Animal Dasein
The Genesis of Existentials in the Early Heidegger’s Interpretations of Aristotle

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Do Animals Have a World?

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)

Early Heidegger

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Later Heidegger
1925 « We miss the essential thing if we don’t see that the animal has a world [das Tier eine Welt hat]. [...] Every living thing has its environing world [Umwelt] not as something extant next to it but as something that is there [da ist] for it as disclosed, uncovered. For a primitive animal, the world can be very simple. But life and its world are never two things side by side; rather life « has » its world [das Leben « hat » seine Welt]. »

(Heidegger, Kassel's Lectures on Dilthey)
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«The essential is missed is we do not see that the animal has a world.»
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The animal not Dasein, but « mere-aliveness » (Nur-noch-leben)
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« The animal has no world (*Welt*), not even an environing world (*Umwelt*) »

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The Existential Constitution of *Da-sein*

V. *Being-in as Such*

28. The Task of a Thematic Analysis of Being-in
   A. The Existential Constitution of the There
29. Da-sein as **Attunement**
30. Fear as a Mode of Attunement
31. Da-sein as **Understanding**
32. Understanding and Interpretation
33. Statement as a Derivative Mode of Interpretation
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38. **Falling Prey and Thrownness**

**Fünftes Kapitel**

*Das In-Sein als solches*

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1st existential structure: *Befindlichkeit*
1\textsuperscript{st} existential structure: \textit{Befindlichkeit}

Greek: \textit{diathesis}
Befindlichkeit : gr. *diathesis*

“The affects (*pathe*) are not mental states, but refer to the disposition of the living in his world [*Befindlichkeit des Lebenden in seiner Welt*], how he stands to something, how he lets something affect or concern [*angehen*] him.”

(Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian philosophy*, SS 1924, GA 18, 122)
“By the very fact that a living being discloses a world, the Being of this being is also disclosed to it. It knows about itself even if only in the dullest way and the broadest sense. Along with the disclosure of the world, it is disclosed to itself.”

Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy*, SS GA 22, 208
The Animal's *Befindlichkeit*

« An affective disposition or attunement [*Befindlichkeit*], namely ἡδονη [enjoyment], is always constitutive of the Being of man. It is in general constitutive of the Being of a living being to be disposed in this or that way [*So-und-so Gestimmmtsein*] in relation to that with which and for which the living being exists. »

(Heidegger, Plato's Sophist, WS 1924-25, GA 19)
Aristotle's distinction between living beings (zōia) and merely living beings (oū zēn monon)
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« It is the possession of perception [aisthesis] that leads us for the first time to speak of living things as animals [zōia]: for even those beings which possess no power of local movement but do possess the power of perception we call animals [zōia] and not merely living beings [oū zēn monon] »

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« What differentiates the zen monon « the merely living or vegetating [das Nur-dahinleben, "Vegetieren"] » from the zoon - the living being in the sense of animals - is the fact that what is "merely living" [nur lebenden] is deprived of that which qualifies the zoon: aisthesis, perception [das Wahrnehmen]. »

(Heidegger, GA 33, 124)
Perception (*aisthesis*) and desire (*orexis*) as equiprimordial powers

“Where there is perception of something, self-orientation in a world, there is *lupe te kai hedone* [pain and pleasure], feeling oneself attuned in such and such a way, feeling well or ill, and thus also being open to, being on the lookout for: *orexis* [desire] (DA, 413b23)”

Heidegger, GA 22, 185-6

“Where there are feelings of pleasure and pain, there must be desire.”

(Aristotle, *De Anima*, 434a1)
Translating « orexis » (desire) as « Sorge » (care)
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Intentionality: a “volitional being-out-for-something and going toward it: orexis (desire)”

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Life's mobility is always a concerned mobility.  
(Lebensbewegtheit is always a Besorgensbewegtheit)  
(Natorp Bericht, 44)
The snail's being-in-the-world [1925]

“The snail is not in its shell like water in the glass, for it has the inside of its shell as a world which it pushes against and touches, in which it warms itself, and the like. None of this applies to the relationship of being of the water in the glass or, if it did, we would have to say even of the water that it has the mode of being of Dasein, that it is such that it has a world.”

(History of the Concept of Time, GA 20, 223)
“Animals are in the world in the sense of having it.” This “having” is “a pale expression for being-aware-of”
Heidegger, Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, (GA 18, 244)

“The world, in the character of hedu and luperon [pleasing and unpleasing], is nonobjective; animals do not have the world there as objects. Rather, the world is encountered in the mode of the uplifting and the upsetting.”
Heidegger, Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, (GA 18, 244)

“The affective as such already has the character of having-itself”
(GA 18, 247)
2\textsuperscript{nd} existential structure: Understanding (Verstehen)
The Existential Constitution of Da-sein

V. Being-in as Such

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Understanding must be taken « not in a theoretical sense, but in a practical one: to understand doesn't mean to know something, but to know your way around something, to know how to do something »

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\textbf{Umgang} (Dealings) = \textit{kinesis kata topon},
Movement from place to place
**Understanding** must be taken « not in a theoretical sense, but in a **practical** one: to understand doesn't mean to know something, but **to know your way around something**, to **know how** to do something »

(Heidegger, GA 22, 207)

**Umgang** (Dealings) =
* kinesis kata topon,
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“**Understanding** [Verstehen]
belongs to the mode of
Being of animals”

(Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy*, GA 22, 207)
Modalities of Understanding in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>(aisthesis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>(mneme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>(emperia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>(techne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>(episteme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>(sophia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Cf. Heidegger GA 22, 23-25)

*Aisthesis* is the most primitive form of *aletheuien*, “because it discloses the world, though indeed not in speech and assertion (*logos*)” (GA 22, 186), it is a form of uncovering that lets something be “known” in a certain sense.
The Genesis of the As-Structure

“We always see the world in an as. If I see something in the distance then I do not see something indeterminate. Instead we take it initially and mostly as something. This basic character of the world is possible through a definite manner of perceiving: krinein.”

(Heidegger, WS 1923-34, GA 17, 294)

The aisthesis of the animal already has the character of krisis, even in aisthesis, in normal perception, something is highlighted in relation to something else”

(Heidegger, GA 19, 39)

Synthetic nature of perception: something as something (a as b)

The “indicative as »
The “demonstrative As »
= The Apophantic As

The « As of Significance »
[die “Als” der Bedeutsamkeit] (GA 58)
The « Critical As »
[Das kritische “Als”] (GA 17)
= The Hermeneutical As
Animals also possess *phronesis* in a certain way» (GA 18, 235)
“If the living being were determined by aisthesis alone, then its world would extend only insofar as it sees, smells, etc. at any given moment. The living thing would be restricted to the sphere of what is immediately present-at-hand. Once it has μνήμη, however, the living thing becomes, in certain sense, free, no longer bound to the beings currently given in perception. [...] The living being dominates a broader scope of the world, which becomes and stays available to it. Its being-in-the-world no longer requires ever new perceptions; on the contrary, when it finds itself within the same position in a world-nexus, it already knows how matters are arranged. The living beings that have μνήμη are φρονιμώτερα, “more prudent,” they are “more able to see around [Umsichtiger]”: they do not live in the moment anymore, but in a whole which they dominate.”

Heidegger, Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy, GA 22, 209[170]
3rd existential structure:
Discourse (*Rede*) or Language (*Sprache*)
The existential constitution of \textit{Dasein}

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« Discourse [\textit{Die Rede}] is existentially equiprimodial with attunement/disposition [\textit{Befindlichkeit}] and understanding [\textit{Verstehen}]. »

Heidegger, \textit{Sein und Zeit}, 161
« The Greeks do not have a word for language [die Sprache], they initially understood this phenomena as discourse, talking [Rede]. »

Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, 165

Talking as talking with one another
[Rede als Miteinanderreden] (SZ, 165)
Dasein as Mitdasein

“The phenomenon of communication [Mitteilung : litt. sharing, dividing-with] must be understood in an ontologically broad sense.”

“He here the articulation of being-with-one-another understandingly is constituted. It brings about co-affection [Mitbefindlichkeit] and co-understanding [Mitverstehen].

Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, 162
Sounds produced by animals are **signs (semeion)** of their pleasure and pain and they use their **voice (phone)** to communicate these affections to each other.

(Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a8-14)

Birds use their voice to **communicate among themselves (pro hermeneian alloesis)** and to teach something to another.

(The Parts of Animals, 660a17-b2)

“Animal voice (phone) gives no report about the being-at-hand of what is pleasing: but rather this indication and crying out is in itself an enticing or warning. Enticing and warning have the character of addressing itself to...”

Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*
Animals' being-with-one-another

Genesis of the structure of being-with (*Mitsein*)

“Enticing and warning as repelling and attracting have in their ground *being-with-one-another* [*Miteinandersein*].

*Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie* (SS 1924), GA 18, 54
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Enticing and warning already show that animals are with one another. Being-with-one-another becomes manifest precisely in the specific being-character of animals as phone. It is neither exhibited nor manifested that something as such is there [...] they only indicate it within the orbit of their animalistic having-to-do.

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Since animals indicate the threatening, alarming and so on, they signal in this indicating of the being-there of the world, their own being in the world”.

Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie (SS 1924), GA 18, 54
What about human *Dasein*?
Human Dasein: Decision and Resolutedness

Human excellence rests not in theoretical, contemplative life, but in a certain kind of practical life endowed with logos: **deliberated action** (*praxis meta logou*).

Man the only living being “able-to-resolve-itself”

*(Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, GA 18, 254-6)*

“Humans because they possess an *aisthesis chronou* [‘sense of time’], can presentify *to mellon* [‘the future’] (433b7) as the possible and as that for the sake of which they act.”

*(Heidegger, Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy, GA 22, 311)*
A Primitive and Inauthentic *Dasein*?

Animals would have *Dasein*’s mode of being, but would be deprived of:

1. **PRIMITIVE DASEIN**: the possibility of considering the meaningful things with which they deal in their everyday lives as simply-being-there, as objective things existing independently of them (*vorhandene*). They would live in an *Umwelt* made out of meaning carriers with no place for a neutral object (Uexküll, Bergson, Scheler).

2. **INAUTHENTIC DASEIN**: the possibility of taking a step back from their everyday world of concerns to realize their own lapsing and their own finitude and appropriate their possibilities accordingly.
Toward the Animal's Deprivation of World

« Life is the mode of being of animals and plants. »


Aristotle's threefold distinction of the soul:

Vegetative  Animal  Human

Heidegger's twofold distinction:

Mere life  Existence
The death of an animal is only a **physio-biological end** without any existential meaning.

**Animals cannot really die because they are not really living**, they have **no lived experience**.
« The animal is a being for whom living, being-there [Da-sein] matters to it in some way. »

An animal is “a being to which we must attribute, in a formal way, the kind of being which belongs to Dasein”

Heidegger, History of the Concept of Time (1925)  
GA 20, 223