

***Fear, Anxiety and Death in Freud and Heidegger***

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**Abstract**

This mini-thesis attempts to understand what it means to fear death. It does this by first investigating how Heidegger and then Freud explain fear of death.

Heidegger believes that the relationship Dasein has towards its own death allows it the possibility of 'authenticity'. Death presents to Dasein its ownmost potentiality for being. Heidegger explains that this means that in facing death Dasein has the possibility of completeness and absolute individuality. Dasein is called to this possibility of authenticity by the anxiety it experiences in the face of its own death. However, Dasein does not necessarily respond to this call. By reducing anxiety to a fear it is possible for Dasein to disregard its fear of death and correspondingly not respond to the call of authenticity. Thus, for Heidegger, fear of death is symptomatic of inauthentic Dasein's relationship towards its own death.

For Freud, on the other hand, death cannot be conceptualised without reference to the social world. Freud believes that the relationship we have towards our own death is learnt through living in this world. Furthermore, Freud argues that it is impossible for the human being to ever understand that death can be an annihilation. When the human being dreads, fears or even desires death, Freud believes it does so symbolically. In this regard Freud explains, by way of the death instinct, that the psyche understands death as a return to before birth. One of Freud's explanations of fear of death is that this fear is actually for the loss of Eros. This fear, however, is in conflict with the phantasy to return to before birth. One of the results of this conflict is the arousal of anxiety.

The differences and similarities between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations are detailed in the final chapter. Examining these details leads to a closer investigation of Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of anxiety. On this issue this mini-thesis finds that Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of anxiety are in conflict with each other. After attempting to avoid placing Freud and Heidegger against each other, this mini-thesis demonstrates that Heidegger's explanation of anxiety is lacking in detail.

## **Introduction**

Death is a fact. This everybody acknowledges. So often, however, it seems to be a subject that most choose to ignore. By this I mean not ignoring the fact of death but rather to ignore the implications of it. When one actually thinks about what the implications of death are, it becomes difficult to argue that there could be another, more important event that shall happen in our lifetime. Despite this, however, it remains a subject that is almost taboo. While there are a myriad of talk shows and books on how to deal with the anxiety of the first date, or the stress of writing an exam it is almost impossible to find even 'pop' advice on how to deal with the anxiety or fear of death.

This being the case it is also difficult to find investigations of 'fear of death'. Fortunately, I happened to be familiar with two investigations which have been undertaken on the subject. This mini-thesis, then, aims to understand and evaluate Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of fear of death.

The first chapter investigates the implications of Heidegger's explanation of fear of death. Our investigation of Heidegger is based on the conclusions he reached in *Being and Time*. In this book Heidegger explains Dasein's relationship towards its own death as a means for Dasein to realise its potentiality for authenticity.

Heidegger explains that his conclusion, that Dasein's relationship towards its own death has implications for Dasein's being, points to the fact that Dasein's initial reaction to the possibility of its own death is not one of fear but rather of anxiety. In explaining why Dasein tends to incorrectly classify its relationship towards its own death as a fear, Heidegger introduces the idea of the 'they' (the social world) - it is the 'they' that makes it possible for Dasein to not be authentic. For Heidegger, then, Dasein has both the potentiality for authenticity and inauthenticity. When Dasein faces the possibility of its own death and its anxiety towards this possibility it realises its 'ownmost potentiality for being' and with this its possibility for being authentic. However, even in facing its anxiety

towards the possibility of its own death, Heidegger believes Dasein still has the potentiality for inauthenticity. Accordingly they make it possible for Dasein to dismiss its anxiety towards death as a fear. Fear of death, Heidegger argues, does not allow Dasein the possibility for authenticity.

When Dasein is anxious towards death, Heidegger explains, Dasein faces its potentiality for authenticity. Because anxiety is vague and non-specific it is not easily dismissed by reference to a specific cause. Heidegger argues that this is because anxiety actually calls Dasein to realise its potentiality for individuality in the present. By this Heidegger means that Dasein is faced with a way of being that is not diluted by the expectations of others and by living in the future. In the face of death, Heidegger believes, Dasein is forced to realise that it cannot 'be' in the (near) future (in the 'being towards'). Furthermore, death presents Dasein with the possibility for individual completeness (the 'ownmost potentiality for being') because it is an event that Dasein must go through alone and in order to attain completeness of being. After all, Heidegger argues, without the possibility for absolute individuality Dasein would be unable to, in layman's terms, be itself.

For the purpose of this thesis the first chapter also investigates Heidegger's explanation why he believes his work should not be read as a psychology, anthropology or biology. Bearing this argument in mind, the second chapter details Freud's explanation of fear of death while simultaneously illustrating the differences between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations.

Because Freud did not specifically investigate what it means to fear death this chapter follows Freud's attitudes and explanations of fear of death through a number of works. In an effort to uncover a more cohesive structure I view Freud's work chronologically and as a work in progress. This allows us the possibility of ascertaining whether Freud has a unitary understanding of fear of death.

Freud's first reference to our attitude towards our own death is of our refusal to believe in

the possibility of our own annihilation. In this regard Freud and Heidegger agree. However, despite this similarity, the second chapter concludes that Freud's explanation is essentially different from Heidegger's, because it always makes sense of our attitude towards death in terms of how it impacts on our social life.

The role our social life plays in influencing the way in which we understand our own death marks a major difference between Freud and Heidegger. Freud never entertains anything like the concept of authenticity or an 'ownmost potentiality for being'. This is because, for Freud, the human being cannot be understood except by way of reference to instincts. Furthermore, because instincts desire love and sex the human being cannot but be a social being.

For Freud, the fact that human beings are social beings means that our relationship towards our own death must be understood in terms of its social implications. Furthermore, Freud argues that the fact of death is not something inherently known. Rather the relationship we have towards our own death is something that is learnt. This means, in a Freudian framework, that our relationship towards our own death is only possible through the experiencing of the death of others. Accordingly we only learn of the possibility of our own death when we experience the death of a loved one and correspondingly the death of a part of our own ego. For Freud, then, our own death only has significance in so far as it has social, or socially learnt implications.

After detailing how Freud believes we learn about our own death, the second chapter attempts to make sense of the implications of the death instinct. In this regard Freud specifically defines fear of death as a fear of the loss of Eros. The investigation of the death instinct, however, is also important because it reveals that Freud believes that even in this case the psyche views death symbolically (e.g. as a return to intra-uterine existence). The fact that death is understood symbolically, Freud argues, demonstrates psyche's inability to ever conceptualise its own death.

However, death is never symbolised by something neutral. In the case of the death instinct, for example, death is symbolised by the return to intra-uterine existence. In this regard, then, death is something the psyche both dreads and desires. In Freud's investigation of the uncanny he links this feeling to our experience of death. This indirectly connects fear of death to anxiety. The anxiety is due to our phantasy for intra-uterine existence which is represented by death while simultaneously dreading death itself.

The details of this, however, are too extensive to summarise here. What is important for this introduction is that Freud links anxiety to our perception of death in a very different way to Heidegger.

The third chapter, then, begins by attempting to ascertain whether Heidegger's and Freud's explanations are compatible. The initial conclusion is that because Freud and Heidegger were not attempting the same type of project it is very difficult, if not impossible, to find a middle path or a compromise between the two explanations. Furthermore, Freud and Heidegger's explanations do not offer competing perspectives and thus we cannot judge which is superior.

However, both Freud and Heidegger have distinctly different explanations of anxiety. For this reason the third chapter attempts to gain a clearer idea of what Freud and Heidegger mean by anxiety and whether their uses of the word anxiety are in conflict with each other or not.

Picking up on Heidegger's assertion that anxiety is central to understanding our relationship towards death, the third chapter begins by developing this theme. It does so by examining what Heidegger sees as definitive about anxiety and whether this has any implications for the Freudian reading of what it means to fear death. At this point it becomes necessary to understand Freud's explanation of fear of death and its connection to anxiety. It is this explanation of anxiety that proves to be problematic. In fact, Freud's explanation of anxiety seems to be incompatible with Heidegger's use of anxiety. Because

Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of anxiety are incompatible the third chapter continues with an evaluation of both Freud and Heidegger's approach to the subject.

In working out these details the third chapter investigates any possibilities for compatibility. In this regard we work through a number of different possible ways of reading Heidegger and Freud only to conclude that the two explanations are indeed incompatible. While working through the details of Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of anxiety it becomes apparent that we need to investigate the similarities and differences between 'being towards death' and 'the death instinct'. This investigation only reinforces the impression that on this subject, Freud and Heidegger are incompatible.

The third chapter concludes this mini-thesis, then, with the realisation that both Freud and Heidegger have problematic conceptualisations of fear of death. Freud, I conclude, did not account for the existential implications that Heidegger picked up on in explaining what it means to be anxious about death. Heidegger's definition of anxiety, on the other hand, proves to be insufficient and ambiguous in the face of Freud's research.

This led me to investigate whether we could argue that Freud's and Heidegger's explanations would have been better validated if they had, respectively, considered the implications of philosophy and psychology. This made it possible for me to argue that philosophy and psychology should be brought into conversation with each other. The result of this, then, is that both psychology and philosophy would be more accurate and most importantly, more convincing. It is on this note and on a call to undertake further research on this subject that this mini-thesis ends.

## **Chapter One: Heidegger and Fear of Death**

From the beginning of this mini-thesis I have been aware that Heidegger himself would have found it difficult to approve of an effort to make his work (particularly that in *Being and Time*) enter into a conversation with Freud. The reason for this is that Heidegger was not attempting to define (as Freud did) an anthropology and even less so a psychology. Heidegger's project was, by his own admission, strictly an ontology - the aim was "to work out the question of the meaning of *Being*" (Heidegger 1962:17). However, this chapter shall show that it is useful, at least for this mini-thesis, to investigate the possibilities for such a conversation.

This chapter first outlines where 'fear of death', as defined by Heidegger, fits into his *Being and Time*. It then discusses Heidegger's resistance to his investigation being interpreted as an anthropology. This is especially important in determining how this perspective influences Heidegger's work being entered into a conversation with Freud's. This is followed by an intensive investigation of what Heidegger means when he talks about fear of death.

### **1.1 Introducing Heidegger**

The following short introduction attempts to contextualise Heidegger's writings on the fear of death in the structure of his investigation. Unfortunately this is intended as just a short introduction and thus glosses over many of Heidegger's more complex and interesting formulations, questions and definitions. In order to further maintain the brevity of this introduction I also occasionally quote from Guignon's introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*.

This mini-thesis concentrates particularly on Heidegger's *Being and Time* not because I believe that this is Heidegger's only relevant work on the subject but rather because it has come to be accepted in philosophical circles as his definitive earlier work. It was first published in 1927 and marked a move away from a traditional ontology typified by

references to the 'observer' and what is observed. This meant a move towards a study of what we know from immediate experience. It does not mean to say that things do not exist if we do not interact with (experience) them but rather that they gain meaning to us by our interacting with them. This marked a move away from questions like 'How do we know that *x* exists?' and 'What can we know for certain?' to a new formulation of the question of the meaning of being. Heidegger justifies this in the first section of *Being and Time* (1962:21-35) where he illustrates that to ask these questions we first need to know what the conditions are to know either of these things. More importantly, Heidegger attempts to lay down the conditions necessary for us to know what it means to *or* for something to 'be'. Guignon most effectively summarises this first part of Heidegger's investigation in his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, as:

an inquiry into our own being, insofar as we are the entities who have some understanding of being, and it does so in order to lay a basis for inquiring into the being of entities in general.

Guignon 1993:5-6

In this Guignon summarises Heidegger's conclusions that in order to attempt to understand what he calls "the darkest of all" concepts (Heidegger 1962:23) we first need to know what it means to understand our own 'being'. In other words, if we are to understand what it means for entities to exist we must first understand what it means for us to exist (or at least what the conditions for this are).

The nature of being, then, is such that we are always part of what we attempt to study/understand. This Heidegger works out in the first part of *Being and Time* in his discussions of everyday activities such as using a hammer. He explains that entities "become accessible when we put ourselves into the position of concerning ourselves with them in some way....This is the way in which everyday Dasein<sup>1</sup> always *is*" (Heidegger 1962:96). After (and indirectly during) explaining how entities become accessible to everyday Dasein, Heidegger is able to illustrate what he means by authentic and

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<sup>1</sup> By way of definition, Heidegger says of Dasein that it is "an entity which is in each case I myself; its being is in each case mine." (Heidegger 1962:150). The literal translation is '*to be there*' but Heidegger generally uses the term to refer to the human being.

inauthentic Dasein. Inauthentic Dasein is everyday Dasein; that Dasein that is able to easily use entities in the world. In using these entities, Heidegger believes, one encounters the presence of others - for example a boat is "assigned in its Being-in-itself to an acquaintance who undertakes voyages with it" (Heidegger 1962:154). By 'others' Heidegger does not mean those against which everyday Dasein stands out but "rather those from whom, for the most part, one does *not* distinguish oneself - those amongst whom one is too." (Heidegger 1962:154) Inauthentic Dasein is essentially at home in these 'others' - is defined by the certainty of these 'others' / 'the they'. Authentic Dasein, on the other hand, faces the possibilities of uncertainty. Authentic Dasein essentially recognises the contingency of its knowledge and existence.

Authentic Dasein is thus Dasein facing the uncertainty of what was previously hidden by the 'they' (that is Inauthentic Dasein as fallen in the certainty provided by the 'they'). Facing this uncertainty (or contingency) is not simply facing the fact of uncertainty. Rather it is facing our possibilities for other ways of being. In this facing of other possibilities for being Dasein is confronted with the possibility of its own death and it is here that Heidegger considers the implications of Dasein's own death to its existence. Death, however, is not just another possibility of existence for Dasein. Rather, death is charged with all sorts of other meanings. Death presents to Authentic Dasein the possibility of not existing, completeness and the ultimate expression of absolute individuality. Authentic Dasein is presented with the possibility of completeness only in death because this final event gives Dasein possibilities for existence inaccessible while alive. Individuality, on the other hand, only occurs at birth and death - Dasein is constantly moving away from its own birth and towards its own death. Because Dasein's own death can only happen to Dasein itself it gives Dasein the only true possibility for individuality<sup>2</sup>. Part of acknowledging these other possibilities is facing what these other possibilities actually mean to Dasein. It is here that Heidegger sees dread of/fear of death as symptomatic of Authentic Dasein.

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<sup>2</sup> These concepts are more comprehensively elaborated later in this chapter.

Essentially Heidegger sees Dasein in the world not as a scientist pondering the masses and infinity of the universe. Rather Dasein's world is delimited by the extent of his/her spheres of activity and interest. In this world Dasein exists always by reaching out beyond itself towards some future goal or accomplishment. It is to this that Dasein lives in anticipation as Inauthentic Dasein. Death presents to Dasein the exact opposite of this. Death is the possibility that calls Dasein to the realisation that the world is not simply his/her sphere of activity and that living in anticipation is inherently connected to the inevitability of Dasein's own death. The possibility of death specifically does not allow Dasein to reach out beyond itself towards something in the future. Finally the possibility of death is the possibility of end and individuality/solitude and in this the only possibility for authenticity. The reason for this is clear - the possibility of death illuminates to Dasein the possibility for it to finally, truly be itself.

To sum up, then, Heidegger sees Dasein as anxious about death only when Dasein is authentic. This chapter, then, attempts to make sense of what this means for the theme of this thesis. In doing this, however, we need to understand what is at stake in bringing Heidegger into what has so far been a psychological investigation. In this regard I will now explain why Heidegger specifically resisted the possibility of his work being read as an anthropology, psychology or biology. A fuller explanation of what Heidegger means when he refers to Authentic Dasein appears later in this chapter.

## **1.2 The implications of anthropology, psychology and biology**

Just five pages into the first part of *Being and Time* Heidegger makes specific his intention to distinguish his analysis of Dasein from biology, anthropology and psychology. Here Heidegger begins by saying that Descartes' discussion in his *cogito ergo sum* solely investigated the *cogito ergo* (the 'I think therefore...') but "he [left] the '*sum*' completely undiscussed" (Heidegger 1962:71). In contrast to this, Heidegger is attempting an investigation of the 'am' or of 'being' as such. Specifically he resists his investigation becoming a study solely of the 'I' or the '(I)think' because he wants his to be principally an ontological question and not a scientific one. Heidegger's understanding of this as an

ontological question primarily means that the question must not be limited or misdirected by the above mentioned or any other sciences.

In this he reminds the reader that this is not a psychological or anthropological investigation. What Heidegger (1962:72) objects to in such investigations is that “here ‘life’ itself as a kind of Being does not become ontologically” a subject for study. By this Heidegger means that we need to take account of, amongst others, the personal nature of the meaning of being. An investigation of the meaning of being needs to resist those interpretations that do not speak to the nature of being in its subtlety and in its completeness. Understanding these subtleties is to understand being as defined by possibilities for being which present a seemingly insurmountable challenge to the above mentioned disciplines.

This does not mean that Heidegger’s method is useless to biology, anthropology or psychology but rather that these disciplines restrict the question to exclude aspects which make Heidegger’s question possible. For example to ask the meaning of the question of being in biology would mean to be confined to a discipline that is rooted in the study of the living (organic). This study of the organic (the living) is not an area that Heidegger wishes to exclude from his investigation. However, it is something which Heidegger wants to exclude from contributing to the formulation of the question. Exclusion of this sort is not meant as exclusion from participation but an exclusion from specific influence. Heidegger insists that the question must be asked on its own terms and not by way of an already restricted discipline.

As regards psychology Heidegger quotes Scheler to demonstrate that psychology does not attempt the question of being. This is because psychology treats the person as thing-like and substantial and more importantly explainable in terms of it “being a subject of rational acts which follow certain laws.” (Heidegger 1962:73) Heidegger explains that this is an inadequate way of understanding being; Dasein should not be treated as though it is constituted like other things in nature. Dasein is different not because it necessarily has

anything more than other things in nature, but because we are certain of aspects of Dasein that we are not certain of with other things in nature (for example, the existence of emotions). This is essentially why Heidegger uses the term 'Dasein' instead of 'person' or 'man'<sup>3</sup>. The question of the meaning of being, then, must resist being a psychology because

It must face the Being of the whole man, who is customarily taken as a unity of body, soul, and spirit. In their turn 'body', 'soul', and 'spirit' may designate phenomenal domains which can be detached as themes for definite investigations; within certain limits their ontological indefiniteness may not be important. When, however, we come to the question of man's Being, this is not something we can simply compute by adding together those kinds of Being which body, soul, and spirit respectively possess - kinds of Being whose nature has not as yet been determined.

Heidegger, 1962:73/74

Despite this assertion, however, Heidegger has on numerous occasions been read as a psychology. In particular Ludwig Binswanger and Medard Boss are often associated with working with Heidegger in a psychological framework. Considering this it would be nothing short of foolish to proceed without considering both Boss's and Binswanger's position.

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<sup>3</sup> For Heidegger 'Dasein' is every possibility for being and is limited in description by using terms like human being because this term is laden with limitations on possibilities for existence.

### **1.3 Defending Boss and Binswanger<sup>4</sup>**

Boss and Binswanger both associated themselves with a form of psychotherapy known as *Daseinsanalysis* - basically analysis of *Dasein*. *Daseinsanalysis*, which based itself on the 'results' of Heidegger's philosophical investigations, was to Boss the next progression for psychoanalysis and medicine because "Heidegger's 'analysis of *Dasein*' is more appropriate to an understanding of man than the concepts which natural science has introduced into medicine and psychotherapy." (Boss 1963:28) By this Boss is not confining himself to changing psychology or psychoanalysis. Rather Boss sees *daseinsanalysis*, as he says a few lines later in the same section, eclipsing all the behavioural sciences. The reason for this is obvious - Boss saw *daseinsanalysis* as asking the question of the meaning of being so as to include, as Heidegger's *Being and Time* insisted upon, all the possibilities for being.

Interestingly, Boss consulted Heidegger and even believed that he had Heidegger's support for his project. Considering what we covered above it is not difficult to conclude why Heidegger might have supported such an ambitious project. Heidegger's resistance to being read as a psychology was a resistance to being reduced to a psychology. Boss never does this - *daseinsanalysis* is never offered as just a school of psychology/analysis.

After this short explanation of the links between *Daseinsanalysis* and Heidegger's philosophy, Boss chooses not to engage in any further philosophical discussion in favour of an investigation into the clinical implications of his research on the process of analysis. For this reason I depart from Boss and turn to Needleman, Binswanger's translator, who continues a similar explanation in the first half of his translation of a collection of Binswanger's essays titled, *Being in the World*.

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<sup>4</sup> While the results of investigating Boss and Binswanger's view add little new to the discussion I feel it is necessary to include their perspectives as I make use of them in Chapter Two.

Needleman explains that daseinsanalysis sees psychology taking up the study of a so-called 'objective' world. By this Needleman means that psychology tends to presuppose a certainty of the 'external world'. It is in this certainty that psychology grounds itself in order to formulate its explanation of human behaviour. Psychology in this sense is psychology attempting to realise itself as a natural science - to make itself scientific. It betrays the belief that it can only achieve the status of a science by way of an empirical study or behaviourism. Specifically "the subject matter of behaviorism is one in which the self is excluded from the world it investigates." (Needleman 1963:43) This, for Needleman, is psychology failing its own definition as a field of research that is more than just a study of behaviour. Thus, for Needleman, if psychology is to truly take up the task of understanding the human being as a whole it must recognise firstly, human individuality and secondly, the completeness of the human condition.

To be truly empirical, the psychologist must preserve the 'transcendence,'  
the reference beyond itself of conscious process - in a word, their meanings  
to the self in whom they are taking place.

Needleman 1963:45

There is clearly a common thread running through Daseinsanalysis that believes that a final definition of the human experience would be impossible without Heidegger's analysis. With Boss this is expressed as a rejection of traditional psychoanalysis as being limited in perspective. For Binswanger and Needleman, Daseinsanalysis is the means of overcoming the limitations of psychology and while accepting parts of psychoanalytic<sup>5</sup> method they also sees it as limited. Heidegger's work gave to daseinsanalysis the explanation and justification for adopting such a view (as I explained in the previous section) by uncovering the possibility of a comprehensive ontology. But by doing this Heidegger ensured that his work cannot easily be assimilated into psychology. For this reason it

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<sup>5</sup> This is especially noticeable in Needleman's anti-behaviourism/scientific psychology. Needleman's attack on this sort of psychology conspicuously remains silent about psychoanalysis probably because psychoanalysis does not accept the behaviourist/scientific psychology as essential. Later Needleman explains that Binswanger saw psychoanalysis as both powerful and with limitations. Unlike in the case of psychology, however, Binswanger saw Daseinsanalysis not as its undertaker but its complement. (Needleman 1963:43-8)

makes sense for Boss and Binswanger to see their work as more comprehensive than psychology. However it also places a limitation on Daseinsanalysis in that it cannot be anything but wholly comprehensive otherwise it would be a misreading of Heidegger.

Now that we have an idea of what Heidegger feels is at stake in reading his *Being and Time* as a psychology I believe the next step is to investigate what Heidegger actually makes of fear of death. Heidegger specifically discusses this in the first section of the second half of *Being and Time* titled "Dasein's Possibility of Being-a-Whole, and Being-towards-Death" (Heidegger 1962:274-304). The rest of this chapter, then, shall follow the structure of the above mentioned section.

#### **1.4 Death and Dasein**

Heidegger begins his investigation into death as a continuation of his attempt to ascertain whether it is possible to ever access Dasein in its being-a-whole. Essential to understanding Dasein is recognising that Dasein always exists in the face of possibilities. In fact, Dasein's existence is always in "Being toward these possibilities" and it is in this being towards that Dasein is always existing in its future. By this Heidegger means that Dasein is always aware of its possibilities and plans its next action in accordance with what these possibilities allow for. For this reason "It is essential to the basic constitution of Dasein that there is constantly something still to be settled" (Heidegger 1962:279) - the something still to be settled is a yet not done possibility of being.

There is one possibility of being that is always outstanding - death. Death is outstanding as both that possibility still left to be fulfilled, and outstanding in the sense that while Dasein exists this possibility cannot be fulfilled. When there is nothing left to be settled, when there is only one possibility for existence left, then Dasein gains its wholeness but "this gain becomes the utter loss of Being-in-the-world." (Heidegger 1962:280) Dasein exists in its incompleteness and when presented with the last missing piece of its existence (itself as death) it becomes complete, but inaccessible as an entity ever again. Thus, Dasein exists as incomplete - as unfulfilled possibilities - and when completeness is achieved through

fulfilment of the final possibility (death) Dasein becomes complete but dead and inaccessible.

Even though Heidegger feels justified in maintaining the above position, he argues that the investigation must go further to ascertain what the implications are of saying that Dasein is inaccessible in death and incomplete while alive.

To explain what he means, Heidegger begins by investigating what death does *not* mean for Dasein. Heidegger initially does this by rejecting the 'typical' conceptualisation of death - namely as a loss. In the second half of *Being and Time* in a section titled "The Possibility of Experiencing the Death of Others, and the possibility of getting a whole Dasein into Our Grasp" Heidegger explains that "death does indeed reveal itself as a loss, but a loss such as is experienced by those who remain. In suffering this loss, however, we have no way of access to the loss-of-Being as such which the dying man 'suffers'." (Heidegger 1962:282) By this Heidegger means to distinguish clearly between loss of others and loss of Dasein's own Being. The distinguishing characteristic is obviously that loss of the other is a loss to the self while the loss-of-Being that is *experienced* in death is actually the loss of the self. For Heidegger the relationship Dasein has with itself is unique and individually definitive while the relationship Dasein has with the outside world diminishes its uniqueness<sup>6</sup>.

The death of the other, however, is not meaningless to Dasein. The other's death allows Dasein the opportunity to observe the transition that occurs in the other moving from 'being' to 'not-being'. However, Dasein has "no way of access to the loss-of-Being as such which the dying man 'suffers'." (Heidegger 1962:282) In other words the death of the other offers Dasein the opportunity to experience a kind of being which it itself will never be able to experience. The reason for this is that a condition for death is that Dasein will have lost its own Being. Most importantly the death of others is not really experienced in the same way by Dasein alive. The dead other still exists to Dasein while itself dead

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<sup>6</sup> This idea is further elaborated in my discussion on the 'they' and 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' Dasein.

certainly does not. Furthermore, the experience of the death of the other illuminates to Dasein that, unlike in most other possibilities of being, “death is in every case mine, in so far as it ‘is’ at all.” (Heidegger 1962:284) In other words death is the possibility of existence which essentially shows that ‘mineness’ is unavoidable and that in being Dasein will eventually be forced to take ownership of the self in solitude.

Many believers do, of course, disagree with this by claiming that there is life after death (and thus Dasein’s own death does not threaten its individuality or uniqueness<sup>7</sup>) but this is an argument that holds little weight for Heidegger. The reason for this is that Heidegger, like Freud, is not referring to what does or does not happen after death, but rather to the fact that death is a certainty for Dasein. This means that death is always a possibility for Dasein’s sense of its own being. The primary factor of facing this possibility is the fact that Dasein cannot be prepared for its own death in life. In other words there are no clues or methods to alleviating the inevitability of death and furthermore, there are no empirical means to gaining further insight into death. For Heidegger, death is the same for all; it is the abyss into which Dasein must realise it will go. For Heidegger, then, death is always on the horizon, “Death is something that stands before us – something impending.” (Heidegger 1962:294)

This entering into death is not a coming of age but rather a clearly signified ending, a perishing or a finishing. When conceived as such it becomes an experience which bears no similarity to any other conceivable experience. This, in itself, presents to us the possibility of an interesting question - what does it mean to come to terms with and to understand one’s fate/destiny?<sup>8</sup> Does it mean to come to terms with the inevitability and inaccessibility of death and dying? And, furthermore, what would it mean to confront such a fear? Interesting as these questions are, however, I shall wait until the next chapter before attempting to answer them.

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<sup>7</sup> Seeing Dasein’s own death as a threat to its uniqueness and individuality is defined more fully later on where I show that death does not threaten to take uniqueness and individuality away from Dasein but rather to define Dasein as unique and individual in death.

<sup>8</sup> This clearly relates to Freud’s understanding of the death instinct and the discussions on this in the next

Having discussed what it means for Dasein to recognise the death of others and what is at stake in its recognition of its own death, Heidegger continues with the investigation in a section titled “That which is still Outstanding; the End; Totality” (Heidegger 1962:285-290).

### **1.5 Death as Something still Outstanding**

For Dasein, then, recognition of its own death is a condition for understanding the implications of what it means to be. One of these implications is that “in Dasein there is undeniably a constant ‘lack of totality’ which finds an end with death.” (Heidegger 1962:286) This lack of totality or incompleteness, that Dasein has without death, is something which Heidegger accepts as a given – it is a basic feature of Dasein’s being.<sup>9</sup> However, it is not accurate to portray Heidegger as saying that Dasein gains this completeness or becomes a totality in death. The characteristic of this gaining completeness in death is entirely necessitated by the fact that Dasein’s completeness can only occur in Dasein’s being-no-longer. In other words Dasein exists as incomplete and in being towards the only possibility of completeness - its own death. Dasein’s death is a reality to all but Dasein itself because for Dasein itself death is only accessible in Dasein giving up its own being. Furthermore, “coming to an end implies a mode of Being in which the particular Dasein simply cannot be represented by someone else.” (Heidegger 1962:286) This means that Dasein is not only presented with the inaccessibility and inevitability of its own end (completeness) but also with the fact that it alone can experience its own death. Nothing can take Dasein’s death away from itself.

Heidegger then raises the question of what it means to say something is still outstanding.

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chapter.

<sup>9</sup> Dasein finding totality in death can be seen as similar to Freud’s conceptualisation of the death instinct where Dasein is constantly striving towards a return to intra-uterine existence. This form of existence is a desire to return to the womb and to be excluded from the influence of Eros. Being excluded from the influence of Eros means to not acknowledge a sense of incompleteness in life, which is the necessary

He answers this by explaining that when he uses the expression 'still outstanding', as he does in reference to Dasein's own death, he has "in view that which indeed 'belongs' to an entity, but is still missing." (Heidegger 1962:286) Heidegger explains this by way of an explanation of what we mean when talking about a debt. We say the debt is still outstanding only in so much as it belongs to (is owed) to the creditor. Death is, then, still outstanding to Dasein in the sense that it belongs to Dasein but has not yet been taken hold of by Dasein.

However, the difference between the example of a debt and Dasein is that, "The 'not-yet' which belongs to Dasein... 'is' not yet 'actual' at all." (Heidegger 1962:287) To say that Dasein dies does not mean that Dasein has reached fulfilment or completion in the same sense that a debt does when paid. Death is an end to Dasein that pays no heed of whether Dasein was fulfilled or completed. Dasein's death is that of an ending "as 'getting finished'" and "does not include fulfilling." (Heidegger 1962:289) Dasein is eligible for death as soon as it has started living and it is eligible for death not on any discernible criteria like 'being used up' or 'being fulfilled'. For this reason, Heidegger believes that Dasein does not come to death but rather is always *Being-towards-the-end*. Thus, death in this sense is not only a way to be but is the only way to be. By this Heidegger does not mean to denounce his previous references to death as a means of completion but rather to remind the reader that these understandings of death do not relate to Dasein in the same way as we relate to entities in the world. To say that death is something still outstanding or a means of fulfilment for Dasein does not take into account the existential nature of what death means to Dasein.

Heidegger continues in this vein with an investigation into “How the Existential Analysis of Death is Distinguished from Other Possible Interpretations of this Phenomenon” (Heidegger 1962:290-3). This section is followed by the “Preliminary Sketch of the Existential-ontological Structure of Death” (Heidegger 1962:293-6) in which Heidegger actually works out his existential analysis of death. For brevity’s sake I discuss these two sections in the following section.

### **1.6 Heidegger’s Existential Analysis of Death**

Heidegger begins his existential analysis by reminding the reader that “Death, in the widest sense, is a phenomenon of life.” (Heidegger 1962:290) Not only does this statement exemplify the nature of death and the fact that the primary condition for death is life itself, but so too it restates Heidegger’s position that his is not an investigation into death itself but rather an analysis of death as experienced by the living. This is what justifies Heidegger in calling his an existential analysis - it is an analysis “subordinate to a characterization of Dasein’s basic state” (Heidegger 1962:291) where Dasein’s basic state is in living.

Heidegger sees his existential analysis as distinct from a biological one in that it investigates dying as a way of Being. From this perspective Heidegger sees the possibility of a psychological investigation of death. However, he distinguishes this possibility for psychology from a psychology of dying that “gives information about the ‘living’ of the person who is ‘dying’ rather than about dying itself.” (Heidegger 1962:291) Heidegger’s existential analysis of death, then, intends to bring into view dying itself in a manner that focuses on what death means to Dasein rather than (as referred to in the above quote) what life means to dying Dasein.

In order to undertake such an existential analysis Heidegger turns to the structure of the basic state of Dasein - that of ‘care’<sup>10</sup>. For Heidegger, if we can understand death at all, it

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Care’ is one of the most important concepts in *Being and Time*. Although a more extensive discussion

needs to be defined in terms of Dasein's own structure. "We must, [then], make plain in a preliminary sketch how Dasein's existence, facticity, and falling reveal themselves in the phenomenon of death." (Heidegger 1962:293) By 'facticity' Heidegger means Dasein's unavoidable existence in the world and by 'falling' he means Dasein's forgetting of Being in Dasein's projection into the everydayness of the world.

Heidegger next asks what it means to consider death as impending. Death as impending must be distinguished from environmental events as impending. Heidegger uses the example of a storm to demonstrate that the storm is impending for Dasein in a way that is different from death. This is because it does not effect Dasein's potentiality for being in the way death does. Death as such is a potentiality for being while a storm is something "present-at-hand, ready-to-hand, and there-with-us." (Heidegger 1962:294) However, there are other events such as taking a journey that seem to be impending in much the same way as death is in that they are also potentialities for being. Heidegger admits as much, but remarks that these possibilities "are based on [Dasein's] Being with Others." Death, on the other hand, is impending in a unique way in that death is the only "possibility-of-Being which Dasein itself has to take over in every case." (Heidegger 1962:294) In other words death as impending is the only possibility for being in which Dasein can stand before itself and have absolute ownership of this possibility for being. The existential implications of this are clear - death is Dasein's only possibility for individuality in that its relationships to other Daseins in this possibility are undone, but death simultaneously signifies Dasein's end. For Heidegger this means that "Death is the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein" (Heidegger 1962:294); impossible for Dasein because it presents Dasein this possibility as only accessible in its non-existence.

Dasein's relationship towards its death demonstrates to itself its existential nature of being ahead-of-itself - that is always living in the face of its projection onto its possibilities for being. As such death, then, redefines this being ahead-of-itself as a being-towards-

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of the concept, and how and why Heidegger came up with it, would be very interesting I am unfortunately forced to leave such a discussion to another time.

death/the-end. For Heidegger this possibility for being is not one chosen by Dasein, Dasein rather “has already been *thrown* into this possibility” (Heidegger 1962:295) by the very fact of its existence. In fact, one could say that a condition for being is existing as thrown into being-towards-the-end. Heidegger specifically uses the word ‘thrown’ to remind the reader that this is not of Dasein’s choice and specifically not of Dasein’s understanding. Dasein can never understand its death simply because it is inaccessible and related to no other experience Dasein can have. For this reason “Throwness into death reveals itself to Dasein in a more primordial and impressive manner in the state-of-mind which we have called ‘anxiety’.” (Heidegger 1962:295) This anxiety, however, is not to be equated with fear. Fear, as Heidegger mentions on the same page, can be understood as an emotional weakness. The anxiety Heidegger speaks about is a basic state of mind for Dasein - this anxiety is Dasein in its ownmost potentiality for being.

In anxiety Dasein, thus, answers its own possibility of understanding death in terms of its facticity. Heidegger claims that in falling, Dasein has the only means to not feel this anxiety: Dasein can only and does only overcome/cover up this anxiety in denying ownership of its potentiality for being. This Heidegger explains as possible “by way of falling” into a being-alongside or a being in the ‘they’ (Heidegger 1962:295). In other words Dasein experiences anxiety because this potentiality of being-towards-the-end is its ownmost potentiality - by refusing its ownership in the anonymity of the ‘they’ it covers up its ownership and thus is able to cover up its anxiety. Heidegger uses the word ‘falling’ advisedly, to demonstrate that this too is a way of being which Dasein is not necessarily able to choose.

This brings Heidegger to the end of this part of his investigation. In concluding this section I point to three important results. Heidegger has differentiated fear of death from anxiety about death. Secondly, Heidegger has illustrated a picture of Dasein facing its ownmost possibility for being as being-towards-the-end. Lastly, we now have an idea of what it means for Dasein to deny ownership of death in its ‘falling’. The first two issues are discussed later in the chapter. I will now elaborate what it means to say Dasein is ‘falling’.

### **1.7 Inauthentic Dasein**

Before beginning my investigation into Heidegger's inauthentic Dasein I think it is necessary to first make clear what Heidegger does not want to discuss. Heidegger specifically does not want to engage in conversation with those who would object to the nature of this discussion simply because they feel that it does not account for those that "go gentle into that good night" (Thomas 1952:159). The reason for this is that this perspective does not encompass the possibilities of being that Heidegger investigates. Despite the apparent similarities between this and Dasein's 'falling' we only need to look back in the text to remind ourselves again that Heidegger is not investigating features of death but rather of death as "a phenomenon of life" (Heidegger 1962:290). As a phenomenon of life, then, the concept of 'going quietly' only makes sense in so far as one realises it not as itself but rather as in 'falling'. To distinguish Heidegger's concept of 'falling' from 'going quietly' this section investigates inauthentic Dasein.

Heidegger's idea of inauthentic Dasein is Dasein as 'falling'. This primarily explains why it is that Dasein is able to believe that it can 'go quietly'. For inauthentic Dasein,

'Dying' is levelled off to an occurrence which reaches Dasein, to be sure, but belongs to nobody in particular. If idle talk is always ambiguous, so is this manner of talking about death.

Heidegger 1962:297

This idle talk and the making ambiguous the eventuality of death is Dasein's manoeuvre to minimise or avoid the full effect of death as impending. Inauthentic Dasein, then, denies ownership of death in its suppression of its individuality and because of this, is able to put its death off as improbable and ambiguous.

For Heidegger, Inauthentic Dasein's suppression of individuality is not an act possible without reference to others. Thus, Heidegger comes up with the concept of the 'they'<sup>11</sup> that makes possible Dasein's re-conceptualisation of death in such a way so as to not think about death on an everyday level as having any ownership. "The 'they' is constituted by the way things have been publicly interpreted, which expresses itself in idle talk." (Heidegger 1962:296) This idle talk, which is the manifestation of the they, speaks of death as an event that occurs but somehow is not present-at-hand and has no effect on Dasein present. It thus makes death ambiguous for Dasein. The effect of this, however, is larger than just a misconstrued meaning of death.

By such ambiguity, Dasein puts itself in the position of losing itself in the 'they' as regards a distinctive potentiality-for-Being which belongs to Dasein's ownmost Self.

Heidegger 1962:297

Dasein, in the 'they', not only loses itself as being-towards-the-end it also loses itself in its ownmost possibility for being. In other words Dasein as fallen in the they is Dasein denying its ownmost possibility for being; it is thus Dasein not proper... Inauthentic Dasein. Before continuing we should remember that Heidegger does not see authenticity and inauthenticity in an evaluative framework. This is because inauthenticity is an inescapable way of being for Dasein.

This state of being as fallen in the they explains the nature of everyday/inauthentic Dasein but it has not yet explained how this is made possible. Dasein thus uses the 'they' to prevent itself from experiencing its ownmost possibility for being. This ownmost possibility for being is forced upon Dasein by means of anxiety in the face of death. In order for the 'they' to prevent this happening the 'they' must prevent Dasein recognising its anxiety in the face of death<sup>12</sup>. This is made possible by the "'they' [concerning] itself with transforming this anxiety into fear... In addition, the anxiety which has been made

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<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that, Heidegger uses the word 'they' to make clear that the concept is not necessarily tangible or definitive in that Dasein could not necessarily point to the 'they'. This, however, does not mean that Dasein could not point to the 'not-they' or the 'self'.

<sup>12</sup> This discussion of the link between anxiety and fear in facing the possibility of one's own death is taken

ambiguous as fear, is passed off as a weakness with which no self-assured Dasein may have any acquaintance.” (Heidegger 1962:298) What is made possible by this, for inauthentic Dasein, is a cultivation of indifference towards death. This indifference Heidegger loosely refers to as a tranquillisation from Dasein’s own death which results in Dasein’s alienation “from its ownmost non-relational potentiality-for-Being.” (Heidegger 1962:298) It is manifested in Dasein’s understanding death inauthentically, for example as “[going gently] into that good night” (Thomas 1952:159).

Inauthentic Dasein, then, is able to flee in the face of death by means of its ‘falling’ into its everydayness in the ‘they’. The ‘they’ makes accessible to Dasein an existential state in which death is ambiguous, not quite real and never has ownership. In this state death is a condition, something that happens to another but never a possibility for my being. The ‘they’ ensures that this perception is maintained by redefining ‘anxiety’ (that condition which brings Dasein face to face with its ownmost potentiality for being) as fear. Fear is equated with weakness and construed as undesirable. By these means Dasein manages to banish death from its own existential state and in doing so becomes inauthentic Dasein. Dasein is inauthentic in this state because it has denied itself access to its self by excluding some of its possibilities for being.

Upon careful inspection, however, one realises that despite the fact that Heidegger has shown how inauthentic Dasein is fallen in the ‘they’, he has not yet demonstrated why this explanation should be accepted. For this reason, in the next section titled “Everyday Being-towards-the-end, and the Full Existential Conception of Death”, Heidegger asks how it is possible for inauthentic Dasein to be certain of death and not be brought into a relationship with its ownmost potentiality-for-being. His aim is to understand why Dasein’s acceptance of the certainty of death is not the same as Dasein being authentic. The crux is that the ‘they’ allows Dasein a certainty about death that denies ownership. To demonstrate ‘evidence’ for this Heidegger says that “the way in which everyday Being-towards-death understands the certainty which is thus grounded, betrays itself when it tries

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up more comprehensively in the third chapter.

to ‘think’ about death” (Heidegger 1962:301) Inauthentic Dasein is able to accept that death is empirically certain while pragmatically believing it is not going to happen. What gives inauthentic Dasein away, Heidegger believes, is the lack of a sense of urgency when relating to death. To say that death is certain is not to say that it will happen some time or some time in the future but rather to say “*that it is possible at any moment.*” (Heidegger 1962:303) Here, particularly, inauthentic Dasein is exposed because to accept death as certain means to accept it (urgently/anxiously) as a presently real possibility.

Thus Dasein exists constantly in the face of the certainty of death while employing inauthenticity to veil ownership of this certainty. This being inauthentic is not to be misunderstood as an incorrect way of being; rather inauthenticity is just another possibility for Dasein’s being. In being inauthentic Dasein has decided itself as inauthentic *instead of* authentic. Being inauthentic instead of authentic is an especially important concept to pay attention to because it reminds us that,

inauthenticity is based on the possibility of authenticity. Inauthenticity characterises a kind of being into which Dasein can divert itself and has for the most part always diverted itself; but Dasein does not necessarily and constantly have to divert itself into this kind of Being.

Heidegger 1962:303

Dasein as inauthentic diverts itself from its authenticity. But what does Heidegger mean when he talks about authentically being-towards-the-end? What does it mean to talk about Dasein authentic/proper? Is it possible for Dasein to be authentically towards death? These are questions I hope to address in the following section.

### **1.8 Authentic Dasein**

Following the structure of Heidegger's own investigation we now discuss his last section ("Existential Projection of an Authentic Being-towards-death") of the sub-section "Dasein's Possibility of Being-a-whole, and Being-towards-death of Being and Time".

Heidegger begins his investigation of authentic Dasein by further elaborating what is different about Dasein being-towards-death and being-towards other things/events. The difference is that in being-towards-death Dasein is always being-towards the impossible. *"The closest closeness which one may have towards death as a possibility, is as far as possible from anything actual."* (Heidegger 1962:306/7) In this Heidegger is elaborating the fact that Dasein can never actually be closer to death because at every moment Dasein is dying. More importantly, though, Heidegger is showing that as a possibility death is never achievable because in order to fulfil this possibility for existence Dasein must not be. Death, then, illustrates to Dasein the possibility of the impossibility of Dasein's ways of being. The reason for this is that in death Dasein realises that it will have no way of being - Dasein comes face to face with "the measureless impossibility of existence." (Heidegger 1962:307) Every way of being in anticipation becomes impotent and meaningless in the face of death. In short Dasein realises in death its main limitation - the limitation imposed on it by life.

More importantly, however, Dasein as being-towards-death becomes aware of itself as anticipation. By this Heidegger means that Dasein realises itself as always being-towards possibilities and in this being in anticipation of these possibilities. Being as always being in anticipation means facing itself as being in anticipation of death. Being in anticipation is Dasein's possibility for being without the 'they' because in this possibility for being Dasein cannot but see itself in terms of itself - that is, as anticipation. In this, then, "anticipation turns out to be the possibility of understanding one's ownmost and uttermost potentiality-for-Being - that is to say, the possibility of *authentic existence*." (Heidegger 1962:307) To say that authentic Dasein is revealed in anticipation of death means, then, that in order to grasp authentic Dasein we must understand what it means for it to be in anticipation of

death. To do this we must analyse what it means for Dasein to understand itself in terms of its ownmost potentiality-for-Being (death).

Dasein's possibility for death, according to Heidegger, is non-relational in the sense that it is Dasein's only. Anticipation of this possibility is, then, anticipation of a non-relational being. Here, "anticipation allows Dasein to understand that that potentiality-for-being in which its ownmost Being is an issue, must be taken over by Dasein alone." (Heidegger 1962:308) Death lays claim not only to Dasein as such but also to Dasein as individual. Death calls only to Dasein and it is only Dasein that can and will answer its call. Thus for Dasein to be authentic means for Dasein to lay claim to its potentiality for being as its self in its ownmost potentiality for being. This means a specific rejection of the possibility of Dasein in the 'they' - Dasein as the they-self is Dasein that denies itself as being-towards-death. Heidegger sees Authentic Dasein in anticipation freeing itself from the 'they' and becoming free and ready for its own death. "Anticipation discloses to existence that its uttermost possibility lies in giving itself up" (Heidegger 1962:308) and only in this does Heidegger see Dasein as making choices authentically. In other words for Dasein to be authentically it must not exist in the 'they'. To not exist in the 'they' means that Dasein understands itself as anticipation of death and in this recognises itself as itself (as authentic). The results of this realisation are that Dasein is able to make choices and understand itself entirely in terms of itself. In other words, Dasein authentic is Dasein that lives in and for itself rather than in and for the 'they-self'.

Anticipation of its possibility of death means that Dasein is individualised and, in this, its anticipation of death "discloses all the possibilities which lie ahead...this anticipation includes the possibility of taking the whole of Dasein in advance in an existentiell manner; that is to say, it includes the possibility of existing as a whole *potentiality-for-Being*." (Heidegger 1962:309).

Words like possibility and potentiality used in relationship to Dasein's possibility for death can be misleading. Heidegger refines the use of these words by reminding the reader that even if death is a possibility and potentiality it is still nothing less than a certainty. Death is a certainty possible at any moment. Dasein, thus, constantly lives in the face of a certain possibility of death. The effect of this certainty is that "in anticipating the indefinite certainty of death, Dasein opens itself to a constant *threat* arising out of its own 'there'." "Anticipation utterly individualizes Dasein, and allows it, in this individualization of itself, to become certain of the totality of its potentiality-for-Being." (Heidegger 1962:310) Dasein is, thus, both individualised (made alone) and aware of the certainty of its own end. Taking these facts into consideration Heidegger, then, asks how it is that Dasein exists in the face of these facts. The answer to this Heidegger sees in anxiety - "*the state-of-mind which can hold open the utter and constant threat to itself arising from Dasein's ownmost individualized Being, is anxiety.*" (Heidegger 1962:310) For Dasein, then, to be authentic it must, by way of anxiety, face its own death. Anxiety is only accessible in Dasein's awareness of its being as anticipation of its own death - this is essentially Dasein as understanding itself only in itself. Heidegger then points out that if anxiety is only possible under such conditions it is possible to characterise being-towards-death as anxiety. In turn it is possible to say that a mark of Authentic Dasein (as being-towards-death) is anxiety. Furthermore, we are able to safely say that Dasein without anxiety is Inauthentic Dasein and thus Dasein living in the 'they'.

We may now summarize our characterisation of authentic Being-towards-death as we have projected it existentially: *anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of, being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather, in an impassioned **freedom towards death** - a freedom which has been released from the illusions of the 'they', and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious.*

Heidegger 1962:311

Dasein can only achieve its freedom in its being towards death. This freedom is freedom to authentically choose and understand its possibilities for being; it is consequently freedom from the 'they' and is *only* accessible in anxiety. Authentic Dasein's anxiety allows Dasein access to itself but at the same time means that its freedom will always be tainted by its anxiety (which is being-towards-death). This means that there is no room for the possibility that Dasein can anticipate rather than be anxious about death because anticipation without anxiety betrays Dasein as inauthentic (as not understanding its death as the possibility for the impossibility of existence). This is because death is something that authentic Dasein cannot but dread/fear and is only able to do this in anticipation of it.

In this section we have seen how Heidegger has worked out what it means for Dasein to be authentic in the face of death. This brings us to the end of this chapter. In the conclusion below I show what has been achieved in this chapter and elaborate some of the themes I hope to investigate contra Freud in Chapter Three.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that, for Heidegger, death is, indeed, a phenomena of life. This is the case because Dasein is only able to be called back to authenticity in its confronting the possibility of its own death. In the working out of this we learnt that Heidegger does not believe that fear of death accurately describes Dasein's relationship towards its own death. When Dasein authentically faces the implications of its own death it does so by the mechanism of anxiety. This anxiety not only describes Dasein's relationship towards death, but has the performative function of a call. This call makes it possible for Dasein to be authentic. Thus it is clear that for Heidegger death is the key to authenticity.

Heidegger explained that this is the case because of both the nature of Dasein's being and the nature of death. Dasein, Heidegger sees, as being towards. Death, Heidegger explains, forces Dasein to realise that it cannot always be towards. Thus death brings authentic Dasein back to the now. Furthermore, it individualises Dasein - it is Dasein's ownmost potentiality for being.

Heidegger's conceptualisation of death as individualising Dasein points to a fundamental difference in the way in which Dasein conceptualises its own death and that of others. Heidegger, then, does not believe that Dasein learns of the implications of death from experiencing the death of others. The death of others, Heidegger believes, Dasein experiences as a loss. However, Dasein's own death implies not a loss but rather a termination.

Although Heidegger takes great pains to avoid conveying the idea that authenticity is superior to inauthenticity, his use of words makes it difficult not to gain this impression. While I acknowledge that Heidegger does not believe it is better to be authentically, I get the impression from his use of expressions such as 'falling in the they' that authenticity is in some senses desired. This simply allows us to reiterate the impression that for Heidegger death is a phenomenon of life. And it is a phenomenon that allows Dasein its authenticity.

Reading this chapter brings to light many apparent conceptual similarities between Freud and Heidegger. This provides me with the opportunity to hint at what we will uncover in Chapter Two. Freud essentially believes that it is impossible for the human psyche to truly understand the implications of death and thus uses death as a symbol for other desires and dreads. Heidegger has, seemingly, taken a similar position and, in fact, recognised the same factors. After all, Heidegger has recognised the impossibility of understanding death itself and the fact that Dasein is inclined to deal with the issue inauthentically (as a means of completion or fulfilment of wholeness). Authenticity for Heidegger is to face the implications of death as an end - the final disruption. I discuss the extent to which these two positions differ in Chapter Three.

On this issue Heidegger and Freud seem to specifically disagree, however, in understanding not being scared of death. The Freudian subject that is not scared of death is easily excusable by Freud because Freud believes it would simply mean that he/she is

not using death symbolically<sup>13</sup>. On the other hand Heidegger's view of death as a disruption is not tantamount to saying that death *is* a disruption. The authentic self understands death as that final disruption but Heidegger also realises that Dasein views death as giving its life a sense of "mineness" (Heidegger 1962:198). By this Heidegger means that Dasein in its potentiality for death itself as present-at-hand. In other words Dasein defines itself as being only in the sense that at every moment it is powerless to escape death. This, for Heidegger, is the one truth I can never escape. To redraw the comparison, then: the Freudian subject can only fear death as a symbol for something else and Heidegger's Dasein fears death only in authenticity<sup>14</sup>.

This divergence strikes uncanny similarities to 'avoidance' - specifically the avoidance so often discussed in psychoanalytic literature. However, it presumes different premises and comes to different conclusions. Some of these conclusions I commented on at the end of the previous section and I hope to make use of in the next.

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<sup>13</sup> Referring to the next chapter we will see that Freud explains the human psyche as using death to symbolise not being loved and/or the death instinct triumphing over Eros in its attempt to return to a state of intra-uterine existence.

<sup>14</sup> Dasein is also capable of seeing death symbolically as its only potential for completeness and absolute mineness. This, however, does not detract from the dread that authentic Dasein has for death because authentic Dasein realises the above as nothing more than a possibility. For this reason authentic Dasein is capable of seeing death non-symbolically.

## **Chapter Two: Freud and Our Attitude Towards Death**

The reason why I am using Freud in this thesis is because I find his infamous willingness to investigate human behaviour without regard to social taboo particularly engaging. When searching for the origins of our desires and behaviour Freud's research shows a desire to uncover 'truths' no matter how uncomfortable we are (he is) with the findings. For Freud, however, this was more than just a search for truth - it was a lifelong journey, almost a demonic struggle against irrationality<sup>15</sup>. Peter Gay (1995:xv) (one of Freud's better respected biographers) saw this as Freud's need to "agitate the sleep of mankind" in order to force man to call himself to reckoning. What Gay is describing is the stylistic impression that many readers have of Freud. It is the impression that Freud's research is as personal as it is scientific. On this note I am hoping that Freud's work will lead us on a journey that does not shy away from the dangers that may be experienced in investigating 'fear of death'.

This chapter, then, outlines Freud's understanding of our attitude towards death. It begins with a discussion of what Freud believes it means to fear and conceptualise our own death. The chapter, then, moves on to discuss whether death is ever something the psyche can understand. This, then, leads to an investigation of the unconscious and its relationship to the conscious and why Freud believes the unconscious never really believes in its own death.

By using Freud's essay on the 'uncanny' this chapter uncovers one of the ways in which Freud sees the human psyche as using the concept of death symbolically. This leads to a discussion of the reasons why the psyche cannot conceptualise its own death. The last two sections of this chapter attempt to make sense of what has been uncovered by way of a discussion of Freud's death instinct. These sections illustrate how Freud's concept of the 'death instinct' helps refine the structure of the questions so far unanswered in this

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Gay uses this imagery quite frequently in his biography to illustrate to the reader that Freud saw his study of psychoanalysis as both a private and public voyage of discovery. This imagery resonates quite clearly with existentialism. This, in turn provides an interesting possibility in that perhaps one could read

chapter. They also provide answers to some of the problems faced in my discussion of Freud's earlier works. The chapter, then, concludes with a discussion of what is at stake when Freud says that somebody is scared of dying.

Placing Freud's understanding of fear of death in his overall theory is not an easy task. This is mainly because Freud's references to 'fear of death' are spread over a number of different works. In the sections that follow we find that Freud mentions two distinctly different conceptualisations of 'fear of death'. Freud's conceptualisation of 'fear of death' in light of the death instinct clearly fits into his later work which attempts to go beyond his original formulation of the pleasure principle. This is investigated in the latter half of the chapter. The first half of the chapter, on the other hand, investigates Freud's conceptualisations of fear of death in his earlier works.

My investigation of Freud's explanation of 'fear of death' has encountered many structural obstacles. The first of which is the fact that most of Freud's explanations of 'fear of death' are small parts of much larger articles. This meant that I was immediately confronted with a problem of fragmentation. Another problem I had was that Freud's explanations are to be found in a number of different essays. This presented a need to order them. The last problem I want to mention is that Freud's explanations touch on a myriad of different themes thus leaving open the temptation for digression.

It is in the hope of solving these problems that each section in my chapter will follow a very particular structure. Each section will begin by investigating how Freud explains fear of death in the particular essay or article under discussion. The investigation of essays and articles follows a chronological order so that developmental themes can be picked up on. At the end of every section I briefly contextualise the particular article or essay in Freud's larger theory. In order to avoid digression, I also include at the end of each section a discussion of the similarities and differences between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations. In an attempt to keep to the subject I concentrate on Freud's explanations of

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Freud's life in terms of a sort of existential enquiry.

our notions of death, fear of death and, anxiety about death.

Chronologically speaking, Freud's first discussion of death is to be found in his magnum opus, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900).

## **2.1 Children and Death: The Formulation of The Fear of Death**

Freud introduces the concept of death into his *Interpretation of Dreams* in a section titled "Dreams of the Death of Persons of whom the Dreamer is Fond".

In the first part of this section Freud describes how children, especially in their early years "are capable of jealousy of any degree of intensity and obviousness." (Freud 1900:351) This jealousy is often the result of having to compete with siblings for attention. More importantly, for us, though, the result of this jealousy often reveals itself in children as wishes for the death of their sibling competitors. Freud bases this interpretation on the fact that children often use the word 'death' in, what we would consider, the most inappropriate circumstances. For example, children will often wish that people they dislike will die while apparently not realising that it means more than simply to wish that they go away and not return again.

Children know nothing of the horrors of corruption, of freezing in the ice-cold grave, of the terrors of eternal nothingness – ideas which grown-up people find it so hard to tolerate as is proved by all the myths of a future life.

Freud 1900:354

Thus the child equates being 'dead' with being 'gone'<sup>16</sup>. This, Freud points out, is very different from the adult attitude towards death that is aware of the possible horrors of such an event.

The above understandings of being 'dead' are, for Freud, an aspect of the child's psyche

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<sup>16</sup> Freud further illustrates this point a little later in the same text with an example he experienced of a ten year old saying, after his father's death, "I know father's dead, but what I can't understand is why he doesn't come home to supper." (Freud 1900:355)

and are replaced in adulthood with a realisation of the traumatic implications of death – i.e. the “terrors of eternal nothingness” (above). The reason why it is possible for children to perceive death in this way is because children “make no distinction as to how [an] absence is brought about: whether it is due to a journey...or to death.” (Freud 1900:355) This, of course, points to the selfish nature of the child – as ‘egocentric’. Unfortunately for this investigation, Freud uses the rest of this section to discuss dreams of the death of parents. At this point he explains the similarities between his interpretations and the story of *Oedipus Rex*. Interesting as this is it proves to be useless for this mini-thesis.

Freud’s distinction between the child’s and adult’s perceptions of death is one that marks a very different approach to Heidegger’s understanding of death. The distinction is important for Freud because he is attempting to devise a system that explains the totality of human behaviour and psychological development. However, for Heidegger, this distinction plays little or no role in his conceptualisation of death. What is important to note, however, is that Freud seems to have the same notion of what is fearful in death as Heidegger – “the terrors of eternal nothingness” (above) Even though this theme of death is prevalent in both Freud’s and Heidegger’s work, however, there is no reason to believe that Freud sees death as the ‘ownmost potentiality for being’.

For Freud the important issue is that children often wish death on those that they are jealous of without realising the implications of what it means. This is important for psychoanalysis because it allows Freud to explain dreams of the death of loved ones in terms of wish fulfilment. The fact that wishes of this nature, in most cases, can only be fulfilled in dreams is very important to Freud’s therapeutic methods. The consequences of the fact that these wishes are not fulfilled are that these wishes constantly attempt to be fulfilled in different situations, for example in dreams. Resolving and/or working through these unfulfilled wishes is how Freud believes he can achieve therapeutic results.

For this thesis these introductory comments allow us to lay foundations for our continuing investigation. How it comes about that children and adults have different conceptualisations of death, for example, is something we need to answer. On top of this, the comments above do not explain whether it is possible for adults to conceptualise their own deaths. What it means to say that the adult knows of the horrors of death, furthermore, is also something we need to work out. Bearing these themes in mind I now turn to another of Freud's essays to further our investigation.

## **2.2 Death The Impossibility**

In 1915, around six months after the outbreak of the First World War, in an attempt to explain why people are prepared to kill and/or be killed in battle, Freud again turned his attention to the subject of our attitude towards death. This he intensively, and most conveniently for this research, investigated in the essay *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death* (1915a). In the second section of this essay (which investigates "Our Attitude Towards Death"), Freud describes death's 'most unmistakable character'. In this section he begins by reminding the reader of the certainty of death - "that everyone owes nature a death and must expect to pay nature a death – in short, that death [is] natural, undeniable and unavoidable." (Freud 1915a:77) Despite this acknowledging of the nature of death, however, this does not illustrate the manner in which Freud believes we deal with death.

Death, according to Freud (1915a:77/8), is never something that is properly acknowledged by us; instead we put it aside and live *as though* it is an impossibility. Death becomes that thing that happens to other people and never to ourselves. To put it simply, Freud believes that death is such a foreign notion that it eludes our every understanding. Even when we try to imagine our own death, Freud explains, we find ourselves imagining ourselves as spectators to our own death. In order to further facilitate this understanding of death as the impossible, Freud believes that we reduce death to a chance

event by constant reference to the seemingly distant or remote causes of it -

our habit is to lay stress on the fortuitous causation of the death -  
accident, disease, infection, advanced age; in this we betray an effort to  
reduce death from a necessity to a chance event.

Freud 1915a:78

To make sense of this, within a Freudian framework, means that we must recognise that our attitude towards our own death, if not present, is subject to avoidance and/or repression. The mature psyche, for example, while acknowledging the reality of its own death and consequentially that it dreads and fears the event, formulates a way (perhaps as a coping mechanism) to ignore the reality and certainty of it. In this Freud seems to, briefly, comment on the existential implications of death. Here Freud compares our attitudes towards death to “an American flirtation, in which it is understood from the first that nothing is to happen, as contrasted with a Continental love-affair in which both partners must constantly bear its serious consequences in mind.” (Freud 1915a:79) By this Freud alludes to the belief that when faced with the certainty of death, the way we live appears impoverished in the sense that we recognise that we generally do not live each moment as if it could be the last. Freud’s allusion to our attitude towards life as an American flirtation, as empty and inconsequential, is a metaphor for our believing that we will never die. While disbelieving in death allows us the luxury of behaving as if our actions do not necessarily have serious consequences, acknowledging the certainty of death means that we must live every moment as if it could be the last.

Being “disinclined to court danger for ourselves” (1915a:79) Freud sees us seeking in the world of fiction “compensation for what has been lost in life...people who know how to die”. Thus, Freud sees the Continental love-affair<sup>17</sup> as a metaphor for living in such a way

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<sup>17</sup> Freud (1915a:79) explains on the same page, in accordance with his infamous anti-Americanism, that the American flirtation is “contrasted with a Continental love-affair in which both partners must constantly bear its serious consequences in mind.”

as to know how to die - to acknowledge the seriousness of death and in this to realise that each action has serious consequences. On the same page, Freud, then, likens the way in which we live to a resistance to the fact that life is like a game of chess - one incorrect move could mean the end. There is no doubt that what Freud has expressed here is both the certainty of death and the fact that the psyche generally does everything possible to reject this certainty. Furthermore, Freud is openly evaluative about this. To live life as if death is an impossibility means to "dare not contemplate a great many undertakings which are dangerous but in fact indispensable" (Freud 1915a:79) The key to understanding this is in Freud's seeing this exemplified by our need to live and die with the fictitious heroes of the stage. For Freud, then, to recognise the seriousness of life is to be able to live as these fictitious heroes, to embark on the adventures we desire and to fulfil our wishes as though we will never again have the opportunity.

This illustrates a particularly different conceptualisation from that of Heidegger's. For Heidegger, Dasein confronts death authentically when it responds to the call of anxiety. This means that Dasein faces death as its ownmost potentiality for being without the influence of the 'they'. Freud's references to our use of fiction to understand what it means to die would be categorised as inauthentic in Heidegger's work. This is because facing death by way of fiction specifically allows us to not face death on our own. The essence of death as representing our ownmost potentiality for being, then, is lost in the use of fiction. Furthermore, fiction cultivates the idea that there is a correct and/or noble way to die. These notions of death are not amenable to Heidegger's understanding of death which is typified by the recognition that it is impossible to penetrate the mysteries of death. These references, furthermore, underline the fact that Freud believes that how we live our lives are consequences of our attitude towards death. The idea of death being a factor in how we live our lives is in no ways similar to Heidegger's belief that death allows Dasein to realise its authenticity. After all, authenticity is typified by rejecting the 'they'. For Freud, on the other hand, how we live our lives is always directed by our attempts to fulfil our wishes for love and/or sex.

On this note, Freud's comments above do not have significant implications for psychoanalytic theory in general. However, Freud's attitude that we need to recognise that death is imminent in order to realise that each action can have serious consequences, is in line with Freud's general attitude towards life. This attitude is typified by his commitment to the belief that in most cases happiness should not be forfeited for the sake of social taboo. An example of this attitude is Freud's acceptance of homosexuality so long as it is in line with what the analysand wants. (Gay 1995:610).

### **2.3 Freud's Explanation of How We Learn About Our Own Death**

After explaining the role of fiction in conceptualising death, Freud attempts to find out how it is that the psyche learns about its own death. Freud believes the answer to this lies in a study of primitive man. Freud's use of the idea of primitive man, in many ways, is based on the idea of unrepressed wishes. As we saw above the wishes of the immature psyche are very similar to that of primitive man. This is because they are unrestrained by moral discourse and thus are not subject to repression. For this reason Freud does not dismiss wishes for the death of others but rather takes them as indicative of the type of thing primitive man may have wished for. Freud explains this by saying that he believes that the *primaeval* psyche initially only knows of death in relationship to others and itself. In these regards the psyche adopts the contradiction that death happens to others but does not really happen to itself. The *primaeval* psyche "had no objection to someone else's death; it meant the annihilation of someone he hated, and primitive man had no scruples against bringing it about." (Freud 1915a:80/81) This relationship, then, typified by both hatred and jealousy, primitive man (the *primeval* psyche) had towards the death of others.

The relationship he had towards his own death, however, was very different. Primitive man's "own death was certainly just as unimaginable and unreal for *primaeval* man as it is for any one of us today."<sup>18</sup> (Freud 1915a:81) This presented primitive man with a contradictory situation in which he relies on the certainty of the death of his enemy but did

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<sup>18</sup> It is interesting to note that children also seem to disbelieve in the possibility of their own death. This is

not believe in the possibility of his own death. These contradicting attitudes towards death, however, Freud believes came into conflict with each other in the case of the death of a loved one; "for each of these loved ones was, after all, a part of his own beloved ego." (Freud 1915a:82) In other words the attitude towards death that allowed primitive man to believe in the reality and certainty of the death of the other (particularly his enemy) while simultaneously disbelieving in his own death came into crisis with the death of a loved one. Because the death of a loved one meant the death of a part of primitive man's ego he realised that death could mean loss of at least part of himself. Primitive man was consequentially forced to realise that his own death is indeed real and results in a loss to and/or of the self. This crisis was further reinforced by the fact that embodied in the identity of a loved one was the otherness and consequentially the simultaneous hatred for this loved one.

It is the above crisis that Freud (1915a:82) sees as responsible for releasing "the spirit of inquiry in man..." - "...the conflict of feeling at the death of loved yet alien and hated persons." It is in this that Freud saw man being forced to recognise death as a certainty while simultaneously being unwilling to accept it as such.

So he devised a compromise: he conceded the fact of his own death as well, but denied it the significance of annihilation...It was beside the dead body of someone he loved that he invented spirits, and his sense of guilt at the satisfaction mingled with his sorrow turned these new-born spirits into evil demons that had to be dreaded.

Freud 1915a:82

It was only a short leap from this that led to the assumption of the division of the body and (newly created) soul. Consequentially by the vehicle of philosophical enquiry the primitive man created the idea of religion and subsequently a picture of the after-life. This Freud sees as the foundation for ethics. Primitive man standing over the dead body became plagued with guilt, and being necessarily convinced of an afterlife he soon became aware

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too often demonstrated by their apparent lack of fear of dangerous situations.

of the need for ethics. It is by way of this that Freud explains the arrival of the first prohibition - against murder.

It was acquired in relation to dead people who were loved, as a reaction against the satisfaction of the hatred hidden behind the grief for them; and it was gradually extended to strangers who were not loved, and finally even to enemies.

Freud 1915a:84

Whether or not one agrees with Freud's, almost anthropological, conclusions it is very difficult to deny the features that Freud picked up on in his investigation into the concept of death. After all in many cases of death of a loved one there is both an overwhelming sense of loss and relief. On the other hand, the experience of the death of the enemy or the unknown is, thankfully, too distant from most of our conceptual frameworks to be able to discuss. Unfortunately Freud's essay made no direct links between how primitive man learnt of the implications of his own death and how the adult does. Whether it does so by education or by a similar process to that of primitive man, however, we must acknowledge that Freud does not believe our attitude towards death is instinctual.

Freud's explanation of how we learn about our own death signifies a major difference between Freud's and Heidegger's perspectives. Heidegger specifically does not believe that an authentic conceptualisation of death can be learnt from observing the death of others. While Heidegger and Freud both agree that the experiencing of the death of others is the experiencing of a loss, Heidegger believes that to conceive of death as a loss is to conceive of it inauthentically. Freud, on the other hand, does not make room for any other way to learn about death. In fact, Freud believes that it is the loss that is experienced in death that is the most important feature. These differences, however, should not have been unexpected. Psychoanalysis, after all, defines the human being in a very different way to Heidegger's definition of Dasein. While Heidegger seems to conceive of Dasein as an essentially philosophical being, Freud sees the human being as essentially mechanical. Freud's explanation of the human being, after all, relies on not much more than the

assumption that the human being wants food, sensual pleasure (love and sex) and to avoid pain. For Freud, all human behaviour is essentially explainable on the basis of this assumption (the pleasure principle).

Freud's belief that our attitude towards death is learnt and *not instinctual*, however, demands further explanation. The explanation of this is found in the same essay. It, however, continues by way of an investigation of the relationship between the unconscious and our conceptualisation of death.

Freud's use of the unconscious was both revolutionary for its time and central to Freud's explanation of the human psyche. For Freud the unconscious represented the place where instincts are translated into ideas in the form of wishes. These ideas make their way into the conscious and it is in the conscious that they set about gaining fulfilment. If, however, the conscious rejects these wishes, either because of 'moral intervention' or any other reason, these wishes are forced back into the unconscious. However, wishes, according to Freud, never simply disappear. These wishes constantly try to return in a disguised form to gain fulfilment. One of the ways in which this happens, Freud theorises, is by use of the hallucinogenic nature of dreams. Another way for disguised wishes to express themselves, Freud believes, is in the use of jokes. For this thesis, then, the role of the unconscious needs to be understood in order to make sense of why Freud believes that our notion of death is never instinctually based.

According to Freud (Freud 1915a:85), the unconscious is the seat of our instinctual desires (drives) - it "knows nothing that is negative, and no negation". For this reason (the 'no negation') it is impossible for it to conceptualise its own death - because the very nature of its own death is not of an instinctual desire (drive) but rather of a nullification. "Our unconscious, then, does not believe in its own death; it behaves as if it were immortal." (Freud 1915a:85) This Freud sees as the possible explanation for martyrdom<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Freud actually uses the word "heroism" (1915a:85) but I use the word 'martyrdom' to distinguish it from my description of the desire to be a fictional hero as explained in the preceding section.

in that it is only the unconscious's inability to believe in its own death that allows someone to give up his or her life for an abstract cause. After working out the explanation of martyrdom Freud (1915a:86) explains that, contrary to the disbelief in our own death, our wishes for the deaths of others are as real as that of primeval man. Although, we may occasionally wish them in a joking manner<sup>20</sup> Freud sees us, at least on an unconscious level, as a gang of murderers. The next few pages sees Freud investigating the links between this and jokes and in this he believes we express our unconscious wishes to murder. This is because, especially in the case of loved ones, "a small portion of hostility...can excite an unconscious death-wish." (Freud 1915a:88) Freud, then, concludes his essay with an appeal to take cognisance of our murderous inclinations. While he is aware that this may be perceived as a regression he believes that to deny the truth of these inclinations is to make life less tolerable. To face the fact of our darker attitude towards death means to take a less illusory attitude towards life. Freud (1915a:89) concludes this essay, then, with the statement, "If you want to endure life, prepare yourself for death."

Most importantly, however, in the above investigation we see death as having essentially social effects. Freud, after all, sees death as the primary cause of ethics. This means that one of the results of our conceptualisation of death is to restrain our social behaviour. For Freud, the fact of this is based on his belief that we never understand that death could mean our annihilation. This simply typifies the fact that Freud only sees the human being as a social being. Freud even explains the creation of philosophy ('the spirit of enquiry') as a result of social behaviour (the primal murder). The fundamental difference, however, lies in the fact that Freud believes that it is impossible for the psyche to ever acknowledge death as an annihilation. This means that there is no place in Freud's explanation for Heidegger's authentic Dasein.

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<sup>20</sup> This is based on Freud's theory that jokes are often a mechanism for expressing unconscious wishes

## **2.4 Death and The Uncanny**

Freud's article on *The Uncanny* published in 1919 is an extensive and detailed analysis of this feeling. This article follows Freud's continuous attempt to explain the psyche in terms of instincts. For Freud every feeling we have is a result of a specific cause. In this regard the uncanny is no different. Freud elaborates that this feeling is a response to a situation caused by the situation reminding the psyche of a repressed wish.

Freud's (1919:368) article begins by attempting to understand how the psyche "allows us to distinguish as 'uncanny' certain things within the boundaries of what is 'fearful'." Recognising that the 'uncanny' is difficult to describe, Freud turns his attention to how the expression is used both historically and contextually. He concludes that "the 'uncanny' is that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar." (1919:369/370) In this regard, then, Freud begins his investigation into how it is possible and in what circumstances something that is seemingly neutral and familiar can become 'uncanny' and 'terrifying'. After an extensive investigation into the different uses and interpretations of the word 'uncanny', Freud (1919:378) begins a review of what "things, persons, impressions, events and situations...are able to arouse in us a feeling of the uncanny." The first example he discusses is of an uncertainty as to whether something is an automaton or not. After extensively discussing examples of how this is used in plays and stories, Freud (1919:395) comments that "Many people experience the feeling in the highest degree in relation to death and dead bodies". After explaining that while he considered beginning his article with an investigation of this example, Freud says that he desisted because it is so closely connected to what is gruesome.

Freud (1919:395) believes that concerning death "there is scarcely any other matter, however, upon which our thoughts and feelings have changed so little since the very earliest times". In this he recognises feelings towards our own death as being fundamentally different from feelings on other subjects as well as referring back to his explanations of primitive man. The difference Freud is pointing to is that while there may be a clear (and justifiable) maturing or changing of attitude towards other fears, our

feelings towards death remain relatively constant. This relative constancy is both throughout our history and our lifetimes – it remains constant because there is no other way of conceiving it: death is always the unknown. This is probably the one fact that we can be certain of about death.

Two things, Freud (1919:395) continues, account for our reaction towards death, “the strength of our original emotional reaction to it, and the insufficiency of our scientific knowledge about it.” There are, of course, theological and spiritual explanations that attempt to account for our reactions but these answers are never based on any kind of proof. This, however, is really a moot point - I do not believe that anybody would really argue that he/she could *prove* what happens when we die; in the end everybody recognises that it is necessary to have prior experience of death in order to understand what it means to die. What can be demonstrated, however, is that since the earliest times human beings have attempted to understand what happens when we die, and refused to accept failure in this regard.

Freud continues his discussion by way of examples that illustrate the apparently absurd nature in which society denies the reality of death. Despite this denial Freud points out that lurking shallowly below the surface of a confident denial of death is a clearly ‘primal fear’. Freud theorises that this primal or original fear of death (‘through our history’) is one dating back to primitive times... the fear that the “deceased becomes the enemy of the survivor and wants to carry him off to share his new life with him.” (Freud 1919:396) Thus our relationship towards the dead is not only of being the remaining survivor, but also of being the enemy left behind by the defector (or the enemy whom we have driven away/killed). The primal fear, then, that Freud is describing, is a fear of the return of the enemy to take us away. This conceptualisation points to the psyche’s tendency to view death symbolically. Strange as this idea may seem, however, Freud uses it as a basis to elaborate the development of the occult, witchcraft and religion which he develops in *Totem and Taboo*. These particular ideas, because they were discussed above, shall be excluded from this particular section.

To get back to the theme of Freud's essay, we learn that Freud recognises that people often experience the feeling of 'uncanniness' when experiencing the death of another. In trying to understand what this feeling of 'uncanniness' means, Freud attempts to determine why this feeling occurs. Freud believes that the conclusion must be that

every emotional affect, whatever its quality, is transformed by repression into morbid anxiety, then among such cases of anxiety there must be a class in which the anxiety can be shown to come from something repressed which *recurs*. This class of morbid anxiety would then be no other than what is uncanny, irrespective of whether it originally aroused dread or some other affect.

Freud 1919:394

We are able to discern from this that Freud is saying that when one experiences the feeling of uncanniness in connection with death this is because one's feeling towards death has been repressed and transformed into morbid anxiety<sup>21</sup>. We must then ask how this repression occurs but more importantly we need to answer how to understand that repression occurs and is transformed into morbid dread. After all, if our feelings towards death are transformed and turned into morbid dread it must have been something less than negative before the repression and transformation - for example longing. I shall not discuss this question in full here, as I take it up a little later in my section on the death instinct<sup>22</sup>. The significance of Freud's explaining anxiety as a cause of the uncanny is taken up in more detail in the third chapter.

If the unconscious can never understand death then what does it mean to deny our fear of death? Freud believes that our experience of death triggers an emotional reaction to some

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<sup>21</sup> Freud's discussion of anxiety and its causes is not the only of Freud's discussions on the subject. Thus it should not be read as taking Freud's work in its entirety into account (*though I will review other texts later*). It is also important to note that Heidegger offers a different explanation of 'anxiety' which I discussed in Chapter One, and will investigate further in the final chapter.

<sup>22</sup> It is very interesting to note that 'The Uncanny' was written a year before 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'. The implications of Freud's discussion on the phantasy of intra-uterine existence are only realised in his discussion of the death instinct which only appears later in his work. For me this only serves to remind me that Freud's should always be seen as a work in progress.

other experience which is instinctually based.

To many people the idea of being buried alive while appearing to be dead is the most uncanny thing of all. And yet psycho-analysis has taught us that this terrifying phantasy is only a transformation of another phantasy which had originally nothing terrifying about it at all, but was filled with a certain lustful pleasure – the phantasy, I mean, of intra-uterine existence.

Freud 1919:397

Thus death becomes a trigger for something desired and certainly lost - the comfort and security that we believe we experienced in the womb before birth. Now if fear of death is simply a response to our loss of intra-uterine existence then death is not at all being conceptualised candidly, at least not in terms of its non-temporal nature. After all, our experiences of life are temporally based and in many ways the most frightening aspect of death is that time may cease to mean anything as there may be no progress if death is nothing more than a termination. This, then, points to another possible feature of death that the psyche does not take into consideration.

These few remarks in this section of *The Uncanny* hint at an impending shift in Freud's theoretical structure. In the previous sections we saw Freud explaining our conceptualisation of death by indirect reference to the pleasure principle. Freud basically conceives of the pleasure principle as the primary feature of the psyche; its role is to motivate the psyche to maximise pleasure and minimise unpleasure. However, Freud's reference to the phantasy of 'intra-uterine existence' is a sign that he is making use of the 'death instinct'. This 'death instinct' is explained in detail in the rest of this chapter.

Before continuing with our investigation, it should be noted that the above explanation seems to have clear similarities with Heidegger's explanation of Dasein. Dasein does not fear death in everyday existence simply because he/she does not face it in everyday existence. Dasein's method for coping with the anxiety of impending death is denial, a sort of self deception which manifests itself in 'inauthenticity'. To draw a parallel (and I only

extend this to Dasein and death) would be to understand Heidegger's 'inauthenticity' in this context as performing the same function as repression and denial – namely to allow the individual to carry on living life without facing the realities of 'everyday misery'.

For Heidegger, death at some point becomes an issue that everybody must face, if not for other reasons, at least because of the objective certainty of it. Furthermore, Heidegger believes that we all have the ability to face it authentically<sup>23</sup>. Authentically 'looking death in the face' involves our acknowledgement of feelings of fear and helplessness (anxiety) caused by the very nature of death as described above.

And it is this "anxiety that [makes] the repression". Freud (contra Heidegger), however, limits this anxiety so that it can only be the "anxiety in the face of a threatening external danger – that is to say, a realistic anxiety." (Freud 1932:118) That is not to say that the anxiety may not originate internally but that the danger must have external origins, as is the case with the threat of one's own impending death in a dangerous situation. In this, then, I have found a point that Heidegger and Freud seem to both agree and disagree on. The anxiety faced by Authentic Dasein perceiving its own death (in any situation) easily fits into Freud's model of repression but Freud only makes room for this anxiety to arise from 'realistic external dangers'<sup>24</sup>.

This section has helped clarify what it means for the psyche to understand the death of others and why it is impossible for it to understand its own death. It has, further, shown how Freud believes the psyche copes with the immediate threat of death. This section has also pointed to the role that anxiety plays in understanding repression and our reaction to fear of death. Furthermore, it has shown a link between Freud's earlier investigations and his latter theory of the 'death instinct'.

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<sup>23</sup> This means that Dasein cannot but perceive its own death authentically. Heidegger means by this that Dasein can only perceive what it means to die in authenticity. Any other perception of death is a perceiving of death inauthentically and thus not a true perception of what it means to die.

<sup>24</sup> The details of these similarities and Freud's explanation of anxiety are elaborated in Chapter Three.

## 2.5 Introducing The Death Instinct by way of Binswanger

Although Freud's explanations, so far, have not attempted an existential reading of the subject there are clear examples of existential themes influencing his comments on death<sup>25</sup>. For this reason I turn to Binswanger, who undertook most of his research as a psychoanalyst largely influenced by Heidegger's existentialism to introduce Freud's 'death instinct'. Binswanger specifically investigated this issue in his essay *The Idea of Homo Natura*. Here Binswanger attempts to view the human psyche through a Freudian framework while paying attention to existential influences. Essential to this view is the recognition of Freud's own existential cynicism of life - Freud, according to Binswanger, acknowledged the certainty of the absolute suffering of life without any hope for compensation or consolation. Binswanger (1975:151) saw Freud as believing that the first duty of all human beings is to tolerate this suffering but there is no clear reward for doing so.<sup>26</sup> It is in this that Binswanger (1975:151) sees the emergence of the death instinct - "It is possible to fulfil this duty only if we orient ourselves toward death:"

More importantly, however, Binswanger sees the above as an example of Freud's tendency towards polar positions. For Binswanger (1975:151), life and death are a clear example of Freud's use of polar positions; this use of life and death is born out of "the theme of 'true and untrue' as an optimisation of mankind's own arch theme of 'good and evil'" In this laying down of the arch theme as being of 'good and evil' Binswanger argues Freud becomes most accessible. In all of Freud's polarisation's Binswanger sees the 'evil' as the prerequisite for the 'good'. Thus in "the sadist's will to destroy [Freud] saw the prerequisite for altruism and culture; in hate he saw the precondition of love..."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Examples of this can be found in the latter part of the section "Death The Impossibility" and in the section "Death and The Uncanny".

<sup>26</sup> This does not mean that Binswanger believes that Freud made theological assertions. Binswanger simply asserts that Freud recognised the fact of suffering in life while also acknowledging the absence of any evidence to support the idea that suffering guarantees redemption.

<sup>27</sup> This theme is further elaborated differently and perhaps more comprehensively in the book 'Death and Desire' written by Richard Boothby. In the first chapter of this book Boothby explains that viewing masochism as the starting point for sadism "means that human aggressiveness is to be understood neither as a reaction of self-defence nor as a result of an innately brutish disposition, but rather as an expression of an internal conflict of the human being with itself." (Boothby 1991:5) This, although not making

(Binswanger 1975:152).

Binswanger's interpretation, then, reinforces the necessity to see fear of death as being the prerequisite for love of life. This allows for the possibility that suffering in life can be the prerequisite for love of death (destruction). By way of an introduction this points to the fact that there is no way to understand this without an investigation of the 'death instinct'. Finding that none of Freud's polar opposites are exclusionary but rather that the opposite poles modify each other allows us another assumption about our attitude towards death. Intrinsic to good is the evil (above) and intrinsic to life is death as both evil and death are defined and created by way of the other. Better still both are created by the same instinctual impulses which are in themselves neither good nor bad. To evaluate this concept in connection with death we can see the same situation playing itself out. Eros is constantly pushing forward attempting to stimulate disruption in order to preserve (create) life while the death instinct is constantly attempting to bring us back into the womb. Thus, according to Freud's model, fear of death must be fear of the triumph of the death instinct and, correspondingly, the loss of Eros. These themes have been hinted at by Freud in most of his earlier works that were discussed above.

In fact, Freud saw the 'death instinct' as the answer to a number of psychoanalytic explanations that he, himself found problematic. One of these, which is better explained below, was of repetition. The 'death instinct', however was more than just another psychoanalytic explanation. It marked a departure from Freud's earlier cornerstone 'the pleasure principle'. While the pleasure principle explained the psyche as motivated entirely by a desire for pleasure, Freud's death instinct introduced the influence of an instinct which had as its primary aim self-destruction.

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specifically metaphysical assumptions of polar opposites in Freud's thought (which Binswanger relies on), shows that issues such as masochism and sadism always begin with the self and are transformed or transferred externally in a way that follows the same results of Binswanger's model. Thus, if Binswanger's view fails or seems dubious because it relies on more esoteric explanations it is possible to

The rest of this chapter, then, attempts a more comprehensive investigation of the death instinct.

## **2.6 Freud's death instinct**

Before beginning this part of our investigation, however, it is necessary to explain the way in which Freud believes instincts work. Freud (1911) explains in *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning*, that to conceptualise one's own death and desire to live (in terms of drives) we must recognise the role of hallucination as the form or the goal to which we must look in order to know how to achieve our desires. This is because Freud, in his discussion on the principles of mental functioning, sees the fulfilment of wishes only being possible through the use of hallucination. The human being "hallucinates the fulfilment of its internal needs" (Freud 1911:37) then recognises the difference between the hallucination and reality and then sets about to bring the hallucination and reality in synch with each other (by changing the reality not the hallucination). Thus, in order for us to view our own deaths in terms of the drive to live we must show how the hallucination can occur – i.e. what does the psyche hallucinate when trying to achieve this goal (life eternal?).

Freud explains in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that

unconscious mental processes are in themselves 'timeless'. This means in the first place that they are not ordered temporally, that time does not change them in any way and that the idea of time cannot be applied to them.

Freud 1920:299

Thus, the unconscious does not know of a means to conceptualise time - it only knows of desire and its fulfilment (or lack of it). For this reason it would be very difficult to argue that the individual hallucinates about 'life eternal' (above).

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understand the polarisation of Freud's explanations in terms of internal and external conflicts.

Discussing time is at best a tricky problem because while we recognise the existence of it and our continuance through it, it is clear that it is very difficult to conceptualise life without time. Because of this and because desires are temporally separated from their satisfaction I believe that what Freud means is that the idea of time as an agent of change or dilution does not apply to unconscious mental processes. This, then, is another obstacle to the unconscious conceptualising its own death because death can only be conceptualised in terms of a temporal definition. Death means nothing unless understood against the backdrop of time because death is characterised by an end of time (or the continuance of it eternally<sup>28</sup>). With the conceptualising of time we have a hint of what it really means to die - to not interact or be part of the progress of time. This helps make sense of Freud's, previously mentioned, claims that the unconscious never believes its own death is a possibility

Freud's use of the 'death instinct', then, not only answers problems that he had of interpretation but it also will allow us to understand how Freud believes the unconscious deals with the notion of its own death. Freud's so-called most daring hypothesis - that of the death instinct - is elucidated in the later part of his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Freud begins by explaining why he believes that it is necessary for him to go 'beyond the pleasure principle'. He explains that there are a number of behaviours that cannot be understood by referring to the pleasure principle alone. In particular, some behaviours are destructive and are constantly repeated and not linked to any experience of pleasure. For example in the case of a person in analysis, "the compulsion to repeat the events of his childhood in the transference evidently disregards the pleasure principle" (Freud 1920:308). Freud understands these behaviours (e.g. repetition of certain traumas) as impossible to explain without the death instinct.

This death instinct is the instinct to return from where we came, to go back to our days before birth and perhaps before animacy. It is particularly unique because it does exactly the opposite of what other instincts do. Whereas other instincts impel us "towards change

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<sup>28</sup> By this I refer to those that see death as a state of eternal rest, suffering, bliss, rotting in the grave, etc.

and development” (Freud 1920:309) the death instinct impels us towards immutability. Freud (1920:310) explains that this ‘death instinct’ tends “towards the restoration of an earlier state.” The desire for this state (which is essentially the state of intra-uterine existence) is a desire to return to earlier goals which are characterised by not wishing change. In other words a desire to return to a state in which constant repetition is all that is desired. The death instinct, then, rejects life. The result is that it engages in self-destructive activities.

On the following page Freud (1920:311) explains how he came up with the idea of the death instinct - because all things die due to internal reasons Freud felt “compelled to say that ‘the aim of all life is death’” And that there is present in all of us the instinct towards death which constantly drives us towards our own death and our self-destruction which we perceive as the state described in the previous paragraph. At the same time, however, Freud believes that another instinct (Eros) is also at play constantly pulling us back away from our own death. Freud believes that these two instincts (Eros and Thanatos) “are component instincts whose function it is to assure that the organism shall follow its own path to death, and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are imminent in the organism itself.” (Freud 1920:311) Thus Freud understands fear of death in unnatural circumstances as justifiable because this is really a fear of not fulfilling one’s destiny. That is when we die of natural causes we die of our own volition – we fulfil our destiny as organisms by essentially killing ourselves.

The death instinct was a very controversial addition to psychoanalytic literature. It meant an acknowledgement of an instinct which essentially wishes for suicide. For this thesis, however, the implications are enormous. The fact that the death instinct desires self-destruction while having a symbolic notion of death in mind means that for the human being to go beyond this conceptualisation of death it must go beyond its own instinctual nature. This, then, *finally* separates Freud’s description of the human being from Heidegger’s Dasein. The main reason for this separation, of course, is because Dasein is a philosophical being and in no way instinctual. It also means that a Freudian reading of

Heidegger would explain Dasein's inclination towards inauthenticity and the 'they' as instinctual. This, however, is material for another thesis.

Freud's death instinct not only changed the way psychoanalysis explained the human being but so too does it allow for a different explanation of fear of death.

## **2.7 How Freud Conceptualises Fear of Death in Light of The Death Instinct**

At first it seems as though the discussion of the death instinct is a major departure from the previous explanations of our relationship towards death. However, if we bear in mind the fact that the common theme running through the previously discussed articles and essays is that the psyche can never conceptualise its own death, Freud's 'death instinct' suddenly seems like more of an answer. For example, when Freud talks of primitive man learning of the possibility of his own death through his relationship to his dead friends and enemies this conceptualisation of death is always defined by fear or love of others. What we were seeking was Freud's explanation of fear of death in terms of what it means to the psyche alone. The death instinct, however, does this by explaining that the organism has its individual relationship towards its own death. We should remember, that the death instinct does not allow for a conceptualisation of death as the unknown. The death instinct, after all, has a clearly symbolic image of death as the return to the womb. The most important result of our investigation, so far, is that we have the impression that Freud's attitude towards death was one that was in a stage of development. The 'death instinct', then, is not so much a departure but rather an improvement which irons out earlier problems. For this reason it is well justified to look to a later work to explain Freud's understanding of 'fear of death' and its relationship to the death instinct.

Freud's essay *The Ego and the Id* (1923) offers a clearer explanation of fear of death. Freud understands the ego to be the seat of anxiety – "The ego is simply obeying the warning of the pleasure principle." (Freud 1923:399) (the fear of being overwhelmed/annihilated) Upon this backdrop Freud explains fear of death as originating between the ego and the superego and under two possible circumstances – as a reaction to

an external danger or in melancholia. In the former, fear of death speaks to an anxiety for our desire to fulfil our destiny. In the latter situation (that of melancholia), Freud believes, that fear of death “admits of one explanation: that the ego gives itself up because it feels hated and persecuted by the super-ego, instead of loved. To the ego, therefore, living means the same as being loved” (Freud 1923:400). Fear of death, then, can be seen as either fear of death before our time, anxiety over fulfilling our destiny and/or fear of loss of love (possibly even the triumph of Thanatos over Eros). This latter explanation, furthermore, strikes clear similarities with my discussion of Binswanger’s paper (above) where I entertained the possibility that fear of death was a fear of loss of Eros.

This allows us to conclude this section with a clear picture of Freud’s ‘fear of death’. Fear of death, then, is a fear of the success of the death instinct. The result of this success is basically the failure of Eros. It means that if the death instinct succeeds over Eros the organism will die prematurely and have no further opportunities for erotic fulfilment. In a Freudian framework, then, it is these results that are feared when the psyche fears death. From the earlier work it is also possible to explain fear of death in terms of the guilt of primitive man. Fear of death, in this case, is fear that the dead enemy shall attain revenge. What is important to note, however, is that Freud’s explanations do not allow for an existential explanation of fear of death and certainly do not explain a fear of the unknown nature of death.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Probably the most important of our conclusions is that fear of death can be understood in a psychoanalytic framework as simply being representative of fear of not being loved and/or fear of the death instinct triumphing over Eros, as well as fear of the return of the dead enemy. This implies a clearly alternative position to Heidegger’s investigation.

What is especially interesting to note is that the way in which Freud speaks about death is in as candid a way as one could expect. Freud, after all, clearly recognises the horrors of death, the fact that life can be full of suffering without any reasonable hope for redemption

and most importantly that death is unavoidable, impenetrable and constantly pending. Despite this, however, Freud believes that death can never be conceptually understood. Furthermore, Freud believes that we continue through life as if our own deaths will never happen. In other words Freud has recognised the horrors of death while simultaneously believing that they make no difference to the life of the human being.

Another theme which has been investigated is the nature of the fear of death. In a number of instances Freud links this to anxiety (especially in *The Uncanny*). As we will see in the next chapter anxiety plays a central role in understanding Heidegger's conceptualisation of fear of death. It is this link between Freud's understanding of fear of death, and its relationship to anxiety, and the similarities and differences of Heidegger's approach that I investigate in the third, and final, chapter.

Furthermore, Freud's explanations of fear of death demonstrate the vast difference between Freud's and Heidegger's approaches. For Freud, after all, the extent to which we recognise the implications of death are measured in how we live our social life. This simply follows Freud's belief that we can never face the fact that our death means our annihilation. Furthermore, Freud's research has demonstrated that our conceptualisation of death is instinctual. Any anxiety we experience because of the fact of our impending death Freud explains by reference to our phantasy of intra-uterine existence. This phantasy Freud essentially sees as symbolised by death. In other words, the death instinct ensures that the organism is constantly driven towards its own death, but its death is not perceived as an annihilation rather it is perceived as the phantasy of returning to before birth (intra-uterine existence).

This allows us to conclude that Freud conceptualises death in a way that disregards an existential interpretation of the event. This means that for psychoanalysis death is only an important theme in so far as it symbolises phantasies and/or fears in life.

### **Chapter Three: Fear, Anxiety and Death in Freud and Heidegger**

The aim of this chapter is to critically evaluate Freud and Heidegger in light of each other. In this regard we will first establish to what extent they can be compared to each other. This is done by examining the similarities and differences between their two perspectives.

Before beginning it is necessary to make clear that my intention here is not to establish which perspective is, as such, correct. The reason for this is because the aim of this mini-thesis was to attempt to bring Freud and Heidegger into a conversation with each in order to gain a clearer picture of what it means to fear or be anxious about death. When I talk about a clearer picture I specifically do not mean to say that by way of these two thinkers we can get a sense of a definitive picture of this subject. The reason for this is because my research does not attempt to measure the worthiness of Freud's and Heidegger's research by what extent their conclusions match 'the truth'. This sort of evaluation I believe is confined to, or only made possible by reference to, so-called empirical research. The role of the philosopher, on the other hand, is to evaluate and investigate the logical implications of a particular theory. In this regard, I investigate what the logical implications of Freud's research, if accepted, is for Heidegger and vice versa. Concluding what these implications are allows me to evaluate the *relative* worthiness of each approach. In this regard, the clearer picture, that I hope will result from this investigation, will be important in so far as it allows us to get closer to the phenomenon of our relationship towards death. This picture will only be definitive in so much as it brings us closer to understanding how we can talk about our relationship towards our own death.

What follows, then, is an investigation into the extent to which we can bring Freud and Heidegger into the conversation while respecting the different nature of their respective projects. In this regard, I begin by assessing what aspects of their theories can be integrated into the same conversation. After working through Freud's and Heidegger's conclusions I argue that it is only their explanations and descriptions of anxiety that are in direct conflict with each other. It is not my intention to evaluate which has *the* correct explanation of anxiety, however, after careful analysis I argue that Freud's explanation of

anxiety appears to be more comprehensive than Heidegger's. This leads me to conclude that in the light of Freud, Heidegger's account seems to be lacking in detail and is, consequently, less convincing in this regard.

### **3.1 Establishing Which of Freud's and Heidegger's Conclusions Can Be Brought into The Conversation**

One of the things Freud and Heidegger do agree on is that the concept of death as an annihilation is something that can never be understood. However, the results of this fact are so different for Heidegger and Freud that at first, it seems impossible to compare them against each other. In this regard, a single fundamental difference underlies all the smaller differences we discuss below - namely that Heidegger believes that death reveals Dasein's ownmost potentiality for being and that Freud believes that realisation of our own death should, by and large, be understood in terms of the consequences it has for our social relationships.

Heidegger saw anxiety about death as the key to Dasein being authentic. In a way this means that when Dasein faces the possibility of its own death, this changes the way in which it lives. However, the influence of death on Dasein is an existential one<sup>29</sup>. By this I mean that authentic Dasein is a philosophical being that specifically does not live in a social world. Freud does not present anything like a similar explanation of our relationship towards our own death. Freud does, however, believe that death is a phenomenon of life. But the way in which it effects us is in terms of our social relationships or, as Heidegger would call it, our inauthentic possibility of being.

Another conclusion in the first chapter was that Dasein experiences the death of others only as a loss. On this subject Freud disagrees. After all, the death of the enemy is not

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<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that Heidegger specifically resisted his work being read as an existentialism, however, the implications of his explanation of fear of death are existential. By this I mean that they force Dasein to ask itself decidedly existential questions about what it means to be, what it means to be complete and what it means to be an individual. In this regard, then, when I refer to Heidegger's existentialism I am referring to the above mentioned questions and not to his work in its entirety.

experienced as a loss. However, Freud does believe that we experience the death of loved ones as a loss and this leads us to the recognition of our own death and with this recognition, the creating of social norms (ethics), religion and superstition. The result of this is that Freud believes that what Heidegger describes as our inauthentic relationship towards death is the relationship that leads us to realisation of our own death. In this regard, Freud does not describe what Heidegger would call an authentic relationship towards death. After all, Heidegger concluded that in the face of death, Dasein faces itself as an individual. Freud never allows for this possibility. He constantly explains our relationship towards our own death in terms of social consequences.

To attempt to evaluate these two explanations against each other at first appears to be impossible. One of the reasons for this is that Heidegger was of the opinion that his work should not be brought into conversation with that of psychology. To do so, then, would be fruitless because the critics would always be able to object by saying that such an attempt disregards the aim of Heidegger's investigation<sup>30</sup>. Furthermore, Freud's investigation of this subject does not specifically speak to Heidegger's conclusions. This means that an attempt to bring these two thinkers into conversation with each other would mean reading into Freud's conclusions on this subject. For example, in order to discuss the concept of authenticity in light of Freud we would have to construct a Freudian position on this subject. Although I think this sort of theoretical construction may be possible, I believe that it would be pragmatically problematic simply because the critic would be able to argue that such an attempt is immediately open to bias. The reason for this bias would be the differing psychoanalytic interpretations that have arisen since Freud's death. Finding a way to construct a position that overcome the possible objections that would be raised by psychoanalytic schools from Klein to Lacan is quite frankly a task that is beyond my scope.

This forces us to reconsider the question that this chapter must answer: whether there is a way in which we can bring Freud and Heidegger into the same conversation. In order to

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<sup>30</sup> Heidegger's reasons for this are explained in section 1.2 in the first chapter.

do this we need to find an issue or conclusion that resists Heidegger's position that he should not be brought into conversation with a psychology. It appears that the issue or conclusion that best fits this<sup>31</sup> category is that of anxiety.

The reader will recall that Heidegger resisted bringing his work into a conversation with psychology because this discipline would limit his investigation. Bearing this in mind we will only be justified in evaluating Freud's and Heidegger's definitions of anxiety against each other if we can show that this evaluation does not limit Heidegger's use of anxiety. Fortunately for us, both Freud and Heidegger have clear definitions of anxiety. It is this that makes it possible for me to justify why it is acceptable to bring Freud and Heidegger into the same conversation.

In this chapter, then, I critically investigate the similarities and differences between Heidegger's and Freud's definitions of anxiety and its relationship towards fear of death. I do this by first investigating the implications of Heidegger's definition of anxiety. I then investigate the link between anxiety and the uncanny and what the implications of this are for both Freud and Heidegger. After working out these details I examine the differences and similarities between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of someone/Dasein that is not fearful of death. This, then, forces me to further investigate Freud's conceptualisation of anxiety. The results of this investigation allow me to demonstrate why Freud's definition of anxiety reveals certain problems in Heidegger's use of anxiety. The penultimate section investigates the differences between Heidegger's notion of 'being towards death' and Freud's death instinct (Thanatos).

The conclusions I arrive at in the above investigations lead me to investigate whether we could argue that Freud's and Heidegger's explanations would have been better validated if they had, respectively, considered the implications of philosophy and psychology. This makes it possible for me to argue that philosophy and psychology should be brought into conversation with each other. I believe the result of this would be that both psychology,

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<sup>31</sup> The reasons for this are detailed in the sections following.

and philosophy would be more accurate, less one sided, and most importantly, more convincing.

### **3.2 Heidegger's Definition of Anxiety**

One of the central themes running through both the previous chapters is the role of anxiety in understanding fear of death. For Heidegger the distinction between anxiety about and fear of death distinguishes authentic from inauthentic Dasein. I wish to investigate this further by first turning to Heidegger's definition of anxiety. This he elaborates in one of the last sections of the first half of *Being and Time*. This section he calls, "The Basic State-of-mind of Anxiety as a Distinctive Way in which Dasein is Disclosed" (Heidegger 1962:228-235).

After reminding the reader of what he means by authentic and inauthentic Dasein, Heidegger (1962:229) explains that in defining anxiety we need to begin with the "phenomenon of Dasein's fleeing *in the face of itself* and in the face of its authenticity". This act of 'falling' makes it possible for Dasein to experience anxiety. Before explaining how this happens, however, Heidegger (1962:230) points out that it is necessary to distinguish anxiety from fear in order to gain a clearer understanding of the concepts. It is this distinction that is important for this chapter because it makes possible our investigation into the differences between Freud and Heidegger.

Dasein's fleeing in the face of itself is what Heidegger calls Dasein's falling into the they. Convinced that this does happen, Heidegger wishes to understand what causes it. The initial understanding would be that Dasein experiences fear which gives it reason to flee in the face of itself. However, "our interpretation of fear as a state-of-mind has shown that in each case that in the face of which we fear is a detrimental entity within-the-world" (Heidegger 1962:230) By this Heidegger does not mean that what we fear is always 'a detrimental entity within-the-world' but rather that what we fear is always perceived as such. For Dasein, then, to flee in the face of itself because of fear, would, then, mean that we would have to acknowledge Dasein itself as 'a detrimental entity within-the-world'.

This notion, although possible, is not the general way in which Heidegger sees this happening. Heidegger (1962:230) believes that “the turning away of falling is not a fleeing that is founded upon a fear”.

Heidegger (1962:230) believes that, “the turning-away of falling is grounded rather in anxiety, which in turn is what makes fear possible.” Heidegger justifies this by an investigation into the differences between anxiety and fear. The first reason he gives for this conclusion is that, as explained above, Dasein does not have anxiety over an entity in the world. For this reason, Heidegger (1962:231) explains that, Dasein’s experience of anxiety “is essentially incapable of having an involvement” with ‘entities’ as such. Anxiety is typified by the fact that what Dasein is anxious about is indefinite. By this Heidegger means that whatever causes the anxiety does so not by what it actually is, but rather by the fact that Dasein is undecided as to what it is about the particular entity that it finds threatening.

This anxiety which may seem to be caused by an entity, then, is typified by the fact that Dasein cannot define or decide what it is about it that it finds threatening. Therefore, there is a certain indefinability about what Dasein may be anxious about. Heidegger (1962:231) believes this is because “the world as such is that in the face of which one has anxiety.” Heidegger (1962:231) explains that the fact of anxiety’s indefinability points to the realisation “that entities within-the-world are of so little importance in themselves”. This idea he believes is reinforced by the fact that when the anxiety subsides it is customary to say that it was really nothing, which points to the ambiguous nature of what we were anxious about.

However, this does not mean that Dasein is anxious about nothing at all but rather that it is anxious about the undecided.... that is the undecided possibilities for being-in-the-world.

So, if the 'nothing' - that is, the world as such - exhibits itself as that in the face of which one has anxiety, this means that *Being-in-the-world itself is that in the face of which anxiety is anxious.*

Heidegger 1962:232

In other words Dasein is anxious about its possibilities for being. However, "anxiety individualises Dasein for its ownmost Being-in-the-world, which as something that understands, projects itself essentially upon possibilities." (Heidegger 1962:232) Thus Dasein is not just anxious about its possibilities for being but anxious about its possibilities for being authentic. This is because anxiety individualises Dasein in such a way as to allow Dasein to be thrown back into its authenticity.

Recalling the previous chapter, then, we know that Dasein is authentic in its anxiety towards death. The nature of this anxiety is of Dasein coming face to face with its potentiality for absolute individuality and the certainty of realising its possibility for being dead. When Dasein fears death this is a mark of Dasein's inauthenticity because it does not allow Dasein to face its anxiety towards death. Dasein is inauthentic here because it is able to brush off fear of death in a way that cannot be done in the case of anxiety. Inauthentic Dasein, then, reduces its anxiety to a fear so that it does not have to face the possibility of individualisation which it would have been forced to confront in anxiety<sup>32</sup>.

Bearing this in mind it is especially important to pay attention to Heidegger's (1962:233) statement that, "In anxiety one feels '*uncanny*'". Here Heidegger describes the 'uncanny' as characterised by feeling displaced, not quite at home and, having a sense of the indefinability of the cause of the feeling. The 'not feeling at home' is what is lost in the "tranquillized self-assurance" (Heidegger 1962:233) that inauthentic Dasein is so

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<sup>32</sup> It is interesting to note that Heidegger sees fear as Dasein's means to avoid anxiety while Freud (as explained later on) sees anxiety as a means to avoid fear.

accustomed to in its fallenness in the 'they'. Heidegger, then, uses the last two pages of this section to summarise his conclusions and pave the way for his next investigation. I see this as a fitting opportunity to discuss Freud and Heidegger together.

### **3.3 Freud and Heidegger: The Link Between Anxiety and The Uncanny**

Both Heidegger and Freud describe the 'uncanny' in a similar way. Both, after all, emphasise the feeling of uncertainty brought about by the 'uncanny'. Turning back to Freud's investigation I believe it will be useful for this investigation to ascertain to what extent he picked up on the same Heideggerean themes discussed above.

In order for this investigation to be justifiable we must pay attention to the criteria I laid down above. I must, then, show that Freud and Heidegger are talking about the same thing and that Freud's definition does not impose limits on Heidegger's.

Freud's investigation described this feeling as typified by an uncertainty over whether something was real or not<sup>33</sup>. In fact, the example Freud (1919:395) gave was of writers arousing the 'uncanny' feeling by encouraging their audience's uncertainty as to whether something was an automaton or not. What Freud left out, though, was that this feeling can be aroused to a greater extent by reference to the possibility that the whole world is not quite as it seems. Conspiracy theories and stories in this genre particularly play on this possibility<sup>34</sup>. While not speaking directly to Heidegger's position this does imply an uncertainty about the world and one's role in it. We could actually go a step further and say that this sort of example, if taken properly, forces the audience to evaluate itself in a different way. In fact we could say that the audience is offered the possibility of uncertainty about the world and in this an opportunity to evaluate their perceptions of themselves. In short, the audience is offered, through these types of dramatisation, what Heidegger would call *the possibility* of authenticity. So far, then, it is safe to say that

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<sup>33</sup> See the section on *The Uncanny* in Chapter Two.

<sup>34</sup> A good example of this is the recently released movie *The Truman Show*.

Freud and Heidegger are talking about the same thing when they talk about the 'uncanny'.

However, in Freud's (1919:395) investigation of the relationship between the uncanny and death he states that "people experience the feeling in the highest degree in relation to death and dead bodies." Earlier in his essay, though, Freud (1919:369/370) claims that the uncanny leads us back to what has long been known to us and is very familiar. By this Freud is alluding to his notion of the primal murder. This Freud (1919:396) explains, on the page following the above example, as the fear that the "deceased becomes the enemy of the survivor and wants to carry him off to share his new life with him."<sup>35</sup>

At this point I must recognise that there is a major difference between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations of what it is that leads to the experience of the uncanny. Freud sees the uncanny as caused by anxiety over a particular primal experience. Heidegger, on the other hand, sees the uncanny as caused by the call of anxiety - the call to authenticity.

Because both Freud and Heidegger describe the uncanny in the same way we have fulfilled the first criterion necessary for bringing them into a conversation with each other. The second criterion, however, which states that Freud must not limit Heidegger's work seems at first to be unfulfilled. After all, Freud explains the cause of the uncanny in a way that does not allow us to accept Heidegger's explanation. I, however, do not believe this is what Heidegger meant when he argued that his work should not be brought into conversation with psychology.

Heidegger (1962:74) is interested in the "question of man's Being" and investigates it in a

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<sup>35</sup> A page later, Freud (1919:397) says that "to many people the idea of being buried alive while appearing to be dead is the most uncanny of all." If we bear in mind Freud's emphasis on wish fulfilment in the creating of dreams and in particular day dreams, we are presented with the possibility of reading this example in a different way. It is possible, in a recognisably so far unjustified system, to see this example as exemplifying Dasein being prompted by the 'uncanny' to conceptualise its own death. By use of wish fulfilment, however, it makes possible the impossible - to 'be' while being dead. I, however, believe that we should be careful not to pursue the line of this argument because the temptation is to investigate the relationship between Heidegger's authenticity and inauthenticity and Freud's conscious and unconscious. I must admit while the temptation is immense we must recognise that that investigation would need a thesis on its own.

way that resists the notion that it is something that “we can simply compute by adding together those kinds of Being which body, soul and spirit respectively possess”. In this regard Heidegger felt justified in investigating things like authenticity. It also meant that this sort of investigation could not be criticised by something like psychology. The reason for this is that Heidegger argued that a psychology which presumed that the human being is “a subject of rational acts which follow certain laws” does not allow for questions like that of what it means to be authentic.

However, I think that there is a major difference between Heidegger being justified in disregarding psychology in asking the question of the meaning of being (or what it means to be authentic) and in Heidegger disregarding psychology in defining things like anxiety. The difference lies in the fact that asking the question of the meaning of being is engaging in a *new* project that psychology may actually restrict. However, in defining the uncanny Heidegger is explaining a phenomenon already under investigation by psychology. In this regard, then, Heidegger is not only not engaging in a new project but, by consequence he is redefining experiences and emotions that psychology already provides (competing) definitions for. For this reason I believe that he is *not justified* in disregarding psychology. The result is that in defining anxiety and the uncanny Heidegger is unwittingly engaging with psychology<sup>36</sup>.

Before attempting to evaluate Freud’s and Heidegger’s definition of the uncanny and anxiety, however, we need to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Freud defines these issues. I think the best way to do this is to first examine what Freud means when he talks about fear of death.

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<sup>36</sup> Another way to look at it would be by reference to discourses. Heidegger is able to ask the question of the meaning of being without being drawn into the discourse of psychology but this is impossible to do when defining things like the uncanny and anxiety.

### **3.4 Freud's Explanation of Fear of Death**

In this section I briefly investigate whether it is possible to argue that Freud was actually talking about anxiety when he explained what it means to fear death. In this regard I turn back to some quotes used in the second chapter.

“Children know nothing of the horrors of corruption, of freezing in the ice-cold grave, of the terrors of eternal nothingness – ideas which grown-up people find it so hard to tolerate as is proved by all the myths of a future life.” (Freud 1900:354). In this quote Freud seems to talk only about fear. On top of the use of the words ‘horrors’ and ‘terrors’, Freud is also describing our emotional reaction towards death as a reaction towards something in particular. In this case it is the ‘freezing in the ice-cold grave’ or the ‘terrors of eternal nothingness’<sup>37</sup>. The fact that this reaction is described in relation to specifics means that, for Heidegger as well as Freud, it is a ‘fear’ rather than an ‘anxiety’.

This conclusion is further emphasised by Freud's essay *The Ego and the Id* in which he equates fear of death to fear of losing love. “To the ego, therefore, living means the same as being loved.” (Freud 1923:400) This means that fear of death, at least in the above mentioned Freudian works, cannot be an anxiety because it has something specific to fear. It also means that this fear of death does not directly acknowledge the solitary nature of death. The conclusion of this, then, must be that Freud's conceptualisation of fear of death is really a conceptualisation of a fear of what we see as represented by death. Freud's research does not, as is the case with Heidegger, face the nature of death as the absolute unknown and certainly not as the ownmost potentiality for being (the ultimate ‘individualiser’). This does not mean, however, that the themes do not exist in Freud at all. After all, below the surface the fear of the success of the death instinct is a fear of returning to the solitude of the womb or, even, a return to the inorganic state and in this

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<sup>37</sup> I do realise that the ‘terrors of eternal nothingness’ could be conceived of as something unspecific. However, I get the impression that in this regard Freud was rather talking about something quite specific to fear. I believe this because it is both, contextually more suited to Freud's discussions and, because, even at a stretch, it does not embody the Heideggerean idea that it is possible to face the absolute unknown when facing death authentically.

one's destruction. It also means the loss of love and who can argue that there is anything that makes one feel more alone than love lost.

However, there is another implication of these themes. The fear of the loss of love could be seen to be a fear of a loss of life. This loss of life, in itself, implies a very vague and non-specific definition of life. For Heidegger the nature of Dasein's anxiety is non-specific and vague and thus seems to have the same nature as the fear Freud spoke about in the example above. However, even if we could say that Freud's use of the word fear (above) is closer in definition to Heidegger's definition of anxiety, we would be hard pressed to explain in a Heideggerean framework the fact that for Freud, Eros always implies existence in a social world<sup>38</sup>. This means that even in this instance it is safe to assume that Freud was not talking about an anxiety when he explained fear of death.

This is further exemplified by the fact that in all of the readings I covered, Freud spoke about fear of death and only mentioned anxiety indirectly. However, in order to clarify this issue I believe it would be beneficial to investigate Freud's conceptualisation of anxiety.

### **3.5 Freud's Conceptualisation of Anxiety**

We should remember that in psychoanalysis anxiety is usually associated with neuroses. This, however, shall not deter us from attempting to understand whether this plays a role in everyday life.

The previous chapter saw Freud explain in *The New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* that it is "anxiety that [makes] the repression". Furthermore we found out that Freud (1932:118) believed that the cause of anxiety is a "threatening external danger – that is to say, a realistic anxiety." However, this does not comprise the sum of Freud's understanding of anxiety<sup>39</sup>. In his earlier *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* Freud

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<sup>38</sup> This is emphasised by Eros being the instinct for love and sex.

<sup>39</sup> Freud actually revises his theory of anxiety, that I detail above, in his *New Introductory Lectures*. I opt to use Freud's earlier lecture, however, because I am more interested in Freud's descriptive details which

(1917) uses both the above explanation of anxiety and another. Freud (1917:441) explains the above mentioned anxiety “as a manifestation of a self-preservative instinct.” He defines it as a realistic anxiety because it is anxiety signalling danger. This sort of anxiety, Freud explains, is a result of knowing or suspecting imminent danger. The role of anxiety, then, is to prepare the individual for impending danger. However, there are situations in which anxiety, instead of preparing the individual, actually debilitates him or her. In these situations Freud sees the link between anxiety and fear. While anxiety is a signal to the individual, it is actually fear that prepares the organism for the impending danger. Freud, then, sees anxiety as signalling the danger and fear as preparing the individual for the danger. But how does the repression make the anxiety? This Freud (1917:443) answers by explaining that one of the ways in which the individual can repress the fear, which embodies a call to defensive action, is to “[protect] himself from fright by anxiety.” In other words the psyche, not wanting to face the danger, generates anxiety, and by not responding to its signal does not have to face its own fear.

However, there is another cause of anxiety that Freud considers. Freud identifies another element in anxiety - the result of repetition. Freud sees anxiety as the result of a repetition of emotions associated with an earlier experience. Freud believes that,

it is in the *act of birth* that there comes about the combination of unpleasurable feelings, impulses of discharge and bodily sensations which has become the prototype of the effects of a mortal danger and has ever since been repeated by us as the state of anxiety.

Freud 1917:444

Freud assumes that birth could not have been a pleasurable experience and thus theorises that at least part of the reason why the repetition occurs is because our first experience of anxiety was toxic. For Freud (1917:445) this explains why the term anxiety “emphasizes the characteristic of restriction in breathing” which must have been present in birth when

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are better laid out here.

we struggled to take our first breath<sup>40</sup>. On top of this Freud sees it as no coincidence that the first incident was temporally so close to experiencing the first anxiety of separation from the mother. Freud asserts that it is his,

conviction that the disposition to repeat the first state of anxiety has been so thoroughly incorporated into the organism through a countless series of generations that a single individual cannot escape the affect of anxiety

Freud 1917:445

Freud spends the next few pages of this lecture explaining why he is convinced that he is correct in this regard and what the relationship is between anxiety and phobias. It is after these detailed explanations that Freud (1917:449) makes the claim that what we are most interested in; namely that in the case of anxiety about some phobias, “the connection between anxiety and a threatening danger is completely lost to view.” It is in these cases that Freud pins the cause of anxiety onto repression.

But these two explanations are not enough, Freud (1917:450) argues, because they do not account for the “connection between sexual restraints and anxiety states” in the case of neurotic anxiety. According to Freud, the correlation between unfulfilled libido<sup>41</sup> and the manifestation of anxiety, especially in the case of women and/or clinical studies, is impossible to ignore. Furthermore, Freud (1917:451) believes that this accounts for why anxiety is so often manifested in “certain phases of life to which, as in the case of puberty and the time of the menopause, a considerable increase in the production of libido may be attributed.” When libido is increased, Freud argues, anxiety is manifested in its place. However, Freud (1917:452) continues that anxiety also manifests itself as “the universally current coinage for which *any* affective impulse is or can be exchanged if the ideational content attached to it is subject to repression.” In other words some psychological affect, not necessarily sexual, is repressed. When there is an experience that results in a similar

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<sup>40</sup> Freud justifies this by explaining that both the german and latin roots of *Angst* are *Enge* which “emphasises the charactersitic of restriction of breathing” (Freud 1917:445).

<sup>41</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis (1973:239) define Freud’s explanation of libido to mean an energy “underlying the transformations of the sexual instinct with respect to its object”.

affect to what caused the original repression, the original repression manifests itself as anxiety. In the case of obsessional neurotics, Freud (1917:453) explains that their “symptoms are only formed to escape an otherwise unavoidable generating of anxiety.”

Faced with all these different manifestations of anxiety Freud attempts to explain the links between them all. Freud (1917:453) begins by reminding the reader of his earlier conclusion that the libido and ego are set in opposition to each other. Reminding the reader that anxiety is a signal to the ego to prepare for danger, Freud (1917:453) argues that “it seems plausible to suppose that in neurotic anxiety the ego is making a similar attempt at flight from the demand by its libido, that it is treating this internal danger as though it were an external one.” In this Freud then maintains his same definition of anxiety but expands its parameters. Anxiety still signals impending danger - however, it includes internal as well as external dangers. As is the case in external danger, anxiety can prompt both flight and defence; it is this defence against internal dangers, Freud argues, that manifests itself in the form of symptoms.

At this point Freud has come up with the explanation that anxiety is the signalling of an impending danger, either internal or external. However, Freud realises, we have forgotten the fact that children generally do not experience anxiety over external dangers. After all, when realistic anxiety/anxiety over external dangers is awakened in children it is “wholly the result of education” (Freud 1917:456/7). Freud justifies this by examining the manifestations of anxiety in children, particularly phobias relating to darkness and solitude. Freud (1917:456) concludes that here it is actually a *longing* that “is transformed into a *fear*”. In almost all situations it is not manifested as a fear of an external danger but the fear of being alone - which is almost always a manifestation of the desire for the mother’s love/attention. This longing, Freud concludes, is caused in children by unemployed libido. This, in itself, is the same as the cause of neurotic anxiety which allows Freud (1917:457) to conclude that the same thing happens with neurotics’ “as with children’s anxiety: unemployable libido is being constantly transformed into an apparently realistic anxiety and thus a tiny external danger is introduced to represent the claims of the

libido.” By this Freud (1917:457) means not only that children’s and neurotic’s anxieties are the same in cause but, in fact, that “every hysterical phobia goes back to an infantile anxiety and is a continuation of it”.

Freud’s explanation, then, traces the cause of anxiety to unfulfilled and/or unemployed libido. In this regard Freud believes our first experience of anxiety is caused by birth and separation from the mother. The cause of this initial anxiety, however, is not removed at birth. In fact it is present throughout our lives and thus manifests itself in a many other situations. For this reason Freud believes that most cases can be linked to this initial anxiety.

There are a number of very important differences between Freud’s and Heidegger’s explanations of anxiety. The most important for this chapter are that Freud explains anxiety as a result of an unfulfilled/unemployed libido, and that the meaning of anxiety is inseparable from our experience of our own birth. These explanations are in direct conflict with Heidegger’s explanation because they exclude the possibility that anxiety is caused by the individuality of authenticity.

### **3.6 The Implications of Freud’s Definition of Anxiety for Heidegger and Vice Versa**

Before beginning this investigation it is necessary to make clear my position on the acceptability of Freud’s and Heidegger’s explanations of anxiety. Neither Freud nor Heidegger could and/or have offered substantial, empirical proof for their explanations of anxiety. This means that there is no compelling evidence upon which we could decide which is a better explanation. However, if we are to make sense of Freud’s and Heidegger’s explanations of anxiety in the light of the aim of this thesis, we are justified in identifying what the implications of their explanations are for each other. In this regard, this section does *not* aim to convince the reader of the *correct* way to understand anxiety. Its aim is, rather, to find the best way possible to understand what Freud and Heidegger mean when they talk about anxiety.

For Heidegger, anxiety is a call back to Authentic Dasein; for Freud it is a symptom of an unfulfilled or unemployable libido. Considering these different explanations, the task ahead is to work out how to bring Heidegger and Freud into the same conversation. I think the best way to do this is to work through the different possibilities of how this can be done. In this regard we actually only have two options. We must either accept that Freud and Heidegger are talking about the same thing when they use the word anxiety or that they are talking about something completely different.

### **3.6.1 The First Option**

The only way to make sense of the first option is to take Freud's and Heidegger's explanations together in an attempt to form a unified explanation. If such an attempt were successful we would be able to conclude that their theories are compatible and, if taken together, we would be able to form a more comprehensive explanation of anxiety. However, I show below that this proves to be an impossible task and that the only results that arise from such an attempt are that we have the opportunity to evaluate Freud and Heidegger in light of each other.

The reason for this is that if we attempt a unified explanation, we are forced to look at anxiety as a call back to an infantile Authentic Dasein and its unresolved, unfulfilled libido. No doubt such an explanation would be disagreeable to both Freud and Heidegger, simply because there are built-in contradictions in such a formulation. Not the smallest of these contradictions is the fact that unresolved, unfulfilled libido often involves sexual or love relationships with others. This, of course, is immediately at odds with the individualism of authentic Dasein. On top of the above example, furthermore, there are a vast number of other contradictions in the above formulation.

Accepting the idea that a unified explanation of anxiety is impossible, however, does not mean that we can immediately disregard the notion that Freud and Heidegger are talking about the same thing when they talk about anxiety. What it does mean, however, is that if they are talking about the same thing when they explain the cause of anxiety, then, their

explanations must be in conflict with each other. If this is the case we are forced to choose which is superior and/or more convincing.

In this regard, then, we must determine, for example, whether Heidegger could effectively respond to the fact that the obsessional neurotic experiences anxiety. In order to do this Heidegger would have to accept that the obsessional neurotic does not respond to the call of anxiety. This is because the obsessional neurotic's response to anxiety is simply to develop obsessional symptoms which allow him/her to avoid the so-called call to authenticity. In order to make sense of this, then, we are forced to explain these symptoms in terms of the obsessional neurotic's fallenness in the they. Looking at the structure of this, then, we see the obsessional neurotic experiencing anxiety. He or she does not respond to the call of anxiety. This is only made possible by its fallenness in the they. In a 'normal' situation this fallenness in the they would manifest itself as a tendency to transform anxiety about death into fear of death. For the obsessional neurotic, however, his or her fallenness in the they allows him/her to classify his/her anxiety as a neurotic symptom. This being the case, it means that the obsessive neurotic would have a most unusual perception of the 'they'. This means that what Freud calls the obsessive neurotic's symptom of anxiety, Heidegger would be forced to explain in terms of a response to a *delusional* perception of the 'they'.

Although, this sort of explanation is not impossible, it is impossible to work out the details of how this occurs from Heidegger's explanations of 'the they' and 'anxiety' in *Being and Time*. This is because Heidegger did not attempt to explain any of the details necessary for working out how this sort of thing could happen. The implications of this, then, are that we must come to the conclusion that Heidegger's explanation is, at best, lacking in detail.

To be fair to Heidegger, however, he does not say that his explanation of anxiety is the only explanation of anxiety. If we interpret Heidegger in this way, then, we could say that Freud's explanation may be correct even though Heidegger uses anxiety in a different way. In other words regardless of what the real cause of anxiety is, it still calls Dasein to

authenticity. In this case we would accept that Freud and Heidegger are talking about the same thing when they use the word 'anxiety'. Freud, then, accounts for the *cause* of, while Heidegger explains the *effect* of anxiety<sup>42</sup>. The problem with this interpretation, however, is that we would have to account for the possibility of not experiencing anxiety. After all, if Freud's explanation is correct, it is conceivable that there may be organisms which do not experience anxiety simply because the cause is either absent or resolved. For example, we could envision a hypothetical situation in which those not experiencing unfulfilled libido would not experience anxiety and thus not be called back to authenticity.

For Heidegger the implications of such a situation would be that Dasein becomes a sort of Nietzschean subject - it is his/her superiority (inferiority) which allows him/her to stand alone and face up to his/her anxiety (which is caused by an unfulfilled libido). This anxiety, then, calls Dasein back to its ownmost potentiality for being (which excludes the influence of the social world - the 'they') and it is left to its authenticity alone. Absolute aloneness and individuality, of course, are only possible in death and it is to this that Dasein must look. However, this explanation tends towards circularity and in many ways absurdity. After all, the above explanation defines anxiety as caused by the, unresolved/unfulfilled libido (which in many cases, for example love, is a result of living in the social world<sup>43</sup>) and interprets it as a call to absolute individuality. Furthermore, access to authenticity is only made possible by unresolved libidinal issues. While it is possible that this sort of explanation may be workable, it is also clear that in this form it makes little sense. On top of this, if we are to attempt to make sense of this we are constantly forced to speak on Heidegger's behalf. This means that we have no guarantee of presenting Heidegger's perspective with any accuracy in this regard.

We could investigate more detailed examples of why the first formulation poses problems to Heidegger's credibility. However, I believe that I have demonstrated that if we

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<sup>42</sup> I recognise that there are objections presented in Heidegger's text to this sort of explanation. However, I believe that the problems Freud presents to this explanation are effective enough to justify disregarding this explanation.

<sup>43</sup> This is explained both above and in more detail in the second chapter.

undertake the first option it only shows that Heidegger's explanation of anxiety is not detailed enough to withstand the implications of a Freudian reading. I now wish to investigate the viability of the second option.

### **3.6.2 The Second Option**

The second option is to accept that Freud and Heidegger are talking about different things when they talk about anxiety. In order to accept this option, however, we have to overcome the fact that while it is true that Freud did not specifically describe the type of general, existential anxiety that Heidegger does, Freud did explain a type of general anxiety that attached itself to the closest perceived danger. This anxiety seems to have the *same* experiential characteristics as the anxiety that Heidegger is talking about. After reading Freud, then, his explanation of anxiety makes it very difficult to conceptualise Heidegger's anxiety without being aware of the fact that Freud has developed a psychoanalytic explanation for the type of anxiety Heidegger makes use of. This means that Freud's explanation of anxiety resists the possibility of saying that Freud and Heidegger were talking about different things when they used the word anxiety. Not only is this the case but Freud's explanation of anxiety is, in fact, in direct conflict with Heidegger's explanation and use of anxiety. After all, Freud would disagree that anxiety, as Heidegger defines it, is a call back to the *non-social self* (authentic Dasein).

If we attempt to argue the second option, we could say that Heidegger would respond to this sort of conflict by reiterating that the Freudian type of explanation concerns itself with the results of Dasein's fallenness in the 'they'. In other words, Heidegger would argue that (and consequentially, disregard) Freud's explanation of anxiety is a result of his own inauthenticity or description of inauthenticity. This would allow Heidegger to maintain his explanation of anxiety by saying either that what Freud described as anxiety is a different thing or that it is the same but Freud has misunderstood it. If we are to take this defence seriously, as in the case above, however, we need to explain how Heidegger would explain the anxiety experienced by the obsessional neurotic. If the premise is that Freud simply misunderstood anxiety then the argument elucidated in the First Option holds.

If, however, the premise is that Freud was talking about something different, then, Heidegger would argue that, in the case of the obsessional neurotic Freud is talking about a different phenomenon. This sort of argument forces us to say that it is only a specific type of anxiety (one that is different from Freud's description) that manifests itself as a call to authenticity. The implication of this, then, is that 'Heidegger's anxiety' must either be experientially different or indistinguishable but different from the obsessional neurotic's anxiety. If Heidegger's anxiety is experientially different we need to ask how it is that we can distinguish this difference. After all, Heidegger did not demonstrate to his readers how this could be done. If, on the other hand, it is indistinguishable from, for example, the obsessional neurotic's anxiety we have no way of knowing what type of anxiety it is that authentic Dasein experiences as a call. In adopting either of the above explanations, after reading Freud, it becomes very difficult to not come to the conclusion that Heidegger's explanation is lacking in detail. This conclusion is justified by the fact that Heidegger does not give his readers the means to answer the above questions in his explanation of anxiety.

In short what I have shown above makes very clear the limitations of Heidegger's explanations. These explanations are not detailed enough to overcome the threat of a Freudian reading. The implications are enormous when we recall the aim of Heidegger's *Being and Time*. As was demonstrated in the first chapter, Heidegger is attempting to answer the question of the meaning of being and he believes that this is superior to other investigations that touch on this subject. The reason I use the word superior is because in Heidegger's explanation why his investigation should not be read as a psychology, anthropology or biology he argues that his analysis of Dasein will not be *restricted* by these disciplines. Considering the above investigations which reveal that Heidegger's explanation of anxiety is lacking, and considering the importance of anxiety to Heidegger's work, we are forced to conclude that the impact of Heidegger's investigation is diminished by a Freudian reading.

However, before continuing it is necessary to point out that many would argue that there

are no compelling reasons or evidence that prove that Freud's explanations are in any way accurate. I acknowledge this point. However, I do not believe it diminishes the impact of my argument. The reason for this is because my argument does not evaluate Freud's against Heidegger's explanation of *the cause* of anxiety. In fact, my argument specifically avoided this approach because when considering that Freud and Heidegger explain the cause of anxiety by way of two very different systems it becomes apparent that such an evaluation is impossible. As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter these types of comparisons and evaluations should not be engaged in because they could only be undertaken if we disregard the subtleties of Heidegger's argument. What is important, however, is that Freud chronicled the occurrence of anxiety in all situations. It is this detailed description of the occurrence of anxiety that casts doubt on Heidegger's use of anxiety. To the sceptic, then, it is not necessary to argue that Freud's explanation was correct. Rather, for the integrity of the above argument to be maintained it only needs to convince the reader that Freud's identification of the occurrence of anxiety is correct. In this regard I am convinced that Freud's descriptions are accurate. I recognise that this may not be the proof necessary to accept the above argument, but I am unable to conceptualise what it is that the sceptic would find problematic in this.

However, even if Heidegger was incorrect about the nature of anxiety it does not mean we need discard all his conclusions. There may, after all, be ways of formulating Heidegger's theory by excluding or diminishing the role of anxiety. For this reason I wish to look at how Freud would respond to Heidegger's conclusion that Authentic Dasein exists as being towards death<sup>44</sup>. This I am going to investigate in the light of the death instinct.

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<sup>44</sup> To do this I am going to ignore the role of anxiety in an attempt to salvage at least part of Heidegger's work on this subject.

### **3.7 Being Towards Death and The Death Instinct**

Before beginning this section I think we should recall the essential features of what Heidegger characterised as being towards death. Death is first and foremost Dasein's ownmost potentiality for being. In this sense it means that authentic Dasein realising its potentiality for death is Dasein brought back to itself in order to realise its potential for absolute individuality. In realising its possibility for death and in this its possibility for authenticity, which is typified by a sense of individuality and 'ownmostness', Dasein is authentic and is able to 'be' in itself instead of in the 'they'. Furthermore, "*anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self*" (Heidegger 1962:311) Anticipation, a mode of Inauthentic Dasein, means that Dasein is always being towards the future. When faced with the certainty of death, Authentic Dasein is forced to realise that being in anticipation inevitably means being towards death as death is one of the only future certainties. Thus it is Dasein's realisation of its being towards death that reveals to Dasein its ownmost potentiality for being - namely authenticity.

When trying to understand this notion of being towards death in psychoanalysis we are reminded of both the fact that Freud (19115a:77) acknowledged that "everyone owes nature a death" and that there is a part of the psyche that actually yearns for it. This part of the psyche is the death instinct (Thanatos). Freud saw Thanatos as a drive towards self-destruction. Thanatos, however, stands in direct opposition to the life instinct (Eros). While Thanatos desires the end of life, Eros, Freud hypothesised, desires the fulfilment of its sexual and self-preservative instincts<sup>45</sup>. However, Thanatos does not desire the end of life in the way that Heidegger conceptualises. Thanatos, rather desires a return to the unstimulated state. This is perceived as either a return to intra-uterine existence or a return to the inorganic state.

In both of these formulations, however, Freud believes that the psyche does not

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<sup>45</sup> This short definition is based on Laplanche and Pontalis's (1973:241) definition of Eros - "The tendency of the life instincts is to create and maintain ever greater unities. Known also as 'Eros', they embrace not only the sexual instincts proper but also the instincts of self-preservation."

conceptualise the possibility of its death as an annihilation. For this reason it is safe to say that while Thanatos motivates the organism towards its own death it does so only in so far as it understands death symbolically or not at all. Thanatos does not acknowledge what Heidegger sees as the essential feature of death: the uncertainty of what it holds.

This means that Freud's death instinct cannot be read as similar to Heidegger's being towards death. The most substantial difference is that Freud's death instinct directs the organism back towards birth or the perception of the beginning (the inorganic state). In fact, one could almost say that there is no space for 'death' in conceptualising the death instinct. The tension between Eros and Thanatos, after all, is not really tension between desires for life and death. In reality Thanatos only desires death because it sees death as a mechanism to return to the unstimulated state. Thus one could say that the tension between Eros and Thanatos is actually a tension between the desire to live in the world and the desire to return to before birth.

Heidegger's conceptualisation of death is very different. For Heidegger the significance of death is the fact of it being an annihilation. If we could speak of tensions in Heidegger we would say that the tension is between being in the social world of the inauthentic and being authentic in the face of death itself. What is most important to mention, however, is that for Heidegger the ability of Dasein to face the possibility of its own death allows Dasein the potentiality for authenticity.

In this regard we see what I consider to be the most important difference between Freud and Heidegger. Freud presumes a rather mechanistic picture of the human being. After all, the sole aim of Freud's human being is to fulfil its instincts. It is true that some instincts are in conflict with each other making human behaviour unpredictable. However, the human being's aim is still only to fulfil its drives. This is a very different picture to Heidegger's authentic Dasein. The word authentic subtly implies a superior position. This position is the possibility for Dasein to realise its authenticity, its possibility for being an individual. I must admit I find the picture of authentic Dasein very attractive, not because it is well

argued, but because it appeals to a part of me that does not want to accept the Freudian notion that I am simply an instinctual being. Of Heidegger's conclusions it is very difficult to imagine why anybody would not be attracted to the idea that one has the potentiality for an ownmost possibility of being. This is particularly appealing in light of the dehumanising tendency of an urban lifestyle. I do not, however, believe that this is reason enough to forgive Heidegger the problems we identified above. However, in so far as this could lead to a future project one of the questions that Freud has not completely answered is how to overcome the attraction to a project like Heidegger's.

The conclusion of this section, then, is that Freud's death instinct is very different from Heidegger's notion of being towards death. The difference is too great to be able to make comparisons and evaluations between the two. On a non-philosophical level, however, we have identified why it is that Heidegger's explanation of our relationship towards our own death is more attractive than Freud's.

### **3.8 Why Philosophy Should be Brought into Conversation with Psychology**

Considering the conclusions we have come to, we would be well justified to accept the Freud's explanation over Heidegger's. After all, it is this explanation that I have shown to be the most convincing. However, there is a certain attractiveness of Heidegger's approach that should not be ignored. One of the ways in which we could still entertain Heidegger's approach is to justify it aesthetically. This would allow us to keep both approaches in currency but for very different purposes.

While it is possible to conclude on this note it is also obvious that the differences between Freud's and Heidegger's explanations actually point to a larger philosophical question. This question is of whether philosophy should be brought into conversation with psychology and vice versa<sup>46</sup>. When I use the word 'should' I am referring to the idea that in some way Freud and Heidegger actually require each other in order to complete their

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<sup>46</sup> This idea could not have been developed without the help of Professor Daniel Herwitz.

pictures.

For Heidegger this is not too difficult to argue, because it simply means referring to the argument above. After all, Heidegger actually needs reference to something like a Freudian approach to resist the criticism we have laid against him. Furthermore, when we consider that Heidegger resisted psychology he actually resisted a psychology that we today would not accept. Heidegger's idea of what psychology is, after all, presumes a very basic behaviourist approach. It is almost as if there is no room in Heidegger's conceptualisation of psychology for anything except a Pavlovian type subject. This means that Heidegger's argument for why he should not be brought into conversation with psychology does not consider the type of psychology we have in mind when we refer to psychology today.

While it is probably true that Heidegger's research would not have been enriched by reference to a strictly behaviouristic psychology, Heidegger could have painted a clearer picture if he had taken cognisance of something like Freud. This, however, does not just point to an omission on Heidegger's behalf, it also betrays an intellectual arrogance. By this I mean that we should pay attention to the fact that Heidegger did not really justify the importance of death. After all, while he argued the reasons for death being so important, he did not give any evidence to convince his readers that Dasein actually does pay attention to it. I would never attempt to argue that death is not important for Dasein, however, by considering the input that psychology could have made, I am certain that Heidegger's research on this subject would have been more comprehensive. In this regard, I believe Heidegger's use of anxiety is a classic example where reference to psychology (specifically Freud) would have resulted in a more convincing explanation.

It is for this reason that I believe we are justified in concluding that in research of this type philosophy needs to include psychology in the conversation. This does not mean that psychology should be allowed the ability to limit (in the way that Heidegger argued against) our conversation. Rather, it means that so far as psychology can contribute and

clarify what is at stake in talking about things like the 'human condition', it should be encouraged to do so. In the light of post-modernism, with its deep opposition to master narratives, this conclusion only carries more weight. However, we have not yet completed this argument. After all, we must still ask whether Freud is guilty of ignoring the possible input of philosophy.

I believe that in this regard Freud is as guilty as Heidegger is. One of the reasons for this can be seen if we examine the way Freud treats anxiety towards death. As I explained in section 3.6, above, Freud's explanation allows for the possibility of a strong ego that does not experience anxiety when faced with the inevitability of death. While it may be possible to persuade the reader to the certainty of this in a particular case, Freud's argument does not seem to take cognisance of the importance of this theme to philosophy and even theology. Furthermore, Freud's explanation of anxiety, while convincing, does not make it easy to dismiss the attractiveness of Heidegger's research. I believe the reason for this is that Freud's research did not aim to or, inadvertently, succeed in overcoming the importance of this theme in the history of philosophy.

If Freud and/or psychology had paid attention to the philosophical themes prevalent in this type of research it probably would have been possible to present an argument that overcomes the attractiveness of Heidegger's existential analytic. However, because philosophy was not consulted on this subject the themes that are so important for philosophy are not detailed in psychological research. This gives the reader the impression that the same themes are not being discussed.

I think that the above few lines demonstrate is that in many cases the notion of strict separation of disciplines like philosophy and psychology only leads to arguments that are not entirely convincing. In a way, philosophy and psychology need each other, if only to expose not yet conceived flaws and omissions. The reason for this is that philosophy and psychology often investigate the same subjects but with different rules. This only illustrates that while psychology's access to 'scientific evidence' may disprove a

philosophical postulation, the need for this same scientific evidence limits the scope of psychological investigation. In this regard psychology needs philosophy too, at the very least so as to expand its horizons.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have investigated the extent to which we can bring Freud and Heidegger into conversation with each other. In this regard, I concluded that we are only able to compare and evaluate Freud and Heidegger, by way of their definitions of anxiety. The result of this is that I was able to show that the integrity of Heidegger's explanation of anxiety is threatened by the descriptive details of Freud's investigation of anxiety.

Although Freud and Heidegger begin their investigations with very different premises they both acknowledge the importance of the initial reaction towards death in understanding what it means to fear death. For Heidegger this initial reaction is one of anxiety. Anxiety is the mechanism by which Dasein is called back to authenticity and thus, able to face the possibility of its own death. While it is clear that Heidegger uses the term anxiety in an existential framework I have shown that he did not define anxiety well enough to exclude it from a psychoanalytic critique. Thus, with Freud's definition of anxiety we find it almost impossible to discern Heidegger's 'existential anxiety' from a Freudian 'psychoanalytic anxiety'. If it is indeed impossible to distinguish the one from the other, we must acknowledge that Freud has accounted for anxiety in a way that makes it very difficult to read Heidegger without scepticism.

This, however, does not mean that we are allowed to disregard Heidegger's interpretation of what it means for Dasein to be towards death. In this regard the analysis of Heidegger's and Freud's conceptualisations of what it means to be towards death simply show that the two perspectives are incompatible.

For Heidegger, the implications are very severe. While it is still reasonable to understand Authentic Dasein as being towards death, the mechanism by which Authentic Dasein

realises this is indistinct. The above investigation does not allow me to say that anxiety was misconceptualised by Heidegger. However, it does allow me the conclusion that for Heidegger's explanation of anxiety towards death to maintain its prominence in his work, it must overcome the problems presented by a Freudian definition of anxiety.

I have not been able to conclude whether it is Heidegger or Freud who has a superior explanation for fear of death. Furthermore, I have not been able to devise a system that fills in what is missing from both explanations. What I have been able to do in this thesis, though, is to show that both Freud's and Heidegger's explanations are lacking.

However, the details missing from Heidegger's explanation encourage scepticism while the details missing from Freud's do not in any way undermine his explanation. Furthermore, I find Freud's explanations much more compelling, not because they necessarily show greater insight, but because they are rich with details and examples. I do acknowledge that Heidegger's analysis does not necessarily allow for these sort of details and example, but without them and in the light of Freud's theory I find Heidegger's perspective less compelling. This allows me to conclude that when it comes to an explanation of anxiety Freud's is superior. The whole irony, of course, is that Heidegger thought these sort of details would restrict his 'grand' analysis. And in this respect he was correct, except, of course, it was not his details but Freud's that restricted his analysis.

The aim of this mini-thesis was to gain a clearer picture of what it means to fear or be anxious about death in light of Freud and Heidegger. I have shown that Freud's overall explanation is superior. This is because Freud's work illuminates problems with Heidegger's descriptions and explanations and not vice versa. However, despite the fact that Freud's explanation is less open to attack than Heidegger's, Freud's explanation of what it means to fear death is quite frankly mechanistic and uninspiring. This does not in any way detract from the value of Freud's research but it does point to the fundamental difference between Freud and Heidegger. The way Heidegger makes use of our relationship towards the possibility of our own death in developing his theory of

authenticity and inauthenticity is very compelling, because it rests on a very different idea of what it means to be. The notion of authentic Dasein has a certain romantic appeal which I am certain very few can deny. This is because the possibility of authenticity resists a mechanistic understanding of the human being. The possibility of authenticity, after all, allows Dasein the potential to be itself and to attain completeness by rejecting the social world. It somehow implies that the solution to finding the best way to be is to be found in one's self<sup>47</sup>.

I recognise that this is a very loose reading of Heidegger and I do not offer it as a definitive summary. What is important in recognising this, is that, in so far as the conclusions in this mini-thesis invite further research, the facet of Heidegger's work that makes it so attractive should be further investigated. By this I mean that the next step would be to attempt a psychoanalytic explanation as to why this sort of notion is so attractive and whether it is possible to reformulate Heidegger's work in such a way so as to make more acceptable the implications he outlined of our relationship towards our own death.

This mini-thesis explained in detail Heidegger's explanation of what is at stake in authentic Dasein facing the possibility of its own death. It then investigated how Freud explained fear of death and in what ways this approach is different from Heidegger's. The final chapter formulated a way in which Freud and Heidegger could be brought into the same conversation with each other. It concluded that such a conversation could only take form around their explanations and descriptions of anxiety. The conclusions are that in the light of Freud, Heidegger's explanation is not compelling and that his description is insufficient. The implications of this conclusion are that Heidegger's account of what it means to be anxious about death does not carry the same weight as Freud's.

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<sup>47</sup> This sort of theme is quite common in a distorted form in popular literature. For example the *Star Wars* movies saw the heroes finding victory by eventually identifying their inner strengths and weaknesses and through this a realisation of their own 'fate'.

This led me to investigate whether we could argue that Freud's and Heidegger's explanations would have been better validated if they had, respectively, considered the implications of philosophy and psychology. This made it possible for me to argue that philosophy and psychology should be brought into conversation with each other. The result of this is that both psychology and philosophy would be more accurate, less one-sided and, most importantly, more convincing.

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