the defeat of the working-class movement and diminishing faith in the proletariat as the agent of historical progress. Kellner claims that for Marcuse, "phenomenological existentialism would provide a philosophical dimension needed to revitalize the Marxian theory and to enable it to expand its problematic to encompass concrete problems of human existence, subjectivity and culture, closed off to more traditional versions of Marxism" (59).

on each. Marxists such as Walter Benjamin[5], Moishe Postone[6], and Sami Khatib[7] have uncovered kairological aspects of Marx's thought, while Giorgio Agamben[8] and Felix Ó Murchadha[9] have identified the kairological in Heidegger, as well. Marcuse's analysis is unique in that it aims to bring together the seemingly disparate frameworks of Marx and Heidegger.

Kairological Time in Marx and Heidegger

Following Marx and Heidegger, the course of history is fundamentally determined by "events" that radically change the significance of the world. Radical events, such as the civil rights movement, Indian independence movement, or movements for gender equality, require an understanding of the kairological moment, in which one's customs no longer make sense and the significance of the world as a whole must undergo a decisive transformation. Radical transformations require an understanding of something—call it truth or value—that stands outside our everyday practices. The kairological moment and its relation to chronos will be developed more fully below, but Marx's criticism of Feuerbach in *The German Ideology* illustrates it quite well:

> He does not see that the sensuous world around him is not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society; and indeed [a product] in the sense that it is an historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the preceding one,

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[5] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1986).

[6] Moishe Postone, "The Dialectic of Labor and Time," in *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[7] Sami Khatib, "The Time of Capital and the Messianicity of Time: Marx with Benjamin," http://anthropologicalmaterialism.hypotheses.org/844. Accessed 5/17/14

[8] Giorgio Agamben, "Time and History: Critique of the Instant and the Continuum," in *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience* (New York: Verso, 1993).

[9] Felix Ó Murchadha, *The Time of Revolution: Kairos and Chronos in Heidegger* (New York: Continuum, 2012).

> developing its industry and its intercourse, modifying its social system according to the changed needs.[10]

Pointing out the abstractness of Feuerbach's conception of the world, Marx insists that the world is nothing fixed and unchanging; moving through time as a river flows through a its banks. Of course, it can be viewed as Feuerbach does, but only in abstraction from its concrete conditions. In the concrete sense, what one understands as the world in any given situation is a product of human action in history. Action not only transforms the entities in the world (e.g., the cherry tree into a pie, iron ore into an automobile, or fossil fuels into gasoline), but also the very circumstances in which the world as a whole can be discovered. Action in the former sense depends upon an already given framework of significance in which the product can have meaning (e.g., gasoline is produced in order to fuel automobiles), while in the latter sense, action aims to transform the very significance of that world. Such world-changing actions are historical in the sense that they do not merely reproduce the world as it is given, but transform its very structure as a whole. For example, the basic structure of the world in capitalism must be distinguished from that in feudalism.

Similarly, as I argued in Chapter Two, Heidegger's notion of resoluteness means that both *Dasein* and its world can change radically from how they have been in the past, and therefore makes more sense as political rather than ethical action. For both Marx and Heidegger, action is historical when it makes possible a new world, qualitatively different than the previous world. Of course, Marx views this change in the basic structure of the world as a product of human activity, whereas Heidegger would see it as the destining power of being. Nevertheless, this transformation in the structure of the world as a whole is necessary to understand history in the

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[10] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The German Ideology, Vol. I," in *Collected Works, Vol. V: Marx and Engels 1845-1847* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 39.

concrete sense, as a movement of human existence. Capitalism, in Marx's view, seems to be based on an abstract sense of time (i.e., chronological time), which eliminates any specific qualities of all beings in the world—including the human being—and reduces them to mere quantities of value. As Khatib points out, in *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Marx writes: "Time is everything, man is nothing; he is, at the most, time's carcase. Quality no longer matters. Quantity alone decides everything; hour for hour, day for day; but this equalising of labour is not by any means the work of M. Proudhon's eternal justice; it is purely and simply a fact of modern industry."[11] Here, Marx views modern industry—a specific mode of production—as the basis for the eradication of quality from the world under capitalism. For both Marx and Heidegger, action not only reproduces the world, but can radically change it. Understanding the movement of history as a series of transformations in the world requires a distinction between chronological and kairological time, which is central to both Marx and Heidegger.

An essential difference between Heidegger and Marx can be understood on the basis of their conceptions of history. Where Heidegger views the whole of human existence in terms of its understanding of being, and hence, history as the movement in a people's understanding of being, Marx holds that the social totality is based on production. He argues:

> The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the means of subsistence they actually find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life* on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. Hence what individuals are depends on the material conditions of their production.[12]

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[11] ———, "The Poverty of Philosophy," in *Collected Works, Vol. VI: Marx and Engels 1845-1848* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 127.

[12] ———, "The German Ideology, Vol. I," 31-32.

Here, Marx adopts a historical view of the social totality. His conception requires that not only the world, but also the individuals who constitute it, can change. Heidegger and Marx can agree on this point. To some extent, modifying the mode of production is comparable to Heidegger's notion of resoluteness as a modification of the disclosure of the world in everydayness. In Part One, I showed that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness assumes that action can change the world and with it, the individuals who constitute it. Hence, for both Marx and Heidegger, we must speak of modes of life; modes of existence. We can speak of "The World" or "Human Nature" as given once and for all eternity only as an abstraction from its concrete givenness in a specific historical situation. However, according to the early Marcuse's Marx, the basis for transformation in modes of life (e.g., ancient and modern) is the specific way in which the social totality interacts with nature, namely, its mode of production. Marx understands 'mode of production' widely to mean a specific form of life.[13] The difference between ancient and modern modes of life is not found in their differing conceptions of being, as Heidegger would argue, but rather in their different forms of producing and reproducing their existence within the natural and material world. Marx's conception of production as the basis for the historical transformations in society results in the view that radical action must transform the existing means of production. Only then can a new form of social existence become possible. Marcuse adopts this latter Marxian view because he sees it as more consistent with a concrete understanding of history.

Given this essential distinction between Marx and Heidegger, the early Marcuse's attempt to bring Heidegger's phenomenology together with the notion of historical materialism in Marx is all the more remarkable. As a result of Marcuse's synthesis, Marx and Heidegger both become

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[13] This point will be important later, because Arendt reads Marx's conception of production as concerned only with the physical, biological existence of human beings, which I (and Marcuse) find to be an uncharitable reading of Marx's view—see Marcuse, "On the Concept of Labor in Economics," 126-127.

essential to a philosophy of radical action. In this context, it should be noted that his synthesis requires not only a revision of Heidegger's phenomenology, but also a modification of Marxian materialism. In Marcuse's day, historical materialism was touted as a basis for a scientific and deterministic view of economy, which precluded the possibility of radical action. All the "orthodox" Marxist had to do was wait for the impending collapse of capitalism. Consider that for Marx, the material conditions of production are ontologically prior to, and determine, the ideas human beings have about these conditions:

> The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material intercourse of men—the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men at this stage still appear as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people.[14]

Marx attacks the philosophy of his day for prioritizing ideas over the material conditions of their production. But following Heidegger, Marcuse insists this priority no longer makes sense: "The old question of what has objective priority, of 'which came first'—mind or matter, consciousness or being—not only cannot be answered by a dialectical phenomenology but also becomes meaningless within this framework."[15] Marx's priority of the material conditions of production only succeeds in negating the tradition, and therefore, remains determined by it. According to Marcuse, Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world can help provide a concrete foundation for radical action, because it rejects the very distinction between material or ideal, mind or matter. This allows Marcuse to claim a position that Marx's materialism never could have held, namely, that "the ideological dimensions of a society are produced ahead of and alongside the economic dimensions—and that is precisely because the former have their

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[14] Marx and Engels, "The German Ideology, Vol. I," 36.

[15] Marcuse, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 29.

foundation in the latter."[16] Here, Marcuse is not merely inverting the priority Marx's historical materialism gives to the material conditions of production. Rather, he argues that this distinction no longer holds. Marcuse's position should be read as positing a third way that can be understood as neither idealism nor materialism, but rather as a synthesis of the dialectical and phenomenological frameworks that requires both be revised. Marcuse shows that resoluteness establishes a framework for thinking about radical political action that is irreducible to either materialism or idealism. In this way, Marcuse shows how Heidegger's phenomenology can overcome problems with the notion of historical materialism in Marx. What is crucial to notice before turning to Marcuse's critique of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness is how, following both Marx and Heidegger, Marcuse redefines the political to have a necessary relation to radical action. Radical action responds to social problems by transforming the form of that society itself. The agents of such action are not only laborers any more than they are elected representatives in a governing body, but rather the people or society themselves.

Marcuse's Critique of Resoluteness

Marcuse embraced Heidegger's thinking to the extent that it allowed him to free the radical kernel of Marx's social theory from a dogmatic materialist interpretation. However, his reception of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness was certainly not uncritical. In the first place, Marcuse attacks what he sees as Heidegger's tendency to conceive *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world as solitary and individualistic, concerned primarily for its self, and obsessed with its own death. Marcuse says, "… one must undoubtedly oppose Heidegger's attempt … to refer the decisive

[16] Ibid.

resoluteness back to the isolated Dasein rather than driving it toward the resoluteness of the act. This resolute act is not just a 'modification' of existence as it has been—it is a shaping anew of all spheres of public life."[17] This early criticism is echoed in a 1977 interview in which Marcuse claims that Heidegger's conception of authenticity is "the withdrawal from the entire world of the others, *Das Man* ... Authenticity would then mean the return to oneself, to one's innermost freedom, and, out of this inwardness, to decide, to determine every phase, every situation, every moment of one's existence."[18] On the basis of what we have already discovered about Heidegger's conception of authenticity in Part One, this criticism of resoluteness is disingenuous. As I already noted, the authentic counter-concept to everyday being with the other (i.e., *das Man*) is not isolation from the others, which is impossible on the basis of Heidegger's conception of world disclosure, but rather community. In community the other does not leap in for *Dasein* and determine its possibilities, but leaps ahead and liberates *Dasein* for its ownmost possibilities. Marcuse seems to fail to recognize this at all. While it is certainly true that the mode of understanding in resoluteness is being-towards-death, this serves to reveal something fundamental about *Dasein*'s concrete temporality—namely, its finitude—and does not at all mean a withdrawal from the others. As Heidegger is careful to explain:

> Resoluteness, as *authentic Being-one's-Self*, does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating 'I'. And how should it, when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness, is *authentically* nothing else than *Being-in-the-world?* Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concernful Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others. (SZ 298/344)

Only by taking a stand on its existence, i.e., deciding to be *for* this possibility rather than another one, can *Dasein* recognize the other in this same capacity. The stand *Dasein* takes on its

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[17] Ibid., 16.

[18] ———, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview," 171-172.

existence—the possibility it chooses—is a possibility of being-in-the-world, and as such not only a possibility for the individual *Dasein*. For this reason, Heidegger can say that *Dasein* can only become the conscience of others in resoluteness (SZ 298/344). Thus, Marcuse's claim that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness is individualistic falls utterly flat.

Marcuse's other criticisms of Heidegger's phenomenology are not as easy to dispel. Marcuse's claim that Heidegger does not move far enough towards concreteness gets much closer to the real difficulty in bringing together Marx and Heidegger. Following the conception of Marx's historical materialism sketched above, Marcuse argues that for Heidegger's interpretation of *Dasein* to be truly concrete, it must understand history as the development of the forces of production in society, because the latter constitutes the ground on which society advances and can exist as historical. "As the expression of the existential needs of a society," Marcuse writes, "the society's mode of production is both the constitutive historical foundation on which it rests and the ground on which the historical movement takes place."[19] For Heidegger, production is a consequence of world disclosure. But for Marcuse, it is the other way around. If production, conceived as a mode of existence—not merely the material reproduction of existence—is seen as the basis for historical movement, then to be radical, action must aim to transform the society's mode of production. Hence, one shortcoming of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness, according to Marcuse's critical social theory, is that despite Heidegger's emphasis on the historicity of *Dasein*, his conception of history remains a false abstraction from the conditions under which society actually develops, insofar as it views being as the basis for historical transformation, rather than society's mode of production.

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[19] ———, "Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 29.

When production is seen as the determining feature of history, *Dasein*'s contemporary situation is the age of advanced capitalism, which determines the structure of the world that can appear for *Dasein*. According to Marcuse, viewing production as the basis for history requires a revision of Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* as a whole. Recall that for Heidegger, the other is not someone over and against whom *Dasein* stands out, but those from whom *Dasein* does not distinguish itself: "By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me—those over against whom the "I" stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does *not* distinguish oneself—those among whom one is too" (SZ 118/154). Marcuse would most certainly reject this conception of *Dasein*'s relation to the other. Following historical materialism, the relations of production in advanced capitalist society are not mutual co-relations, but class relations that operate in opposition to each other (e.g., bourgeoisie v. proletariat). Hence, where Heidegger sees the whole of *Dasein* as a unity, namely, the people who share a common understanding of being, Marcuse argues that the whole must be viewed as an antinomy. Marcuse writes,

> It is not only that the world of significance varies among particular contemporary cultural regions and groups but also that within any of these, abysses of meaning may open up between different worlds. Precisely in the most existentially essential behavior, no understanding exists between the world of the high-capitalist bourgeois and that of the small farmer or proletarian. Here the examination must confront the question of the material constitution of historicity and in so doing achieves a breakthrough that Heidegger fails to achieve or even gesture toward.[20]

For Marcuse, Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* is a bad abstraction from the concrete situation of life in the age of advanced capitalism. In this context, it is interesting to note that by turning to class as the underlying basis of society, Marcuse seems to overlook the concept of capital in Marx, and thus moves away from both Marx and Heidegger. Christian Lotz has argued that for

[20] Ibid., 16.

Marx, the unifying force in capitalist society is not class, but money.[21] This sort of argument goes against the Lukácsian model, which views the proletarian position as the guardian of truth.[22] If this is so, then to the extent that Marx posits society as a unity based on capital, he may be closer to Heidegger than even Marcuse acknowledges. Marcuse may have missed the possibility of viewing capital as a mode of world disclosure by confining himself to Marx's early writings. In any case, Marcuse argues that when viewed from the perspective of production and reproduction of society as a whole in this age, we cannot claim a common world of meaning between, e.g., the bourgeoisie who own the means of production and the proletariat who are forced to sell their labor in order to survive. While both can be seen as occupying the same space within history, and so in some sense share a common age, the significance of the world for each class differs enough that Heidegger can claim a unity only at the cost of abstraction from the actual conditions in which each produces and reproduces its existence. One might similarly ask whether there can be any shared understanding between different genders, races, and sexual orientations. Hence, while Marcuse wants to preserve Heidegger's conception of life-space because it overcomes the distinction between materialism and idealism—which is necessary if he wants to claim that the ideological dimensions of society have some role in shaping the material relations of production —he insists that Heidegger's view must incorporate the material content of history into its analysis. But is it really the case that between, e.g., bourgeoisie and proletariat, there is an "abyss of meaning"? While few would deny that the existence of classes tracks an important distinction that merits consideration, one might question whether it is really the case that no shared

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[21] Christian Lotz, "The Transcendental Force of Money: Social Synthesis in Marx," *Rethinking Marxism* 26, no. 1 (2014).

[22] Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981).

understanding or common ground can be found between them. Any terms that would be used to describe one class must necessarily imply the existence of the other. In this view, one cannot make sense of the bourgeois world as a world in which labor can be purchased for the expansion of capital, and the means of production are held in the hands of a few independently from the proletarian one, and vice versa. This relationality points to a larger whole within which the parts coexist. To be clear, for Marx this unity is based on capital, for Marcuse on class, and for Heidegger on the people's understanding of being. Hence, despite the very real and significant differences between classes, some fundamental underlying unity that links them together must necessarily remain.

In Marcuse's later essay from his early period, "On Concrete Philosophy" (1929), he seems to acknowledge this point and corrects the position that no common understanding can be found across different classes of society. He claims:

> Numerous variations among individual classes, peoples, countries, etc. may become apparent … but they are all merely variations within a unity that provides their foundation, different positions and developments within the same economic and social being. And only as far as the unified structure of this being extends can one speak of a unified situation. … All individuals, all "communities" of a certain epoch, however different they may be, are united by the essential fact that they occupy the same historical situation. To be sure, there are as many modes of existing as there are individuals, and thus also just as many existential possibilities and necessities. But the individuals are by no means the ultimate unities on which the analysis of historical existence must rely.[23]

Marcuse's change from viewing the whole of *Dasein* as an antinomy to a unity in line with Heidegger's conception of community could signify a confusion on his part, resulting from his attempt to combine two frameworks (i.e., Heidegger's and Marx's) fundamentally opposed to each other, or resulting from a revision of his earlier position. Either the whole of *Dasein* is an antinomy, i.e., a logical contradiction that only appears rational, or it is a rational unity; it cannot be both. If Marcuse is confused, we can assume he wants to have it both ways—the world in

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[23] Marcuse, "On Concrete Philosophy," 41.

which class exists is both a contradiction and a rational whole—when he cannot. Ian Angus seems to suggest this when he argues against the possibility of bringing Marx's historical materialism together with Heidegger's political ontology.[24] But if Marcuse is revising his earlier position, Heidegger's thought would seem to exert a stronger influence on Marcuse's critical social theory than other commentators, like Abromeit, would allow.[25]

To the extent that Marcuse holds that the life-space is determined by production in the age of capitalism, he cannot have in mind Heidegger's conception of life-space as determined by a people's understanding of being as the constitutive basis for history. Heidegger holds that history is not constituted by relations of production but rather an understanding of being, which has been expressed in discourse and passed on from previous generations. From this perspective, production is already a form of understanding the world; of interpreting it as something to be used for the sake of human life. We can get a better sense of Heidegger's view when we recall that for him, our understanding of being is communal, that is, founded on the community's way of understanding the meaning of existence in the world. An example will clarify this view. Say that I am French and raising a child. As a French parent, I have a tacit understanding, which needs be neither explicit nor objective, of what it means to be a parent—of how to parent—so I understand that when my child wakes up in the middle of the night, I should allow her the opportunity to lull herself back to sleep so she will learn to do this for herself, and in the future I

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[24] Ian Angus, "Herbert Marcuse's Heideggerian Marxism: Review Essay," *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (2009). See also "Walking on Two Legs: One the Very Possibility of a Hedeggerian Marxism," *Human Studies* 28 (2005).

[25] Abromeit, "Left Heideggerianism or Phenomenological Marxism? Reconsidering Herbert Marcuse's Critical Theory of Technology." See also "Herbert Marcuse's Critical Encounter with Martin Heidegger 1927-33."

will suffer fewer sleepless nights.[26] I would know this not because I have ever been a parent before or even because I have worked out a theory about what parenting is. In fact, if anyone were to ask me what I am doing and why I am doing it (i.e., teaching my child how to put itself to sleep), I would probably simply reply that this is what parenting *is*; this is what it means to be a parent. I would know how to parent because I am French, and the French people who have gone before me have "resolutely" passed this tradition on to me of what it means to be a French person. It should be pointed out that to be a French person in the sense I am talking about here does not mean to be a member of *this* or *that* nation. Rather, to be a French person in the way I refer to here means only that I have an understanding of existence—of what it means to be a parent, cook food, decorate my home, and supply my personal needs—that is somehow distinctively French and rooted in a particular place and culture. French-ness, whatever it would mean, would also not be something that one could ever *become*, but that one could only *be.* In this way, the people could be seen as prior to social and economic concepts such as race, class, and gender.

What I have described above is a way to understand the connection between culture (or "peopleness") and the meaning of being that can be seen as the everydayness of world disclosure. Heidegger described everydayness as our most fundamental and characteristic way of engaging in a world that has always already been understood, even if we cannot always be specific about the contents of our pre-understanding. Pre-understanding is a knowing *how* (pre-understanding), which must be distinguished from knowing *that* (understanding), since the latter

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[26] Pamela Druckerman, *Bringing up BéBé: One American Mother Discovers the Wisdom of French Parenting* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012). See Chapter 3.

assumes that the givenness of understanding has been made explicit in discourse.[27] While some might view this pre-understanding that characterizes culture as a kind of bigotry, Gadamer describes it as a type of prejudice that is necessary for any understanding whatsoever. Although prejudice is often seen only in negative terms, he points out that the term only begins to acquire this connotation in the legal discourse of the Enlightenment.[28] Following Heidegger's conception of the historicity of understanding, Gadamer shows that pre-understanding should not be viewed as a judgment rendered before all the facts have been rendered, but as a positive condition of our existence in a world that we can recognize as our own. In this sense, one can view the pre-givenness of the understanding as a form of being related to an other that enables us to fulfill our essential possibilities. Through pre-understanding, the significance of the world in which we live has always already determined by the other, who leaps ahead of us and discloses a world of possibilities for us. Pre-understanding can be seen as a gift—one we can never be sure we should have accepted—that has the potential either to dominate or free us, to close down our possibilities for Being-in-the-world or open us up to them. In Heidegger's view, pre-understanding is neither good nor bad, just nor unjust, but simply a basic constituent of being-in-the-world and the possible meaning (specific content) of moral and ethical terms such as these. At this point, one might be tempted to ask why Heidegger does not provide criteria by which to judge cultural practices as just. But this would be missing the point, for at interest is not the specific *content* of a people, but the meaningfulness of *Dasein* as a being-in-the-world; what it means for *Dasein* to exist as a people. Accordingly, even false examples would have no effect on

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[27] Discourse here means a mode activity in a world of significance that is fundamentally shaped by a culture. This culture is a central part of the constitution of the world as something for which *Dasein* can exist and that has been handed down from the past.

[28] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd, rev. ed., Continuum Impacts (New York: Continuum, 2004), 270.

Heidegger's basic observation that the way in which we understand ourselves and our world is profoundly determined by culture as a heritage that has been passed on by others who have existed before us and shaped the significance of our world through their discourse.

Applying the example of French parenting to the issue of resoluteness as radical action, I can now say that radical action must aim to redefine the meaning of being a French parent, or more precisely, to redefine what it means to be a French person. It is hard to see why anyone would want to make a revolution out of the example I have given above, which at first glance seems like a reasonable way to raise a child. But consider another example—the culture of masculinity in America. Suppose that what it means to be an American man is to have a socially accepted propensity for violence as a legitimate way to handle disputes, to view women as objects rather than fellow people, or to see any expression of emotion as feminine, and thus un-masculine. In these instances, the need for radical action to transform this culture by redefining what it means to be a man seems apparent. Or, consider another example. Suppose the understanding of being that shapes the American culture values car ownership over public transportation or riding a bicycle, and accepts eating a large number of our meals in that car, while ignoring the impact of these decisions on our health and environment. Of course, Heidegger's perspective must hold that whatever understanding of being guides the American people supersedes our modes of transport, our forms of nourishment (or lack-thereof) and even the artificial boundaries dividing us from other nations. Yet these examples serve to illustrate that however I specify the people or the factors (region, climate, language, etc) that influence the specific content of who they are, radical action is *communal* and aims to redefine what it means for us *to be* this people.

This shift in a people's understanding of being—the new stand they take on existence—may not be sufficient for radical transformation, but in Heidegger's view it is nevertheless necessary to bring about the economic and social reforms for which Marcuse advocates. For example, the civil rights movement has in many respects redefined whatever culture there is in the United States, i.e., transformed what it means to be an American people. Their radical action has worked tirelessly, with more or less success, to shape this culture into one that—at least symbolically—can no longer tolerate relegating some to the status of second-class citizens, thereby transforming what it means to be American people. I recognize that this fight is anything but over, but notice that while the stand a people takes on existence can later be codified into laws, etc., this movement would be fundamentally misunderstood if it were viewed as simply about changing laws and getting jobs for folks who are systematically excluded from earning even a meager wage. It would be a fundamental mistake to view radical action as an instrument for these sorts of purposes. What these and other kinds of radical action are fundamentally about is nothing legal, social, or economic, but rather the kind of people we want to be. Just as teachers ought to tell their students to value their education for its own sake and not simply because it can get them a job, the goal of radical action is nothing but the action itself. Radical action allows a new space to appear within the world, which is necessary for a new world to emerge.

The stand that a people takes on its existence—its being-for some possibility of themselves as a whole—is prior to, and determines, not only legal relations, but also social and economic categories. In resolute action, the form of *Dasein*'s relation to the other can be seen as

leaping ahead of the other rather than leaping-in for them).[29] This enables *Dasein* to take itself over into action without coercion for the realization of its essential possibilities.[30] Culture is ontologically prior to social and economic categories such as class, race, gender, and sexual orientation and is a part of determining them. These categories do not become meaningless in Heidegger's conception of *Dasein*, as Marcuse assumes.[31] Rather, for Heidegger we can only make sense of such categories on the basis of an already-given concept of what it means to be a people.

Marcuse's conception of capital as the basis for world disclosure totalizes the existing state of affairs. To the extent that he views world disclosure as fundamentally determined by production, he negates the possibility for any change in the the status quo. Capitalist world-space requires us to orient ourselves around chronological time and instrumentalize our activity: doing A because of B, B in order to C, and so on—all for the sake of D. In this orientation, because D is the basis for the whole (A, B, C), the meaning of A, B, and C must be independent from the chain of instrumental activity or D cannot really be that for the sake of which we perform A, B, and C. The materialist perspective, which Marcuse claims to share with Marx, views D as an abstraction. It argues that there is nothing for the sake of which we do A, B, and C that is not itself instrumental, if for no other reason than D must serve the development of *Dasein*'s possibilities in the world. Hence, from the materialist perspective, instrumentality is the basic form of human engagement with the world, and nothing can exist outside its chronological

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[29] The space/situation in which the radical actors dwell, their everydayness, has already been described as a condition of domination. Hence, the radical act must aim to get out of that state through a different relation to the other, i.e., "leaping-ahead." See SZ 122/159. This would be the basis for a concept of freedom in Heidegger's *Being and Time.*

[30] Artists already have this insight, for through the act of creation they help bring a new world into existence.

[31] Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview," 167.

ordering. Because there is no time but chronological time in the materialist view, it appears that *nothing* transcends instrumentality, and that the world cannot change. But if radical action is possible at all, we must be able act in ways that are not instrumental. The world and the others within it *cannot* show up to us as something for us to use towards some other end, but must instead be valued for their own sake. In kairological time, there is no division between means and ends. The notion of kairological time, which is the basis for Heidegger's conception of resoluteness, can therefore be seen as essential to radical action to such an extent as to be a condition for its very possibility. Freedom is not just an ability to instrumentalize the world to enact one's ends. In Heidegger's view, radical action enacts a different kind of freedom that (using the same language) brings means and ends together, and should be seen as closer to play or art than the domination of others. Hence, his conception of radical action is closer to Gandhi's *ahimsa* vow and nonviolent resistance than it is to any form of domination or action for the sake of some goal other than the action itself. Radical action is a kind of leaping-ahead of the other, where *Dasein* can hand the matter of concern—which can only be a concern for itself as Being-in-the-world—back to *Dasein*. In this sense, the other offers a mirror in which I can take in myself, and hence without whom I cannot exist.

Marcuse's mistake in synthesizing Marx and Heidegger is that he totalizes the capitalist form of world disclosure, where he instead might have seen it as a deficient form of community. Marcuse tends to think of capitalism as something that society has become. His criticism that Heidegger neglects social reality squanders his insight that Marx and Heidegger understand history kairologically, and therefore must distinguish between the world that exists in capitalism and the possibilities inherent in any disclosure of world. In my view, it would be better to say

that while it is possible to *be* capitalists, we can never become them. From a Heideggerian perspective, capitalist culture could be viewed as a privative or deficient form of culture. On the basis of his ontology, even the *lack* of culture would have to be a form of culture, just as being apart from others is still a form of being-with them (SZ 121/157). The very concept of capitalism presupposes a certain type of people—a unified whole of *Dasein*. This people, who constitute the very possibility of capitalism, reproduce their own existence as a "capitalist" people in everydayness. But for Heidegger, capitalism cannot be what constitutes them as a people; the activity of production must be seen as an effect of culture, understood in this ontological sense, not as an effect of the production itself. To the extent that nothing exists outside the modes of production in the materialist view, Marcuse would claim precisely the opposite is the case. The act of production creates the need for its own consumption. While Marx would probably agree that our form of production is capitalism and hence that we are the capitalist people—it does not follow for him that capitalism is the sort of thing we can become. Accordingly, Marcuse seems to have overlooked a more solid common ground between Heidegger and Marx, and could have supported his conception of radical action as a space of resistance to the status quo.

From a Heideggerian perspective, to change the mode of production in society, it would first be necessary to develop new forms of discourse—new ways of engaging with the world. Radical action does not require overthrowing laws and legal relationships—we can act radically right now to make new ways of being-in-the-world.[32] Following Heidegger, these forms of

[32] Interesting in this context is what we might call Heidegger's *private* activism. Heidegger resisted many of the technological "innovations" that have come to be seen as commonplace in the construction of his *Hütte*, drawing water from a well. This information could be important because I suspect that in the interview with Olafson, Marcuse's rejection of Heidegger amounts to an *ad hominem* attack. Heidegger's radical activism may help illustrate that he is not *only* a Nazi and that the specific content of his own *private* radical action could be developed in other ways.

practice (i.e., ways of engaging in the world) are forms of discourse.[33] They allow a space to arise that is, if not non-capitalist, is at least constituted in such a way as to allow a people to decide collectively how to co-exist within a capitalist world. For example, the Amish have found a way to reflect together on whether their common values can allow the encroachment of technology on their way of life. While discourse in this sense may be seen as the content of resoluteness, it cannot of course remove the influence of capital or the socio-political in their midst. Still, the discursive practice of this form of radicalism may be seen as authentically political.

If we wait for capitalism to fail before working towards new forms of community, then we are making the same error in judgment I think Marcuse is guilty of—namely, believing that there nothing is beyond the structure of capitalism and so, only with its collapse can new forms of life in community with others be realized. In my view, this is the gravest mistake a would-be activist can make, i.e., to do nothing because nothing could come from it. It may be the case that capitalism will only collapse when we have exhausted all of the earth's resources and destroyed the home in which the global community dwells. Or perhaps then we will find ways to exploit new resources in other parts of the universe—and capitalism will ensue on a galactic scale. But waiting for capitalism's implosion before developing new forms of community seems to completely erase any radical content from Marx's astute analysis of the socio-economic structure of capital in the modern age. For the Marx who wrote that the point of understanding the world is not merely to interpret it, but rather to change it, nothing could be worse than using his analysis

[33] From the perspective of world disclosure, religious practices would just be types of Being-in-the-world, which could be seen as forms of participatory discourse that create a common understanding of the world.

to insist there is nothing beyond the socio-economic structure of capitalism, thereby squashing any hope for making a new beginning in the world.

If capitalism is ever to collapse, the understanding of being that makes it possible must be transformed, which for Heidegger, is technology. He understands technology as a way of viewing the world, (i.e., beings as a whole) as means towards the ends of human existence, rather than any specific thing (e.g., hammers, shovels, atom bombs, computers, drones, etc.). Hence, Heidegger could argue that capitalism depends upon a specific understanding of being, which views all beings—the human being included—as mere means towards human ends. The commodity form that arises in capitalism could be seen as a radicalization of this basic tendency. Capitalism can only develop where such an understanding of being is already in place. Technology in this instrumental sense can be seen as the basis, not only for the worker's exploitation of earth, but even for the bourgeoisie's exploitation of human labor power. If the root of the matter for capitalist society is not viewed as unequal class relations, but rather as its resolve to support and even pass on this technological understanding of the world, then radical action must aim to develop new forms of understanding that challenge the technological view of the world. In Heidegger's writing after *Being and Time*, he seems to hold out hope that it would be possible for us to develop a free relation to technology, in which technology no longer "leaps in" and determines our relations with others from the outset, but instead allows for mutual freedom.[34] For this possibility, however, new communities must emerge to oppose the free reign of technological development.

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[34] Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 35.

While I have shown how capitalism could be viewed from the perspective of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, some have argued his conception of radical action remains an idealistic abstraction because he fails to specify either the specific content of the people or what it is that the radical act must do. This criticism is basically accurate, for in resoluteness, the call of conscience does not and cannot say *what* to do, but *that* it should be done. Resoluteness does not tell us how to act, but only that we *must* act; that we must do *something*. Resoluteness cannot specify that the radical act must overthrow capitalism and that we should become socialists, communists, or anything else, and it certainly cannot point us towards the means to achieve this goal. While some might see this omission as an irredeemable flaw in Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, however, I think his ambiguity is a real advantage. Without specifying the content of radical action, Heidegger recognizes that the stand *Dasein* takes on its existence cannot be coercive, instrumental, or strategic, because it is kairological, not chronological. If Heidegger's conception of resoluteness as radical action remains too abstract, this is because resoluteness is but a moment from which we must return to everydayness. Resoluteness maintains a constancy between the moment of vision in resoluteness and *Dasein*'s everydayness. But in coming back to the temporality of strategic time, *Dasein*'s everydayness takes on a new sense. To be sure, the content of radical action can be nothing specific prior to the radical act itself, but radical action must be *structured* in such a way as to bring about freedom rather than domination. Radical action must be distinguished from action that leaps in for the other and takes control of his possibilities. In radical action, *Dasein* leaps ahead of the other and hands the matter of concern over to him, rather than exploit or dominate him (i.e., it is a form of leaping ahead of the other, not leaping in for them). Radical action aims to give to the other its freedom for its own

existence rather than stepping in for it and creating a situation of dependency. Also, for the most part, there is reason to be mistrustful of anyone who purports to tell us what the content of radical action should be: Make the revolution! Expel "foreign" elements from the pure community! In that case, Heidegger's conception of resoluteness and its exclusion of any specific content his analysis of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world could be seen as consistent with a free and uncoerced people. Wolin argues that Heidegger's failure to give resoluteness any specific content makes it un-principled and anti-democratic.[35] But his judgment depends on the meaning of democracy—is democracy constituted in the development of public opinion to inform a voting population? Or is it more like radical action, mutual preservation, cultivation, and perfection of our shared existence? Wolin would be right if there were something anti-democratic about non-violent political action. There is certainly a danger in thinking that the people can be the goal of radical political action, because it then becomes possible to justify horrendous acts so long as they are done for the sake of the greater good. However, as I have argued, culture is not something we become but that we *exist* as—we *are* the people but we can never *become* the people. The people cannot be the goal of radical action.

Ultimately, critical theorists and Heideggerians have a lot more uniting than dividing them. Central here is their shared concern that the instrumentalization of *Dasein*'s life-world shuts down the possibility that community can develop that will represent any significant challenge to the existing state of affairs in advanced capitalist society. But what of community? Is it really the case, as Marcuse seems to claim, that we can only form these sorts of uncoerced,

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[35] Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger*, 64-65.

meaningful relations to others after the revolution has toppled the forms of domination that support them?

I have established that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness influenced the early Marcuse's conception of radical action. Marcuse viewed resoluteness as central for understanding radical action as an event that aims to change the world by transforming both the structure of the world and the people who constitute it. However, I have also noted that Marcuse's criticism of Heidegger may prevent the possibility of radical action. To the extent that Marcuse rejects Heidegger's notion of resoluteness in *Being and Time*, his conception of radical action focuses on class divisions, rather than the unity of a people, and views radical action as the modification of a single element (i.e., the mode of production) in the web binding these people together.

CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICAL ACTION IN ARENDT'S *VITA ACTIVA*

> "Freedom as related to politics is not a phenomenon of the will. We deal here not with the *liberum arbitrium*, a freedom of choice that arbitrates and decides between two given things, one good and one evil, and whose choice is predetermined by motive which has only to be argued to start its operation— "And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,/ To entertain these fair well-spoken days,/ I am determined to prove a villain,/ And hate the idle pleasures of these days." Rather, it is, to remain with Shakespeare, the freedom of Brutus: "That this shall be or we will fall for it," that is, the freedom to call something into being which did not exist before, which was not given, not even as an object of cognition or imagination, and which therefore, strictly speaking, could not be known."[1]

To further examine the social and political implications of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, I now turn to Arendt's conception of political action in *The Human Condition* (1958). Here and in other writings during this period, Arendt's conception of political action emerges in seeming opposition to Heidegger's existential ontology, which she characterizes as a basically anti-political philosophy. "Since action is the political activity par excellence," she writes, "natality, and not mortality, may be the central category of political, as distinguished from metaphysical thought."[2] According to Arendt, *Dasein*'s anticipation of death, which is the mode of understanding in resoluteness, views authentic existence as fundamentally set apart from the other, since no one can relieve the self of its thrownness into death. For Arendt, Heidegger's notion of resoluteness seems the very opposite of existence in political community, disparaging the public realm as an inauthentic mode of existence. To Arendt, Heidegger characterizes the

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[1] Arendt, *Between Past and Future, Six Exercises in Political Thought*, 151.

[2] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Charles R. Walgreen Foundation Lectures. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 9.

everyday, public mode of disclosure as an impediment to authenticity. The discourse of everydayness is mere idle talk; a pretension to the possession of absolute truth that covers over beings as they really are and blocks access to truth. Despite Arendt's characterization of Heidegger's existentialism as anti-political, I argue that resoluteness shapes her conception of political action by understanding action as world constitutive rather than as a means toward an already given end. Her conception of political action as distinguished from other instrumental activities, reproduces Heidegger's distinction between chronological and kairological time. Although Arendt views existentialism as fundamentally devoid of any political content, her conception of political action as based on natality relies upon Heidegger's conception of resoluteness in significant ways. Resoluteness is the moment of the event, in which the smooth, everyday functioning of life is interrupted by the possibility of beginning anew, which Arendt views as the foundation of political action. She criticizes the Western philosophical tradition for understanding action solely in terms of the process of production, where it is seen as a means towards an already anticipated end. By demonstrating how resoluteness influences Arendt's non-instrumental conception of political action, I show that resoluteness does not lead to a totalitarian conception of politics.

Despite the influence of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness on Arendt's conception of political action, the literature on Arendt's political thought includes few compelling accounts of this relationship between their thought. Where the relationship between Heidegger and Arendt has been explored, it has focused on their personal relationship.[3] Scholars have tended to focus on Arendt's relation to liberal democracy, independent of its origins in Heidegger's attempt to

[3] Elżbieta Ettinger, *Hannah Arendt/Martin Heidegger* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

deconstruct the Western philosophical tradition in *Being and Time*.[4] Wolin criticizes Arendt's critique of modernity as neo-Heideggerian, rejecting the influence of existential ontology on her political thought because it leads to an anti-democratic form of politics.[5] Other scholars have debated whether or not Arendt's conception of action should be seen as adopting Heidegger's existentialist ontology or rejecting it altogether as a basically anti-political philosophy. Dana Villa shows how Arendt's non-sovereign conception of political action is rooted in Heidegger's conception of authentic world disclosure.[6] However, Jeffrey Barash argues that Arendt leaves existentialist ontology behind by rejecting Heidegger's attempt to understand the activity of the public realm as a form of forgetfulness. Barash claims that Arendt rejects this view of political activity by reconceptualizing the public realm as founded upon remembrance.[7] Similarly, Arne Vetlesen argues that Arendt rejects the individualistic and anti-pluralistic aspects of Heidegger's conception of conscience. Although this chapter will focus on the implications of Arendt's conception of action for Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, it is worth noting that my reading of

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[4] Margaret Canovan responds to initial criticism of Arendt's provocative views on the Holocaust, providing an insightful and far more nuanced conception of Arendt's political thought that focuses on its analysis of totalitarianism and her call for a "new republicanism" in *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Similarly against the view that Arendt's political thought cannot be subsumed within a liberal democratic framework, see Peg Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt & Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, Studies in Continental Thought (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006). Birmingham argues that rather than rejecting liberalism, Arendt's political thought provides a more robust conception of human rights than is typically found in liberal democratic conceptions. More recently, however, Michael H. McCarthy shifts the debate away from the issue of whether or not Arendt can be understood in terms of liberal democracy by focusing on Arendt's political humanism as a response to the situation of politics in the modern age. See *The Political Humanism of Hannah Arendt* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012).

[5] Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 31-69.

[6] Dana Richard Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[7] Jeffrey Andrew Barash, "Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Rememberance," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 10, no. 2 (2002).

Arendt's concept of political action contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the relation between her political thought and Heidegger's ontology.

Unpacking the existentialist aspects of Arendt's conception of politics reveals not only a deeper philosophical continuity between Heidegger and Arendt than the literature typically admits, but also suggests how to understand resoluteness as incompatible with totalitarian modes of thought. For Arendt, the Western philosophical tradition views political action as a form of instrumentality. Against this view, Arendt argues that unlike the kind of activity that characterizes the process of production, political action is characterized by its unpredictability, irreversibility, and anonymity. The tradition's concept of action understands history as a process with a beginning and end, rather than a movement characterized by the event of foundation, or beginning something new. For Arendt, political action can only be seen as a means towards an end, when it is misunderstood in terms of the production process and seen as a kind of craft activity, or work, in which the ends can be known in advance. Here, Arendt reproduces Heidegger's distinction between the chronological time of everydayness, which is determined by the instrumental relation between means and ends, and the kairological time of action that understand history as a process without a definite beginning or end. I have shown that resoluteness is a mode of disclosure that interrupts the everyday intelligibility of the world in which means and ends can be determined. In this moment, the horizon determining the meaning of the entities in *Dasein*'s world breaks down and impedes *Dasein*'s normal, instrumental engagement in that world. *Dasein* confronts a world whose meaning it cannot readily find, and is uncertain about how to go on. The future shows up as limited only by death, when *Dasein* will no longer be *Dasein,* and so is forced to accept the fallibility of any of its projects. This

disruption in the everyday, instrumental relation to the world is necessary for *Dasein* to discover a new meaning for its existence and act for the sake of this possibility. Accordingly, Heidegger's distinction between the temporality of everydayness and that of resoluteness is reproduced in Arendt's distinction between work and action.

The fact that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness should exert such an influence on Arendt's conception of action is strong evidence that resoluteness does not necessarily lead to totalitarian politics. But while Heidegger's conception of resoluteness is a necessary condition for Arendt's understanding of history, in her view, it is not sufficient to understand the capacity of political action to form a common understanding between diverse agents history as the movement of a plurality. I aim to show how Arendt's conception of the *vita activa* emerges in relation to Heidegger's conception of resoluteness while also considering the limitations of his view from her perspective. The *vita activa*, according to Arendt, is characterized by three types of activity that constitute the human condition, namely: labor, work, and action. The distinction between labor and work describes the process character of activity, which Heidegger saw as constitutive of the everyday mode of disclosure, though in *Being and Time* he did not differentiate between activities whose product was meant for consumption (labor) or the endurance of the world (work). After briefly describing labor and work, I turn to a more in-depth discussion of Arendt's conception of action. Of the activities that constitute the *vita activa*, action is unique because it does not have a predetermined end and requires the presence of others. Action is the basis for politics as the foundational moment of a community, which cannot be coercive or instrumental because it requires mutual agreement among a plurality of people. Here I will show that Arendt's conception of plurality makes an important critique of resoluteness

insofar as Heidegger views the people as a uniform whole and does not have the resources to understand its members in their difference from one another. Hence, to be foundational for politics, the resolute act must be capable of generating consensus from a diversity of perspectives.

To appreciate how Heidegger's conception of world disclosure influences Arendt's rejection of instrumental conceptions of political action, it is necessary to consider its essential difference from both labor and work. The temporality of labor and work is purely chronological, that is, they have a definite beginning and end, which characterizes the process character of the kind of activities that determine the everydayness of existence. Arendt views labor activity as determined by the strictly biological process of life.[8] The object of labor serves the material necessities of human existence—the things that human beings need because they have bodies that require, at the very least, food and shelter from the elements to continue functioning as bodies. Through the labor process, the earth is consumed as a resource for the sake of sustaining life. In principle, labor can be performed in total isolation from others, a trait that it shares with the activity of work. Although others may be present or assist in this process, they are not necessary to the activity itself. It is possible to make a meal by oneself; gathering together the various ingredients found in one's environment and assembling them together to nourish oneself or one's family.[9] What distinguishes labor from work, however, is that labor leaves nothing behind. The products of labor are intended to be consumed, used up, and are therefore not long for this world. This will come as no surprise to gardeners, whose labor cultivating plants, from

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[8] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Charles R. Walgreen Foundation Lectures. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 96-101.

[9] Of course, given the move to specialization that has become characteristic of capitalist culture, this has become all but impossible, as very few people possess the knowledge or skill that would be necessary for someone to do so.

this perspective, serves the sole purpose of the meal they will enjoy when the plant begins to bear food. Of course, some people raise flower gardens without any interest in utility, unless one considers beauty to be useful. However, even here, the final product, i.e., the tomatoes or the flower, once it has served its purpose, will ultimately end up in the trash, compost heap, toilet, or the human body where it will be transformed into the nutrition it needs to survive. A society of laborers would produce all sorts of necessary goods, but none of them would endure beyond the present moment.

While labor may be a necessary condition for the kind of historical existence Heidegger describes in *Being and Time*, it is not at all sufficient to understand *Dasein* as being-in-the-world. In this context stands Arendt's claim that the object of labor is inadequate for a world to arise between human beings. Labor allows the natural process of life to continue, but it is not enough for a world to arise between human beings because its object is strictly necessary, and consumed as soon as it is produced. Hence, the object of labor does not last beyond the present. A society of laborers would be wholly absorbed by the present, unable to transcend the utter necessity of continuing the biological process of life. Such a society would have no sense of past or future, as nothing beyond the natural imperative would be passed on to future generations, and there would be nothing like the heritage that Heidegger claims *Dasein* takes over in the moment of resoluteness (SZ 383/435). Confined to the sphere of laboring activity, existence could not be other than it is. In fact, being would never be an issue, and there would be no question of beginning anything new. In this way, Arendt argues that while the products of labor may be necessary conditions for history, they are in no way the decisive factor in the creation of a world that exists between human beings and persists through time.

The product of work, unlike that of labor, possesses "durability," which allows human life as a whole to have a life beyond itself, that is, to pass something of its existence on to future generations, to create a future world that can outlast the mortality of human beings. The durability that the product of work lends to the world refers to its ability to open up or make possible *Dasein*'s existence in time. The work has a relation to a future possibility of *Dasein*. Without the durability that comes from the product of work, nothing like a world could be disclosed for *Dasein* because it would lack a temporal dimension; *Dasein* could have no relation to past, present, or future. Unlike labor, the product of work is able to transcend the private sphere of individual interests, as its products are intended for the public world where they will, as Arendt says, "give the human artifice the stability and solidity without which it could not be relied upon to house the unstable and mortal creature which is man."[10] The product of work is not for the sake of consumption, but for the sake of others. The sacred texts of the world's religions fit into this category, as would the invention of shoes, the microscope and telescope, and theories that make it possible for a people to engage the world in a new light. The product of work aims to make a lasting impact on the world, and therefore, goes beyond mere consumption. It is true that shoes and telescopes will eventually be used up, so their endurance in the world can be called into question. Nonetheless, object of work can be distinguished from objects of labor because even if time eventually consumes all things, objects of work withstand the effect of prolonged use and contribute to the durability of the world. This durability is what becomes "used up" in the object of work, rather than the object itself. Hence, Arendt argues that "destruction, though unavoidable, is incidental to use but inherent in consumption."[11] The

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[10] Ibid., 136.

[11] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 138.

objects of labor possess none of this longevity, as their sole purpose is feeding the immediate, biological needs of human existence, and therefore, are always meant for consumption. Nevertheless, what the objects of work and labor share in common is that neither requires the existence of others and could be produced in total isolation. Only the object of work can establish the possibility for a world to arise between human beings, which they can experience and discuss together.

Under the conditions of modern mass society, the distinction between the objects of work and labor is not so easy to maintain. A book, for example, could be consumed as a mere distraction from the everyday necessities of life, which is how many people often treat the things they read: as means toward the end of falling asleep, or as a diversion to allow them to return to their jobs refreshed the next day. Not unlike the critical theory of the Frankfurt school, Arendt suggests that the modern age moves away from culture toward entertainment. In *Between Past and Future* (1954), she argues:

> Mass society … wants not culture but entertainment, and the wares offered by the entertainment industry are indeed consumed by society just like any other consumer goods. The products needed for entertainment serve the life process of society, even though they may not be as necessary for this life as bread and meat. They serve, as the phrase is, to while away time, and the vacant time which is whiled away is not leisure time, strictly speaking—time, that is, in which we are free *from* all cares and activities necessitated by the life process and therefore free *for* the world and its culture—it is rather left-over time, which still is biological in nature, left over after labor and sleep have received their due.[12]

Many of the films shown in the multiplexes today, for instance, do not provide their viewers the opportunity to see the world afresh and discuss this view with others, but simply serve as a spectacle for folks to watch while they consume massive quantities of junk food so that they can enjoy a moment's respite before returning to their jobs on Monday. These films may as well be forgotten and discarded as easily as the gigantic bucket of popcorn at the end of the movie.

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[12] ———, *Between Past and Future, Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Viking Press, 1961), 205.

Compare the consumption of entertainment with the sacred texts that inspire the world's religious traditions, which have been passed from generation to generation since antiquity, and have followers who, with differing degrees of success, attempt to live their lives according to the truths or values they articulate. The product of work erects a world for which a people can exist —whose value demands preservation and joins people together. Hence, Arendt's distinction between the product of work and labor allows her to uphold a positive conception of culture against the conditions of modern mass society.[13]

Arendt's distinction between labor and work allows her to account for the temporal character of the human condition. Through the activity of work, we see the possibility for the human condition to have a temporal existence, that is, one that can transcend the immediate needs of life, stretching beyond the present moment and into a past and future. Because of the durability of the object of work, existence can be passed on to the future and inherited from the past. While this is a necessary condition for a world to emerge between human beings, it cannot allow for the possibility of human action to qualitatively transform that world through concerted action with others because it has a definite end and can be produced without others. The others

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[13] Before turning to Arendt's conception of action, I must note that her distinction between labor and work is an attack on Marx. For Arendt, the rise of mass society goes hand in hand with the collapse of the distinctions between labor, work and action. Activities such as labor, which once were confined to the private realm, begin to enter the public realm and take over all spheres of life. Arendt finds this breakdown in Marx, whom she argues views all activity solely in terms of labor: "Within a completely "socialized mankind," whose sole purpose would be the entertaining of the life process—and this is the unfortunately quite utopian ideal that guides Marx's theories—the distinction between labor and work would have completely disappeared; all work would have become labor because all things would be understood, not in their worldly, objective quality, but as results of living labor power and functions of the life process." See *Human Condition,* 89. A socialized existence, Arendt claims, would be one in which all forms of activity are reduced to labor and governed by the instrumentality leading that process. Such a life of labor would have no purpose other than the endless perpetuation of a toilsome existence. Whether or not Arendt accurately describes mass society or the ideals of socialism, her claim that Marx reduces all activity to labor is a mischaracterization. At the very least, Marx does not seem to view political action in instrumental terms. For example, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852), Marx writes "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." In this formulation, Marx's conception of political action avoids reduction to an instrumental process.

do not belong to the activity of work the same way that they are essential to political action, which can only happen between human beings who are each different from one another, and whose power depends upon their ability to act in concert. Political action, or action in the proper sense, may be seen as the highest expression of the *vita activa* because it alone requires the plurality of human existence and transforms the world as a whole, as distinguished from merely adding another product to it. Only action depends on the public realm, neither labor nor work require the presence of others.

To appreciate the centrality of action within the *vita activa*, I first want to contrast instrumental or strategic action from political action from the perspective of Arendt's distinction between thought and cognition, which helps to discern the influence of kairological temporality in Heidegger on her conception of political action. Arendt's conception of labor, work, and action, hinge on the difference between cognition/strategizing and thinking, which is crucial for understanding action in a non-instrumental way. Thought is set apart from cognition because it cannot rely upon any given standards, leaving us "without a bannister."[14] On the other hand, cognition operates in an utilitarian register about the means necessary to achieve a given end. Therefore, cognition rests upon an already established framework of meaning, even if this structure is only implicit or unacknowledged. Political action is not strategic, i.e., oriented towards the means necessary to achieve a given end, because it only occurs where people act in concert, which requires consensus among participants. Hence, action is based on judgment, and for this reason it cannot be certain of whether the new world it opens up or gives birth to—can ever be achieved. Arendt rejects the identification of action and speech with instrumental actions

[14] Melvyn A. Hill, ed. *Hannah Arendt, the Recovery of the Public World* (New York: St. Martin's Press,1979), 336.

like labor and work, because while the former may be seen as events that are capable of disclosing the world, the latter depend on an already established world within which its product is already meaningful.

Arendt's distinction between cognition and thought maps on to the difference between everydayness and resoluteness in Heidegger's conception of world disclosure. For Heidegger, instrumental action depends upon a chronological conception of time within which means and ends can be separated, and the action of casting a vote or passing a law can be understood as performed in order to accomplish some other objective. Instrumental actions like these require an already established framework of meaning within which the sum of these actions can accomplish a goal external to that framework. There cannot be a distinction between means and ends in the moment of resoluteness, because in this moment the entire framework of meaning breaks down, which requires *Dasein* to establish a new framework based on something that lies outside the established context. Heidegger describes this moment as a kind of anxiety about the meaningfulness of the world as a whole.

Political action differs from the instrumental activity that characterizes our everydayness, because it aims to transform the basic framework of the world as a whole. This distinction is essential for understanding how Heidegger's notion of resoluteness influences Arendt's conception of action. An example will help clarify. When legislators debate in Congress, they rely upon an already established framework of meaning to convince others of their views and achieve their political goals. They might say, "If we value X, then we must Y." The legislators could disagree that Y is the proper way to achieve X, or they could disagree about what X means, but they would not be able to have a discourse together (in any meaningful sense of the term) if

they thought it was impossible to ever reach an agreement about X. Hence, the things we value, whatever they may be, enable us to see the world in a particular way and engage in discourse about them with others. Such discourse is closely tied to action, as it allows us to coordinate our actions for the achievement of these goals. Our everyday activity is similarly oriented by an already established framework of meaning that enables discourse.

To appreciate how Arendt can view political action as a break from everyday existence, consider Rosa Parks's refusal to give up her seat to a white passenger on the bus. Words may have been exchanged, and Parks may even have tried to reason with the bus driver and police officers who insisted that she move to the back of the bus or get off. But ultimately her refusal had very little, if anything, to do with her ability to convince people of an argument. How could it when her opponents refused to accept her as an equal, with the same privileges they afforded themselves? While we may be able to look back and discover many reasons Parks may have decided not to yield her seat, what is significant about her action from the perspective of Arendt's conception of action is not its rationality, but rather its rejection of the established framework of meaning and the new world it aimed to open up: a world in which no matter the color of their skin, folks would at least have equal access to seats on the bus. Parks's action, and the world it sought to disclose, may be seen as ethical rather than political if taken outside the context of the civil rights movement as a whole. If motivated solely by a personal conviction (e.g. "I, Rosa Parks, ought to be free to sit wherever I want on the bus"), her action would end when that freedom was attained for herself, even if she thought others should not be similarly oppressed. But if her action contributed to an awareness of oppressive social conditions—not solely her own oppression—and worked in the context of a larger movement, then one can say it was motivated

by a political conviction and view it as central to the kind of power necessary for radical action that can give birth to a new world.

Insisting on the communal nature of the struggle for a new world, Arendt expands upon the kairological temporality of resoluteness from *Being and Time*. According to Arendt, the tradition of political thought reaches its height in Marx, culminating in the collapse of a classical distinction separating action from labor. The result is that his conception of action understands radical political action in terms of the instrumentality that governs the labor process. If the animating force behind the production process is instrumentality, that is, "thinking" in terms of the means required to achieve an already given end, then for Arendt, action and speech must transcend not only the realm of means and ends, but also the private sphere of the isolated individual. Action in the proper sense must be based upon non-instrumental thinking oriented towards reaching consensus with others, rather than dominating them.

Resoluteness establishes a new framework within which action can become meaningful, but so long as the moment lasts, it can only be concerned with the goal or principle that animates our actions, not the means required to achieve it. "Thinking" about the means required to achieve a given end requires an already established horizon of meaning. Hence, resoluteness, which I am arguing is the basis for political action, cannot be any kind of instrumental activity, because in aiming to establish a new framework or horizon of meaning, it requires the coordination of others. As I have already argued, in the moment of resoluteness, there cannot be a division between the end of a people's action and the means required to achieve them.

On the basis of the disclosure of agency through action and speech, Arendt derives three central features of political action, which she neatly summarizes as "the unpredictability of its

outcome, the irreversibility of the process, and the anonymity of its authors."[15] In the following, I trace these characteristics of action to Heidegger's conception of resoluteness.

First, Arendt identifies the outcome of action as unpredictable because the new framework it aims to establish has never been witnessed before. Furthermore, this new world will depend upon the co-operation of a multitude of individuals who are each different from one another, and can only see the world from their own vantage point. Arendt does not, however, go the route of relativism, for there is only one world, and one public space about which people can disagree, but which nevertheless joins them together. In Part One I argued that the moment of resoluteness is characterized by the mood of anxiety, because the world as a whole is no longer meaningful and there is no possibility contained in the world to which *Dasein* can turn in order to give it meaning. As a result, *Dasein* must give the world some new meaning if it is to go on living. But *Dasein* can never be certain that this new meaning can ever be achieved, as it has never existed before in the world. To continue the previous example, notice the "fear and trembling" that must have accompanied Rosa Parks's decision not to yield her seat on the bus. Not unlike Kierkegaard's Abraham or knight of faith, action requires a leap of faith in the world one hopes will come about, but which all existing evidence shows is impossible. In that moment, Parks could not have known whether her challenge to the status quo would ever result in equal accommodation on the bus, legal protections, or whether such protections would ever have any tangible effect in the world, just as none of the civil rights protestors could have known how others would respond in the face of their opposition. If she cannot make that leap of faith, her

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[15] ———, *The Human Condition*, 220.

action cannot anticipate anything beyond the existing order of things—the status quo—for it is only in this way that her actions can give birth to a new world.

Second, Arendt describes the process that action sets into motion as irreversible, because once it has been started, it cannot be taken back. Recall that for Heidegger, the discourse of the moment of resoluteness is the call of conscience, which discloses *Dasein*'s existence as guilty. In the moment of resoluteness, *Dasein* makes itself guilty of its actions. In order to act, *Dasein* must make itself guilty of its action and in this way becomes guilty, i.e., accountable, for whatever process it sets in motion. Once the bus is stopped and delayed by Parks' refusal to yield her seat, the disruption in the everyday smooth functioning of racial oppression cannot be rescinded. Of course, she could have changed her mind and decided she was happy to stand, but then one would say she did not really decide not to yield her seat. Her action set in motion a whole process of actions—many of which were in the interest of segregation in opposition to the new world that she and the other activists hoped to bring about—that would either lead to that new world or would not.

Lastly, political action has an anonymous author, because even though we can identify Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Mahatma Ghandi, or Nelson Mandela as the heroes of radical social movements, the truth is far more complicated than is possible for anyone to tell. No single individual be named the indisputable champion of a cause, just as no single event can be credited with the success of the civil rights movement as a whole. Only though the process of their action together can the people whose participation made the civil rights movement what it was, discover where exactly they stand, and in what exactly they believe. The civil rights protestors could have given up on the boycott, or no one could have attended the March on Washington and

Martin Luther King could have delivered his infamous "I Have a Dream" speech to only the birds bathing themselves in the reflection pool. Only through their participation in the movement can the protestors—each of whom is unique—discover who they are and for what they stand. But who they are and for what they stand cannot be seen as the product of the action of any individual participant. Rather, it is a result of their ability to share a common understanding and develop a common will, which is set above that of the individual.

Given the anonymous character of action, one could argue against my thesis that Arendt's conception of action can be understood from the perspective of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness. Indeed, Heidegger appears to suggest that the course of a people's history is unified by a hero in whose footsteps they loyally follow (SZ 385, 437). If that is true, the resoluteness of a people would consist in each member of the community deciding to live the model of existence for which the hero stands. However, I have argued that resoluteness is only a moment in which *Dasein* sets up the meaningfulness of its existence, i.e. takes a stand on its existence—even though it may of course change "in the twinkling of an eye"—and must then return to everydayness to carry out that for the sake of which it has decided. The author, or "agent" of this everydayness, however, is no one in particular, but rather the organization of the whole that unites them all together. As we recall from chapter one, the who of *Dasein* in everydayness is the anonymous anyone. In other words, the "hero" of history cannot be *Dasein* itself or any single individual, but rather *das Man*. No one can be pointed to as the indisputable ruler of everydayness, which takes on a new sense in *Dasein'*s return to it from out of the moment of resoluteness.

Still, Arendt holds that action, like speech, cannot be predicated on the basis of a uniform whole. If it were the case that all members of a people were the same, there would be no need for them to speak to each other. In *Being and Time,* Heidegger does not seem to have the resources to explain the differences between members of a community, but Arendt does. What develops out of the anonymous character of action is her conception of the public realm. Where Heidegger saw this public realm as composed of individuals from whom *Dasein* does not distinguish itself, Arendt argues that the equality of the public realm must be predicated on the basis of the otherwise inequality of all its members, i.e., their plurality. She says:

> The equality attending the public realm is necessarily an equality of unequals who stand in need of being "equalized" in certain respects and for specific purposes. As such, the equalizing factor arises not from human "nature" but from outside, just as money—to continue the Aristotelian example—is needed as an outside factor to equate the unequal activities of physician and farmer. Political equality, therefore, is the very opposite of our equality before death, which as the common fate of all men arises out of the human condition, or of equality before God, at least in its Christian interpretation, where we are confronted with an equality of sinfulness inherent in human nature. In these instances, no equalizer is needed because sameness prevails anyhow; by the same token, however, the actual experience of this sameness, the experience of life and death, occurs not only in isolation but in utter loneliness, where no true communication, let alone association and community, is possible. From the viewpoint of the world and the public realm, life and death and everything attesting to sameness are non-worldly, antipolitical, truly transcendent experiences.[16]

Arendt's argument implies that Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* fails to account for its situation in the public realm, which she argues is necessary to unify the otherwise inequality (i.e., plurality) of its members. Recall that for Heidegger, the other is not one from whom *Dasein* is distinguished, but one with whom *Dasein* belongs. Hence, he seems to think of *Dasein* solely in terms of its sameness or uniformity with the other. Arendt points out that such homogeneity fails to describe the decisive feature of the public realm, that it unifies members who are not otherwise equal. In this respect, Heidegger's conception of *Dasein* seems to fall back into a kind of metaphysical position beyond the human condition, insofar as it fails to grasp the public

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[16] Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 215.

sphere as the space in which different individuals are given equal consideration. This space does not always exist, but arises where human beings come together and can disclose themselves in their difference from one another without coercion or domination.

It is tempting here to read Arendt's conception of the public sphere as a rejection of Heidegger's notion of world disclosure. In many respects, it is true that she views his thought as incapable of accounting for the life of a people in a political community. While Heidegger's conception of world disclosure may not be a sufficient condition for the existence of political community, it is nevertheless necessary for her conception of the public realm, which is held in existence through action that is unpredictable and irreversible. As such, her conception of political action is similar to resoluteness, insofar as it resists characterization in terms of means and ends. Hence, while Arendt's conception of the public realm makes an important modification of Heidegger's conception of resoluteness, she does not reject it as all together irrelevant from the perspective of politics.

Conclusion

Despite Arendt's criticism of Heidegger's existentialism, her conception of political action follows his notion of resoluteness by opposing instrumental views of political action. Political action is distinguished from the other forms of activity that characterize the *vita activa,* because where labor and work occur within an already determined horizon of meaning, action cannot justify itself on the basis of any standard. Similarly for Heidegger, the possibility for resoluteness arises only when the everyday ways of understanding the world break down and *Dasein* is confronted by the fundamental meaninglessness of its finite existence, the lack of any

inherent standard in the world. This confrontation with finitude is decisive for Arendt, even when she says that not death, but natality, corresponds to the human capacity for action; to make a new beginning. Because every new beginning marks the death of the old, death and natality are like two sides of the same coin; both acknowledge a sense of time as transitory and fleeting rather than infinite and unchanging. Following Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, Arendt accepts the finitude of time as the horizon within which action occurs, by characterizing action as unpredictable, irreversible, and anonymous.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Arendt's conception of action we can argue against Marcuse's demand for Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein* to incorporate the material conditions of history. Arendt argues that what is determinative for the movement of history is not its material conditions, but rather the capacity of human beings to disclose themselves through speech and action.[17] Their power to be a new beginning for the world depends upon their ability to act in concert, transcending the material conditions of their existence. Hence, following Arendt we can see how Heidegger's conception of resoluteness can explain the possibility of new forms of existence to arise without giving an account of the material conditions of society. What is necessary for a new beginning to the world is cohesion and unity, not new material conditions.

Heidegger's conception of resoluteness provides a basis from which to understand political action independent of instrumentality and sovereignty. However, Arendt's conception of political action makes a compelling critique of resoluteness by insisting on the plurality of the community who are unified within the public sphere. Following Arendt, then, the resoluteness of

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[17] Ibid., 200.

a people for a common destiny should be seen as the outcome of the interplay between unique individuals, rather than a uniform whole.

CHAPTER FIVE

HEIDEGGER AND THE POLITICAL

The aim of this dissertation was to examine the notion of resoluteness in Heidegger's *Being and Time,* in order to examine the work's political implications. This research strives to direct attention to the important political contributions of the text, which have been either ignored or unfairly discounted by perspectives that have overlooked the significance of resoluteness. Several factors contribute to a lack of attention to the work's political implications. First, the text is not overtly political. It is intended as an exploration in fundamental ontology that seeks to pose the question of being, and does not claim to establish a foundation for political thought. Second, the predominant interpretation of Heidegger's thought in the Anglo-American tradition isolates his concept of understanding from the notion of resoluteness, viewing Heidegger's analysis of resoluteness as an unfortunate remnant of his later repudiated existentialism. This interpretation overlooks the political dimension of the text. When resoluteness is considered from this perspective, it is seen as an ethical concept that stresses the importance of self-individuation, rather than as a political concept. Finally, the literature that focuses on the political implications of resoluteness does so from the perspective of Heidegger's support for National Socialism, which distorts the political implications of resoluteness by characterizing it as a kind of voluntaristic decisionism. To understand resoluteness as a political concept, I analyze its early development as a mode of disclosure in *Being and Time*.

I

In the first part of the dissertation, I show that Heidegger's concept of resoluteness is the core of *Being and Time* by showing how resoluteness can be read as a distinctive mode of world disclosure. To develop the basis for a political understanding of resoluteness, I argue for the intersubjective character of Heidegger's concept of world disclosure in Chapter One. I show that for Heidegger, *Dasein* must always be understood as a whole. The individual is always already part of a whole, such that the meaning of an individual can only be discovered within this larger context. To show how resoluteness can be seen as a distinctive mode of disclosure, I define world disclosure as constituted by attunement, understanding, and discourse. Heidegger calls the average form of world disclosure, which characterizes *Dasein*'s existence most of the time, "everydayness." Everydayness is a specific mode of world disclosure, distinguished from resoluteness, in which the other leaps in for *Dasein* and determines its relation to the entities in the world. In this mode, the world is understood in advance by *das Man* (the one, anyone, the they), the "who" of everyday *Dasein.* Here *Dasein* does not discover the world as it is for itself, but rather, as it has been interpreted by everyone else. This is a form of domination in which all things of the world, including the possibilities for which *Dasein* can exist, are what "one" says they are. *Das Man* is no one definite, and no one *Dasein* has chosen, yet *das Man* determines *Dasein*'s existence so thoroughly that *Dasein* is not really itself in the mode of everydayness, but *das Man.* Publicness characterizes *Dasein*'s existence in the mode of everydayness

According to pragmatist readings of *Being and Time*, Heidegger's discussion of *Dasein*'s everydayness holds the "primacy of practice" thesis, which states that understanding is an engaged involvement with the world, as opposed to a cognitive representation of the world in the mind. One does not understand a hammer by representing its essential properties in one's mind,

but rather by using it to build a house or hang a picture on the wall. We have this understanding, the thesis holds, because our orientation toward the world is primarily a practical, not theoretical, one. The things we encounter in the world are for the most part instruments for our practical purposes. However, I argued that this pragmatist reading is insufficient to understand what Heidegger means by world insofar as it views practice in terms of purposive activity, that is, as determined by an end. Purposive activity occurs within an already established horizon of meaning. The hammer can be used as an instrument to build a house, let us say, because we live in a society where houses can be sold for profit on the market, which in the first place determines the use of the hammer to build a house. Without a discussion of the integral relation between everydayness and resoluteness, the primacy of practice thesis takes *Das Man*'s understanding of existence as naturally given, and cannot account for its the establishment of this horizon of meaning, or how it changes over the course of history.

To show how Heidegger's conception of disclosure accounts for transformations in the structure of the world as a whole, that is, the possibility for new horizons of meaning to open up, it is necessary to turn to his analysis of resoluteness, which I argue describes the possibility of foundational political acts. My discussion of resoluteness presents a side of Heidegger's conception of disclosure with which pragmatists are generally unconcerned, namely, the moment of event in which something happens in the world and interrupts the established mode understanding it. In the moment of resoluteness, *Dasein* takes a different relation toward the other. Instead of leaping in and determining the possibilities of the other, *Dasein* leaps ahead, opening up a possibility of existence the other can choose for itself. Hence, the counter-concept to *das Man* is not the isolated individual, but rather the community, the others with whom one

stands for a shared way of life. Resoluteness does not leave *Dasein* isolated in its own world, somehow outside of publicness, but places *Dasein* in a different relation to the other so that they may co-constitute a new possibility for existence. The question of *Dasein*'s authenticity is not distinguishing oneself from the herd, so much as discovering oneself as belonging to a community; taking up one's place in a whole of others. Resoluteness is communal, rather than individualistic. For this reason, I argue that by referring to a foundation for a whole people, rather than a maxim one keeps merely for oneself, resoluteness can be distinguished from an ethical concept.

Furthermore, resoluteness cannot be seen as action that is oriented towards an end the way that craft activities create a final product. As a mode of disclosure, resoluteness is characterized by anxiety (attunement), being-towards-death (understanding), and conscience (discourse). The moment of resoluteness is an event in which the received intelligibility of the world fails us, so that *Dasein* encounters the nothingness of existence; the non-being of the received intelligibility. For the significance of the world to be dislodged in this way, *Dasein* must find itself in a situation where the past no longer offers any guidance for understanding the present. Here *Dasein* is not "at home;" its world is not intelligible as a whole. Heidegger describes this as a kind of anxiety about the world; a feeling of not being at home that first makes it possible for a people to take a new stand on existence. But this also means that the political act cannot be an instrumental act, because instrumental action relies upon an already established world of significance relations. With resoluteness as a condition of the political it becomes clear that political action—situated in kairological time—establishes a new foundation or horizon of meaning in place of the failed framework.

From this kairological moment at which meaning shifts, the significance structure of the world as a whole changes, and resoluteness provides a definite way of looking at political action as a foundational moment. Interestingly, political action is concerned with the world as a whole, and not merely the distinction between friend and foe, or the efficient production of goods. Politics is what first establishes the meaning of the world. While resoluteness in some sense lacks any determining criteria, this does not mean that it is empty, even if its specific content cannot be predicted in advance. Resoluteness cannot be instrumental, because the framework in which instrumentality can operate has been put out of play.

In Part Two of the dissertation, I confirmed my analysis of resoluteness as a political concept by turning to Herbert Marcuse and Hannah Arendt, who stand out among the great number of philosophers influenced by Heidegger for a number of reasons. They are distinctive among continental philosophers for their influence on social and political thought in the United States. Their influence extends beyond the field of philosophy, impacting not only political theorists (in the case of Arendt), but also radical student movements and theorists of the New Left (in the case of Marcuse). Additionally, both were Heidegger's students around the time that early drafts of *Being and Time* were presented in his seminars leading up its publication. Because both were Jewish and fled Nazi Germany, their exposure to Heidegger's thought is for the most part limited to his project of fundamental ontology as developed in the text. Hence, their assessment of the political implications of *Being and Time* is to a large extent unburdened by his writings in support of National Socialism after 1933. This allows us to think about the meaning of resoluteness in *Being and Time* from a perspective that is historically prior to its employment in the service of Nazi ideology.

Furthermore, Marcuse and Arendt are compelling for this study of the political implications of *Being and Time* because of their perspectives on the notion of historical materialism in Marx differ so dramatically. Marcuse argues that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness failed as an account of history because it was blind to its material conditions, that is, the relations of production that determine it as a concrete phenomenon. Resoluteness participates in the movement of history, Marcuse argues, only when it reshapes the social institutions determining human existence, thereby creating a new world, but not through mere idealistic conversions in individuals. However, for Arendt, political action is distinctive because it transcends material factors. She argues that the materialist conception of history failed to distinguish political action from other forms of instrumental activity. The birth of a new world that resoluteness makes possible depends not on the strength to overcome the material forces that would prevent it, but rather the ability of different individuals to act in concert. This juxtaposition is interesting in the context of the political implications of *Being and Time* because it allows us to respond to Marcuse's claim that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness must account for the concrete material conditions of society. By turning to the reception of resoluteness in Marcuse and Arendt, we could critically assess resoluteness as a political concept in which the material conditions of existence are transcended.

Despite this difference between them, Marcuse and Arendt show that resoluteness refers to a transformation in the whole of *Dasein*, and not merely the individual. Following Heidegger, both Marcuse and Arendt see action as a transformation in the organization of human existence as a whole. Thus, resoluteness should be seen as a political, rather than an ethical concept. While Marcuse and Arendt are both critical of Heidegger's political thought, they both view political

action as emerging through a distinctive relation to time in which the customary, instrumental way of relating to the entities in the world is arrested and *Dasein* takes a new stand on existence. Following Marcuse and Arendt, we see the political emerge as a realm irreducible to the instrumental logic of means and ends, which requires us to make a distinction between politics as the management of social existence, and that which remains beyond or outside of administration. The political becomes groundless, that is, without any ultimate or absolute foundation of right. Reiner Schürman refers to Heidegger's thought as a kind of anarchism, according to which action becomes freed from the principles that had secured its justification in the Western philosophical tradition.[1] Anarchism in Schürman's sense does not refer to a program of action, but rather the interrogation of those views which serve as false foundations for action. The goal here is not the establishment of a new foundation which would replace the old, but of weakening the power of hegemony to dictate the possibilities for the future. By turning to Marcuse and Arendt, one sees the emergence of what Oliver Marchart, among others, refers to as "Left-Heideggerianism." Marchart credits Heidegger with the inauguration of "Post-Foundational" political thought. Explaining the necessity of the distinction between politics and the political, Marchart says,

> …the conceptual difference between politics and the political, as difference, assumes the role of an indicator or symptom of society's absent ground. As difference, this difference presents nothing other than a paradigmatic split in the traditional idea of politics, where a new term (the political) had to be introduced in order to point at society's 'ontological' dimension, the dimension of the institution of society, while politics was kept as the term for the 'ontic' practices of conventional politics (the plural, particular and, eventually, unsuccessful attempts at grounding society).[2]

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[1] Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 1.

[2] Oliver Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau* (Norfolk, Great Britain: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 5.

Where conventional politics assume some ground upon which the actions of society rest, the task for a post-foundational politics is the weakening of that ground; the attempt to show its inability to be institutionalized in some authority that could finally determine the possibilities of human existence. According to Heidegger's concept of resoluteness, the stance a people takes on existence serves to organize the everyday activities of its individual members and determines the ethical and legal institutions. Here the question could arise that if normative domains such as ethics and laws are overruled by the political, is there no longer a legitimate basis for criticizing a political body? While this is an important question to raise, for Heidegger it would be begging the question, since resoluteness attempts to account for the normativity of the norms themselves — to explain what it means for a law or ethical norm to exist. Heidegger's claim is that an ontology of the subject is a prior condition to ethical agency. This is not to say that the political has no ethical dimension, but rather that the political serves as the ground for ethical considerations. It must be kept in mind that in my conception of political action, following Heidegger's notion of resoluteness, the political represents a non-instrumental form of relation between *Dasein* and its other. Accordingly, it is not in the realm of the political, correctly understood, that the possibility of violence occurs, but rather in the institutionalization of a specific stance on existence against others. This rejection of institutionalized conceptions of politics animates both Marcuse's social theory and Arendt's political thought. In the second part of the dissertation, I showed how such a conception of the political can be traced to Heidegger's concept of resoluteness in *Being and Time*. Accordingly, resoluteness does not lead to political nihilism, but rather views the struggle for new forms of existence as the core of *Dasein*'s care for its existence as being-in-the-world.

To support my view that Heidegger's notion of resoluteness is not simply an individual's decision about its own isolated existence, but a political concept that pertains to a transformation in the overall framework within which individual activities can be meaningful, I turned to Marcuse and Arendt. In Chapter Three, I argued that although Marcuse recognizes the importance of the kairological moment for understanding the possibility of radical social transformation, he is mistaken about the importance of the material conditions of history in shaping the radical act. Marcuse thought that Heidegger's concept of resoluteness suffered from a lack of concreteness insofar as his concept of *Dasein* understood human existence in society as uniform, when there are, in fact, important differences between the life-world of members of various classes. Marcuse saw this as a major limitation to Heidegger's view, and on these grounds would later claim that Heidegger's philosophy is unable to provide a suitable basis for social theory. Marcuse's major criticism is that some account of economy is necessary to understand *Dasein* concretely, given its encroachment into the daily existence of *Dasein*. Against this view, I argued that the differences in members of society could only be understood on the basis of something commonly held between them. Heidegger's concept of everydayness can be seen as theorizing culture as something that shapes who a people are, that is, shapes the possibilities towards which they can exist. If the goal of radical action can be seen as a transformation in this culture, which underlies the divisions between classes, then it can be seen as an action of the whole society, not of one part against another. Defending Heidegger against Marcuse's criticism that resoluteness failed to adequately account for the material conditions of history was important here, because on this basis, he later claims that Heidegger's ontology cannot serve as a suitable vehicle for social and political thought.

In Chapter Four, I turned to Arendt's conception of political action in *The Human Condition* to show how resoluteness could be justified without incorporating a materialist perspective on history, as Marcuse claimed it must. According to Arendt, political action transcends the material divisions between social classes because it is founded on the ability of a people to come together and act in concert. By showing how Arendt's conception of natality emerges in conversation with Heidegger's concept of resoluteness, we can see why Arendt distinguished political action from activities that have a definite end, as the activity of the carpenter ends in the final product, such as, a table or chair. Unlike the activity of labor or work, there is no thing that political action is supposed to produce. It pertains to an attempt to reshape the world as a whole, which is to be distinguished from instrumental actions that have a given end within a world whose meaning is already determined. Arendt further confirmed my thesis that resoluteness is a moment of change and transformation, in which the world as a whole takes on a new significance. For her, resoluteness is the moment of natality—referring to the inability to control or determined in advance the event of the new that political action makes possible—in which some new possibility for human existence as a whole comes into being. Natality may be unexpected and unanticipated; in this sense she follows Heidegger in seeing the moment of resoluteness as something that cannot be planned or made the way that products are manufactured. This is a crucial aspect of resoluteness that shapes Arendt's conception of political action.

Yet for Arendt, this coming together of a people for new possibilities of existence is based on her conception of the people as fundamentally different from one another. She rejects Heidegger's conception of the community as a uniform whole. Because of this, Arendt's

conception of the political has a stronger communicative dimension, for she sees political action as occurring between unique individuals who must come to a shared consensus. Unlike Heidegger, then, who sees this consensus as already given by the historical situation in which *Dasein* finds itself, she sees the formation of this unity as the result of a communicative process between fundamentally distinct agents. On this point, Arendt reveals a significant flaw in Heidegger's conception of resoluteness without making resoluteness insignificant from a political perspective.

By tracing the reception of Heidegger's notion of resoluteness through Marcuse and Arendt, my dissertation contributes to an understanding of the political with respect to Heidegger's ontology. What does resoluteness tell us about the place of politics in *Being and Time*? What does it tell us about the meaning of political action? The political is the foundational moment of a community that marks a collective resolve or shared affirmation for a certain way of life, which exists prior to and enables its ethics, its laws and legal institutions. Accordingly, these cannot be understood independent of the space of the political that circumscribes them. On the basis of Heidegger's ontology, the political first makes possible a specific ethical and legal order. In other words, for Heidegger, the political becomes a condition for the possibility of the normative. This means that the fields of ethics and law lack any ultimate authority of their own, independent of the political space that opens them up. That Heidegger views this moment of grounding as itself without an absolute grounding in reason or an ultimate cosmic order, means that these domains of inquiry lack any a-historical, absolute standard of right, and remain fundamentally open to revision and transformation. This seems to be a benefit over the modern conception of the rational subject, for it allows theorization of ethics and laws by new standards

while at the same time recognizing their anchoring in a tradition that must first be rethought in its foundations. The political is the ground for a people's ethical and legal conceptions, but no such ground can by given once and for all—it remains open to future determinations.

My analysis shows that Heidegger's conception of resoluteness in *Being and Time* is highly significant for social and political philosophy. Importantly, Heidegger rejects a-historical conceptions of subjectivity, insisting that what it means to be an individual is determined within a larger horizon that is limited with respect to time. This means that truth can only be grasped in relation to specific historical horizons. This insight has a crucial impact for understanding the meaning of human freedom. According to Heidegger, freedom is an ontological characteristic of *Dasein* that makes history possible as a transformation in the specific form of *Dasein*'s world. *Dasein*'s freedom consists of its being thrown into a world that has always already been determined for it. *Dasein* exists at a specific moment in history and is not free to decide the historical world into which it is born. As such, its existence is determined by those others who have come before it and cast a distinctive light onto the way in which the entities in the world are understood. This means that in the first instance, the world in which *Dasein* lives is never its own, that is, it has not made itself responsible for its world. But for Heidegger, *Dasein*'s relation to the other can have the character of either oppressing *Dasein* by "leaping in" and determining how and what *Dasein* sees, taking away the burden of being responsible for its own existence, or of "leaping ahead" and freeing *Dasein* for its own existence. How is this latter move possible? For *Dasein* to take up a free relation to its existence entails that the tradition it has inherited needs to be closed down so that some new possibility can come forth. This happens in moments of anxiety—the attunement of resoluteness—in which *Dasein*'s possibilities for existing in the

world cease to absorb it and its existence becomes a question for it. *Dasein* is confronted by existence as something for which it is responsible. The discourse of resoluteness is the call of conscience. In hearing the call of conscience, *Dasein* takes itself as guilty; as existing at this place and time, and not another one. In taking itself over as this particular *Dasein*, as for example modern, democratic *Dasein*, rather than medieval, monarchic *Dasein*, it becomes capable of owning itself as the sort of being that it is. But only insofar as it has accurately come to grips with the sort of being it is and the possibilities open to it can it take itself over authentically. This entails having an understanding of itself in its potentialities. Central to this authentic grasping of *Dasein*'s possibilities is the recognition of its existence as finite, that is, as limited not only by the birth which gives it the factical existence that it must adopt, but also the death to which its existence is condemned. In taking itself over as a finite being, *Dasein*'s mode of understanding in resoluteness is being-towards-death, which signifies that the new possibility for existence that *Dasein* has taken over, occurs within a finite temporal horizon. Only because *Dasein* can be confronted with the possibility of its death, can it act in a way to bring about new possibilities for existence. Hence, Heidegger's conception of freedom is based on a finite conception of time.

As determined by finitude, the decision *Dasein* makes in the moment of resoluteness is still derived from the tradition it has inherited. This has the effect of modifying the tradition in some way; of transforming it so that it can live anew in the present. For Heidegger, freedom requires working through how tradition affects our understanding of the present. Here it should be noted that at the most fundamental level, Heidegger views a single tradition in which an understanding of being emerges, namely, that of Western metaphysics. Freedom at any given point in time would need to lay bare the prejudices of that tradition upon the present moment.

Only in this way can the tradition be transcended. It can only be transcended through a modification of that tradition, not merely by replacing it. Freedom entails going beyond the tradition and thus means to be without a ground, that is, to be anxious; never finding a home and yet longing for one. It is for the home, the place of establishment, to remain in question. This may sound strange, because we expect thinking to give us answers, not questions. We expect grounding. We expect philosophy to do something; give us some kind of certainty. From Heidegger's perspective, any such certainty would be illusory and hide the more fundamental freedom to which we are opened up as being-in-the-world.

II

As noted above, my discussion is limited to Heidegger's conception of resoluteness and its relation to the political to his early thought in *Being and Time*. I do not analyze his writings during and after his membership and support of National Socialism. By limiting the reading in this way, I show that Heidegger's *Being and Time* reserves a central role for politics, while also showing another side of resoluteness than is often portrayed in the literature on the political implications of Heidegger's early thought. For the sake of efficiency, I have also limited my treatment of Marcuse and Arendt to how their conceptions of action show an overlap with the conception of action that Heidegger develops in *Being and Time*. In light of this narrowed focus, I conclude my dissertation by pointing to new horizons for reflection on the political implications of Heidegger's thought.

Later Heidegger and the Political

The major limitation of this study is that I omit consideration of Heidegger's later thinking on the topic of the political, notably during the rise of National Socialism. By narrowing my attention to his early development of fundamental ontology, I do not intend to suggest that his thinking during this later period is inconsequential to his earlier views on politics. Indeed, others have shown the internal connections between Heidegger's political thought and his support for National Socialism, most notably Victor Farias,[3] Jürgen Habermas,[4] Tom Rockmore,[5] and recently, Emmanuel Faye.[6] Faye goes as far as to suggest that Heidegger so thoroughly incorporates Nazi concepts into his philosophy that the whole of his *Gesamtausgabe* "cannot continue to be placed in the philosophy section of libraries; its place is rather in the historical archives of Nazism and Hitlerism."[7] Studies like these are important for enabling a critical perspective on Heidegger's political thought, and allow a healthy amount of skepticism about the extent to which his philosophy is compatible with democratic ideals. However, such criticism should not absolve the present of serious engagement with Heidegger's contributions to understanding the political, by positing his views as incompatible with democracy. Heidegger's influence on Marcuse and Arendt alone shows that equating his thought with totalitarian ideology is far too reductive. Nevertheless, Heidegger's later thought does seem to abstract from the concrete socio-political reality of the contemporary world, by subordinating such

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[3] Farías, *Heidegger and Nazism*.

[4] Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity : Twelve Lectures*. See also

[5] Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*.

[6] Faye, *Heidegger, the Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933-1935*.

[7] Ibid., 319.

consideration to the "really essential" history of being—a history that only the philosopher can interpret. In this abstraction there seems to be cause for suspicion, which both Marcuse and Arendt point out by criticizing Heidegger's lack of a strong concept of communication, in which the disclosure of oneself through speech must remain open to challenge by public standards.

Later Marcuse and the Relation Between Capital and Technology

Another limitation of this study is my narrowed reading of Marcuse, which is confined to his early reception of *Being and Time*, and does not follow later developments in his thought. Marcuse claims that by 1932, Heidegger's thought was no longer an issue for him.[8] Because I am primarily concerned with the possibilities opened up by engagement with resoluteness in *Being and Time*, I do not treat Marcuse's turn to Hegelian-Marxism, his analysis of society in terms of Freudian drive theory, or his critique of capitalism in *One Dimensional Man*.

Further, I do not discuss Heidegger's later conception of technology. In chapter three, I suggested that for Heidegger, an account of the understanding of being that predominates the modern world would require a discussion of what he refers to as enframing, which is an understanding of being that views all beings as resources to be exploited, a mode of thinking that makes technology possible. This would be interesting to consider in light of Marcuse's critique of capitalism, for in both the technological understanding of being and capitalism we witness a similar leveling down of beings to resources to be exploited. Left open, then, is the question of whether what Heidegger refers to as enframing is not instead an effect of a historically contingent mode of economy, and hence not the ontologically most fundamental phenomenon, or

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[8] Herbert Marcuse, "Theory and Politics: A Discussion with Herbert Marcuse, Juergen Habermas, Heinz Lubasz, and Telman Spengler," *Telos: A Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought* 38 (1979): 125.

whether capitalism can be seen as the most advanced form of technological domination. Further, given this domination, the question remains whether the technological understanding of being has become so complete that it has displaced any other. In any case, Heidegger's conception of technology as made possible by a certain mode of thinking that limits the existence of all beings to their ability to be ordered within a system of control, invites comparison to instrumental reason as the dominant mode of thinking in industrial, capitalist society.

In this context, it is worth noting that while Heidegger appears to view technology as an insurmountable force organizing all relations in the modern age, Marcuse's analysis tells a different story. For Marcuse, the danger posed by technology is in its employment in the service of the established social system, which makes for a more effective means of domination and control. However, made to serve different goals, Marcuse argues that technology could serve the growth of human freedom. The notion of liberatory technology would have an oxymoronic ring for Heidegger, who speaks of freedom from technology as something for which the modern age may hope. Heidegger would have been critical of Marcuse's notion of liberation, since it often conceives human needs and interests independently of their historical situation. That is, Marcuse understands the need for liberation as something that in the historical situation of capitalism is prevented from finding expression, without understanding that need as itself historically conditioned. In this point of disagreement, Heidegger and strict historical materialists can find common ground in viewing Marcuse's concept of liberation as remaining metaphysical and a-historical. Additionally, Heidegger's conception of enframing allows for an ecological perspective on technology because for him, enframing pertains to the exploitation of earth as

well as human beings. This perspective seems absent for Marcuse, whose humanism seems to place human beings in the center of his theory, which Heidegger would have opposed.

Arendt and Political Practice

Arendt's focus on the political as an end in itself in the *Human Condition* leaves open crucial questions about the practice of political administration. These questions could similarly be posed to Heidegger's conception of the political. In Arendt's conception of the political, power is generated by formation of a common will among all participants through speech and action. Arendt distinguished this from instrumental activities like work and labor that have a known and definite end. But as Habermas points out, Arendt's conception of the political may be necessary for understanding political power, but it is insufficient to account for the maintenance of this power. Habermas explains:

> ...we cannot exclude the element of strategic action from the concept of the political. Let us understand the force exercised through strategic action as the ability to prevent other individuals or groups from realizing their interests. In this sense force has always belonged to the means for acquiring and holding on to positions of legitimate power. In modern states this struggle for political power has even been institutionalized; it thereby became a normal component of the political system. On the other hand, it is not at all clear that someone should be able to *generate* legitimate power simply because he is in a position to prevent others from pursuing their interests. Legitimate power *arises* only among those who form common convictions in unconstrained communication.[9]

According to Habermas, Arendt wrongly conflates instrumental action with strategic action, thereby eliminating strategic action from her conception of the political. As such, her concept of the political, and any such conception of the political that views political action simply as an end in itself, will be unable to account for the institutionalization of legitimate political power in a modern state. This is a compelling critique that warrants further research and consideration. To

[9] Jürgen Habermas, "Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power," *Social Research* 44, no. 1 (1977): 18.

put the issue in terms of resoluteness as a political concept, the question becomes: what does a resolute world look like? I would hazard the answer that a resolute world, or the continual practice of the political in Arendt's sense, would be schizophrenic, that is, constantly revising its foundations and ceaselessly changing. In such a world, nothing like Heidegger's conception of everydayness or Arendt's notions of work and labor would be possible, because nothing would ever really be decided upon. The need for the political arises in these moments where unity and decision is contested, and such decisions determine our everyday existence. This is not to say that we can or should be political all the time. Political action is perhaps necessary only when the established world has lost its ability to unify differing agents into a whole. The point of the political, in the case of Arendt and Heidegger, is to show the foundation of the world in the struggle between differing views, not a supra-historical entity or concept of reason.

Mood and politics

While Marcuse is well-known for having applied psycho-analytic theory to an analysis of capitalist society, he does not seem to follow Heidegger's conception of attunement. Neither he nor Arendt direct much attention to Heidegger's view that the political is determined by mood. For Heidegger, moods are not merely possessed by individuals, but pertain to the way in which the world is made intelligible for a whole people or society. In a lecture course given during 1929-30, Heidegger investigates whether the mood of the contemporaneous situation is boredom. As I showed above, Heidegger identified anxiety, the withdrawal of significance from the world, as the fundamental mood from out of which new possibilities for existence can emerge. What makes such a mood "political" is that it reveals the significance of the world as a whole, and not

specific entities within a world whose meaning is already constituted. Future research could explore the extent to which, and how, other attunements might have significance for the political. The question here could arise: How are moods like anxiety prevented or appeased by the status quo so as to maintain its dominance and prevent action for new possibilities? What would be the attunement of an impending environmental catastrophe?[10] Here, I presume only to point to ways in which Heidegger's concept of world disclosure could lead us to think about the political in new and interesting ways.

Despite these limitations, I think it sufficient to have shown that the core of *Being and Time* is concerned with the possibility of resoluteness, and is therefore significant from the perspective of social and political philosophy. Pragmatist interpretations of *Being and Time* fail to recognize its central problematic by limiting themselves to Heidegger's thesis that in the everyday mode of disclosure, understanding is a form of praxis that operates within an already established structure of meaning. But as Heidegger goes on to argue, this structure of meaning has its source in the political act of foundation. It is established in the moment resoluteness through a modification of the past. At issue, then, is not how human beings tend to understand their world through the instruments that they use to cope with it, but rather, the conditions that must be in place for an understanding of the world to be given to us at all. As I have shown, Heidegger argues that this foundational moment is resoluteness; an act of establishment that is itself without any foundation. By showing how this idea influences Marcuse and Arendt, we see that the political should not be understood as a form of instrumental action, but rather the basis from which instrumental actions ultimately derive meaning.

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[10] I am grateful to Christian Lotz for this suggestion.

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