

ANXIETY-THE HARBINGER OF FREEDOM IN „BEING AND TIME”

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Abstract: *This paper will highlight the way in which anxiety represents the mood of freedom for Dasein. The first section will argue that at the level of the „they” Dasein is not free, and the second section is an approach to fear and it will highlight the way in which fear oppresses Dasein and steals its freedom. The third section shows that anxiety provides Dasein with all the necessary conditions to fulfill its freedom and Dasein can choose between authenticity and inauthenticity when it experiences anxiety.*

Keywords: anxiety, freedom, fear, authenticity, inauthenticity.

In „Being and Time”, Heidegger devotes an important role to the concept of anxiety. Anxiety is the most important mood of Dasein and through anxiety Dasein can gain its freedom.

In this paper, I will argue that anxiety is a basic state-of-mind of Dasein without which it cannot reach freedom. I will also argue that at the level of the „they”, Dasein is not free, that freedom is concealed. Dasein cannot be aware of its possibilities, and it is deprived of the possibility of choice. Contrary to Magrini’s paper¹, which argues that anxiety is the harbinger of authenticity, I will argue that anxiety is the harbinger of freedom. Anxiety is the sign of Dasein’s freedom, meaning Dasein is not thrown directly into authenticity; rather it is placed between authenticity and inauthenticity. Dasein is not projected into the freedom of authenticity, but it is projected into the freedom of choice and it is allowed to choose between an authentic and inauthentic existence. Dasein’s choice of itself does not imply automatically the choice of the authentic existence, but it implies the possibility of Dasein to choose between everydayness and authenticity: *„Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its Being- free for (propensio in...) the authenticity of its Being, and for this authenticity as a possibility which it always is. But at the same time, this is the Being to which Dasein as Being-in-the-world has been delivered over. That about which anxiety is anxious reveals itself as that in the face of which it is anxious- namely, Being-in-the-world”*.²

¹ J. Magrini, „Anxiety in Heidegger’s Being and Time: The Harbinger of Authenticity”, in *Philosophy Scholarship*, paper 15, 2006. <http://dc.cod.edu/philosophypub/15>.

² M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, pp. 232-233, author’s emphasis.

I will also point out that concerning the „they”, Dasein is dominated by fear, triggered by the Being within the world, by the covered up world, a fact that steals the freedom away from the Dasein, who is afraid and threatened by the entities around it. The quality of Being-with Others of Dasein determines Dasein to assess and to see itself through the eyes of the Others, whereas anxiety helps it to be free, to manifest its identity.

The „they” and the dissolution of Dasein in the Others

At the level of the „they”, Dasein is not a free being, because in relationships with others, it tries to minimize their importance for it, to be equal with them, even to differentiate itself from them. Frederick Olafson, as shown by Hubert Dreyfus, argues that Heidegger, unlike Husserl, demonstrates that Dasein moves from a relationship with its world towards a relationship with the world at large, in which it finds present-at-hand entities and ready-to-hand entities and a world where it has to confront Others. For as long as it exists, Dasein identifies itself with Others, is dominated by Others, and it is together with Others: „*Frederick Olafson, in his helpful account of the project of Being and Time, sees that Heidegger was trying to avoid a Husserlian account which started with my world and then moved to the world*”.³

Dasein meets the Others and it perceives them as they are, and it understands them as they define themselves through their actions, through how they act, and what they do: „*In that with which we concern ourselves environmentally the Others are encountered as what they are; they are what they do [sie sind das, was sie betreiben]*”.⁴

Dasein is dominated by the existence of Others and in the relationship with them, it should find a place where it could not manifest itself and its identity, but rather a place where it meets the trials of affirmation. The Others are identified as what they are and as to how they behave at the level of the „they” and are defined through their actions.

Through distantiality, leveling down, and averageness the „they” steals the freedom of Dasein, forcing it to lose its possibilities. In its attempt to get rid of the Others and to have a privileged status in

³ H.L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, Cambridge, MA, and London, The MIT Press, 1991, p. 142.

⁴ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p.163, author's emphasis.

comparison to them, Dasein is dominated by norms that dictate what is good and what is evil without giving any justification. Dasein always reads as one reads, it uses the tools according to the norms and it does not allow itself to be free and to manifest itself and its identity. The norm not only prevents Dasein from manifesting itself, but it annihilates its ability to manifest. The distantiality keeps Dasein preoccupied with the differences which appear between it and the Others and it automatically carries on with what is given to it at the public level. At the level of distantiality, Dasein is not free, it does not give itself the power to act according to its principles, but it falls under the authority of the Others: „*But this distantiality which belongs to Being-with, is such that Dasein, as everyday Being-with-one-another, stands in subjection [Botmässigkeit] to Others. It itself is not; its Being has been taken away by the Others*”.⁵

Once fallen, Dasein will not come back to anxiety, it flees from itself and moves on into a familiar world that provides its rules and norms and Dasein obeys without knowing itself. Its selfhood is replaced by the Others but not by specific Others; it is replaced by the „they”.

Even though the „they” has a positive function in terms of intelligibility of what can be shared at an everyday level, this function also has a negative aspect, because it creates conformity in the Dasein and when a norm is violated then it becomes a norm obeyed by all, and the Dasein has to follow it. For example, if people are taught to break the law in a certain community, Dasein is not free, and conforms to the violation imposed by the „they”, and the violation itself becomes a rule.

Through rules, leveling down, and distantiality, Dasein is at the same level as the Others, it has the same starting point, and the same endpoint in actions. Dasein thus submits to the „they” and the „they” becomes the most real subject of everyday life. Dasein as an individual is replaced by the „they”, which takes over its role. The Dasein is thus left without its role and becomes Being-with-one-another, a part that does not differentiate itself anymore because with the „they” comes the leveling down. Dasein submits to the convenience of Others, and the Others are not definite. Dasein is abiding by the principles imposed by the „they” and it is not in a relationship with itself but with the others. It lacks the determination to choose for itself, and the fact that merges with the familiarity of the Others takes away its freedom. The familiarity takes away the possibility of the Dasein to move towards itself, it holds Dasein back, concealed and passive at the level of inauthenticity. The role of the

⁵ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p.164, author’s emphasis.

Dasein in relationship with the „they” is a passive one because Dasein is not a creative being, but a being at the mercy of Others.

At the level of the „they”, any action is filtered by „what is appropriate” and by „what is expected”, therefore everything is leveled and Dasein is left without possibilities. The public space cannot be wrong and regulates the way Dasein understands itself as a Being. Dasein is not free because its responsibility is taken away from it. If freedom means the ability to make decisions, then at the level of the „they”, Dasein is not free. Its dissolution happens when it interacts with the world that is around it. Even if the „they” is part of the existential constitution of Dasein, it steals its freedom. In the everydayness, at the level of the „they”, Dasein is under the influence of the affect and is defined by fear.

Fear as a means to steal the freedom of Dasein

Heidegger looks at fear from a threefold point of view: the fact that one is afraid, the thing that one is afraid of, and the thing that one is afraid for. The structure of fear is not random, argues Heidegger - through it, the basic mood is revealed. Fear appears because of Dasein’s concern for the equipment and it also appears because of Dasein’s relation to Others. It is threatened by something it does not know well and this menace comes from the entities within-the-world: *„That in the face of which we fear, the ‘fearsome’, is in every case something which we encounter within-the-world and which may have either readiness-to-hand, presence-at-hand, or Dasein-with as its kind of Being”*.⁶

By getting used to living in a familiar and comfortable world, Dasein can experience something unsettling that steals its freedom. If for example, within the tool-wise framework, we are afraid of an ax blow this is because at the level of the „they” we have been taught that the ax blow is detrimental. So, when these objects are not in our proximity, we do not feel the threat, we only feel it when the „they” is nearby because a blow can cause our death and we perceive this blow as „not yet”. The fear is represented by Dasein as Being-with-one-another. We are afraid for ourselves but also for another Dasein as Being-with-one-another. For example, the fear of death comes out of the fact that at the level of the „they”, death is supposed to be a mere demise and it is not understood as a possibility. Dominated by this fear, Dasein is not free to face death

⁶ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p. 179, author’s emphasis.

as a possibility. We are told that death is a fearsome issue and that is why the Dasein is not free to choose it as a non-relational, outstripped, and ownmost possibility. The fear limits Dasein, constrains it to be passive, and pushes it to run away from itself.

The fact that the Others can be taken away from us shows us that we do not understand Others in their individuality but only as Being-with-one-another. Fear, as Heidegger argues, conceals the truth, so it conceals death as a possibility. The loss of someone is understood as annihilation and Dasein cannot understand its death through fear because it considers that death is not something that belongs to the realm of „what is mine”.

At the level of the „they”, fear controls the life of Dasein and Dasein is not able to be free because it is dominated by this state-of-mind. Fear, as downgraded anxiety, instead of making Dasein free, forces it to be the prisoner of the things that can destroy it. Fear as a reaction to the threat of death seems to be an automatic and primitive reaction to what the environment offers us. As a mechanism of defense, the „they” forces Dasein to rest in inauthenticity, it does not allow it to choose for itself, but it forces it to stay in the everyday comfort where Dasein is threatened as much as the Others. By running away from itself because of fear, Dasein preserves itself in order not to face death. Fear means being on the lookout at the everyday level - it is a mood which having been produced by the „they”, makes the fearsome come nearby. „*Fearing, as a slumbering possibility of Being-in-the-world in a state-of-mind (we call this possibility ‘fearfulness’ [„Furchtsamkeit”]), has already disclosed the world, in that out of it something like the fearsome may come close*”.⁷

Fear predicts what will happen in the future. The threat projects Dasein in a state of predicting, of talking about probabilities regarding its Being, so under its impetus it is no longer free to choose.

The threatening thing one is afraid of is that which decides instead of Dasein. Dasein is free to choose between authenticity and inauthenticity, it is free to choose to become anxious, but once it falls, it cannot be free at the level of the „they”. Fear conceals the Being of Dasein. For example, if one deals with a war that one is afraid of, the glory of man is not uncovered through fear, but it is disclosed through anxiety. If one is afraid of the death of another, if one can empathize with the other, one cannot understand death as a possibility. Death is for

⁷ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p. 180.

Dasein its ownmost possibility, non-relational and outstripped and it is at the same time the accomplishment of freedom for Dasein.

Death, as belonging to oneself, represents the plenitude of Dasein, it is that „not yet” which Dasein understands at the level of anxiety, where it becomes free and where it is a Being-towards-death. Thus, fear is an aspect of the everydayness in which Dasein loses its freedom. As the fear is a mood of Dasein, a downgraded anxiety, it takes part in the existential constitution of Dasein. Fear represents the highest degree of Being-with-one-another because it represents the fear of death for Dasein itself and the Other. Fear of death represents the climax of being together with Others. Dasein loses itself, it is afraid of losing itself, and then the hope for the last accomplishment of understanding death as a possibility is lost. It loses the possibility to understand its existence authentically.

Anxiety as the harbinger of freedom

Unlike fear, where Dasein is afraid of being dominated by something threatening, anxiety reveals to Dasein its alienation from the world. The context of involvements and the context of references disappear, and the world appears to Dasein in its insignificance: „Therefore, the totality of involvements of the ready-to-hand and present-at-hand within-the-world is of no significance in the case of anxiety”.⁸

In many cases, one does not make a distinction between fear and anxiety, the two concepts being interchangeable: „Of course, it still remains obscure how this is connected ontologically with fear. Obviously, these are kindred phenomena. This is betokened by the fact that for the most part they have not been distinguished from one another: that which is fear, gets designated as ‘anxiety’, while that which has the character of anxiety, gets called fear”.⁹

Through the moods, the entities we see in the world are disclosed and they reveal the world as a whole. The moods that blind us are negative. Anxiety highlights the insignificance of the world, the world as a whole, and fear blinds Dasein and oppresses it through the present-at-hand entities, and it neither allows Dasein to understand its possibilities nor to become anxious to attain authenticity. Before talking about Dasein as being a rational Being, Heidegger stresses the emotions

⁸A. Keikhaee and S.Bell, „On the Concept of Anxiety in Heidegger’s Thought”, in *Intl. J. Humanities*, 23(1), 2016, pp. 1–26, p. 7.

⁹ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p. 230.

and the moods which disclose the world to Dasein –as either being in hiddenness or un-hiddenness. It might be said that there are two ways of uncovering the world through the moods: a way in which the world is disclosed in its hiddenness, as a world of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand entities, or in a way that frees the world from its hiddenness and that is disclosed in the world of possibilities of Dasein. Firstly, and for the most part, the world seems to be disclosed through weak moods. Then, Dasein struggles with itself to reach the breakdown and to arrive at strong moods, such as anxiety. At this point, Dasein is free to understand its possibilities, it is open to authenticity, but at the same time, it can choose to fall and go towards inauthenticity. Magrini highlights the perspective of anxiety as a harbinger of authenticity while in fact, anxiety is also the possibility to choose inauthenticity. „*For the sake of its potentiality-for-Being, any Dasein is as it factually is. But to the extent that this Being towards its potentiality-for-Being is itself characterized by freedom, Dasein can comport itself towards its possibilities, even unwillingly; it can be inauthentically; and factually it is inauthentically, proximally and for the most part*”.¹⁰

Anxiety determines Dasein to be aware of its freedom of choice, and the freedom towards death is disclosed to Dasein through anticipation. Freedom provided through anticipation is already contained in anxiety and it determines Dasein to be free towards death: We may now summarize our characterization 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*”.¹¹

Anxiety reveals to Dasein, on the one hand, the possibility of authenticity, and on the other hand, its potential choice of being locked at the level of inauthenticity. Anxiety is the link between authenticity and inauthenticity, and when it finds itself in anxiety it is free to choose itself. Dasein understands itself starting from its existence and understands itself as being or as not being itself. On the one hand, this determines Dasein to single itself out and to get closer to its death, allowing it to reach supreme freedom. On the other hand, it allows it to fall in inauthenticity, guaranteeing its freedom. Freedom – as a determination of the selfhood attained by Dasein – is always found in anxiety and it is

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 237.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 311, author's emphasis.

always a burden for Dasein. As Being-towards-death is the supreme sign of the freedom of Dasein, anxiety gives Dasein access to this experience of death. The fact that Dasein faces the world as a whole and is devoid of significance makes Dasein free. Dasein has now the possibility to see the world as a whole, to understand its possibilities, and to think about its death or to fall in the „they”.

Anxiety is not a meaningless mood, but it reveals to Dasein the world as a whole and the possibility to choose between an authentic and inauthentic existence. Therefore, Dasein is anxious about its Being-in-the-world and it is free to choose to choose. If Dasein is anxious about its freedom, it is anxious about its Being-in-the-world and of the decisions it can make. Dasein is Being-in-the-world, it is not threatened by this or that, but it is threatened by its freedom. Dasein is pushed towards itself and towards being in a way or another. In anxiety, we are not dealing with the complete self, but the self from which Dasein can choose whether it falls in the „they” or whether it ascends to its consciousness and listens to its call. In anxiety, Dasein does not see only the possibility of its fall and its thrownness, but it also sees the possibility of death, authenticity, and inauthenticity.

To choose the possibilities means to choose if you can live freely or not. Only in anxiety, it can determine whether it reaches authenticity and itself, or whether it descends in inauthenticity because the anxiety helps it to see the world as a whole, in its indeterminacy, and helps it decide where it will position itself. In anxiety, Dasein can understand the Being of entities, because it sees the world as large and as a whole, and thus, Dasein is free, because through anxiety the concept of freedom may be intelligible.

If we disclosed the world only through reason and without moods, this would imply that we cannot talk about love, fear, faith, or anxiety. These moods show us the dwelling of Dasein in the world, how the entities are in reality because without Dasein we cannot talk about beings. Anxiety shows the real nature of the human being, and it enables the human being to be authentic, but at the same time, it allows them to remain in inauthenticity.

The mood represents the way in which Dasein experiences the world. What I notice within-the-world may be different from one moment to another, according to the mood I experience at that moment. For example, one can be happy for a small achievement, or one can be sad because of a failure. The mood is larger than the emotion, it belongs to the self, and it is not connected only to one aspect of one's

experience. The emotion can be a reaction to a certain stimulus, while the mood is what defines me at a certain moment. Even if the emotions and the moods are different, there is a causal relation between them.

While the concept of anxiety in psychiatry shows the human being as avoiding to do anything, Heidegger singles out Dasein through anxiety, Dasein does not run away from the entities within-the-world, and it becomes their master; it does not run away from itself, it is not avoidant, but it faces death and the most difficult elements of existence. It takes over the world with lucidity and it is anxious about the world as a whole, which it understands in anxiety. Even if in anxiety it does not choose its existence and its historicity, Dasein can choose the way its existence can take. Dasein has now the freedom to see its potential into becoming an authentic being.

At the level of inauthenticity, the potential of Dasein to be free is hidden, and only at the level of anxiety, this potential is freed from its hiddenness: „*As Dasein is individuated through the slipping away of the familiar world, it is forced to look upon its own significance and potentiality. It acknowledges its thrownness and can either embrace it or succumb to it. If it embraces its thrownness, it can identify itself as a free agent, responsible for its own life and projects, and will therefore not allow public interpretation to dominate its will. If it instead succumbs to it, it will consider the fact that it did not choose to exist to be an indication of its overall powerlessness, and therefore see its life as beyond its control, allowing itself to be dragged along in the hustle of Das Man, or ‘the They’*”.¹²

Starting from the mood, from the fact that I am in the mood of writing a book, and in the mood of being afraid of something, I choose how to use the tools – what tools to use and what I have available to use. If fear is a mood oriented towards an entity within this world, then anxiety is not oriented to a certain entity, it shows the world as a whole, the nothing and the nowhere, which are not nothingness or void, but represent the world as a whole. In this overall view, the human being is freed from this or that fear, from this or that concern, from this or that duty, and it may understand itself as a Being-towards-death.

Even if the moods can be managed and even if the crying and the fear can be controlled, this does not mean that the mood does not exist, and it is not the first way we come in contact with things near us. Take for example a monk. How could we judge the so-called authentic

¹² S.M. Mowat, *How Do We Understand Anxiety? A Heideggerian Approach to Modern Psychiatry*, Unpublished master's dissertation defended at the University of Edinburgh, 2009, pp. 1-53, p. 23.

existence of a monk, who may compensate anxiety with faith? Faith is a changed anxiety taken in the direction of indeterminacy, but this anxiety does not concern the world as a whole, it concerns something which is beyond the world, which cannot offer an authentic existence because it does not take us to ourselves. This kind of changed anxiety cannot replace the concept of anxiety in Heideggerian terms. Two lovers cannot experience anxiety because anxiety requires a return to the world and to its insignificance. They fall in love with someone from this world, the object of their desire is definite, and they fall under the „they” when they are in love.

The fact that the fear and the anxiety can be described and explained in words is secondary to the fact that they reveal the world to Dasein. Putting into words what anxiety is, the description of fear, love, and joy does not represent an argument against the idea that through these moods, the world is disclosed for Dasein. We cannot deny that apart from the fearsome within-the-world, as is the case for example with the poisonous snake, we are afraid that we have lost time in vain. This fear is dissimulated in regret and in the fear of death understood as demise.

The idea of having lost time in vain, makes me reflect upon my looming demise, upon the fact that I am getting old, and upon the reality that I cannot make up for the time I lost. However, this reflection upon what I have experienced, what I did wrong, or how I used my life in specific situations, cannot be mistaken for anxiety. Anxiety does not represent the regret about failure, it is not a psychological issue, it is not a frustration, but it represents the ordering of the world as a whole. The world appears as a whole, it is defined through past, present, and future; the temporality as we understand it at the level of inauthenticity is abolished.

Anxiety is not a trauma or a regret, but it is a vague mood and it is a general dissatisfaction concerning the world and not a dissatisfaction about the way I live in this world. The world, in general, includes Dasein, but not Dasein as itself that did this or that. Anxiety does not know what it is anxious for, while someone who is afraid that he has lost time in vain, is afraid of something specific.

However, when it is afraid, Dasein is dealing with the within-the-world definite beings and sees them as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand entities, and when it is at the level of anxiety, Dasein is dealing with a world devoid of content. Suddenly, the entities lose their significance, the world is not formed anymore of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand

entities: „the world has the character of completely lacking significance. In anxiety, one does not encounter this thing or that thing which, as something threatening, must have an involvement. Accordingly, when something threatening brings itself close, anxiety does not ‘see’ any definite ‘here’ or ‘yonder’ from which it comes”.¹³

The role of anxiety is to put Dasein face to face with the insignificance of the world and with itself and allow it to disclose itself. In contrast to anxiety, fear appears at the level of everydayness, at the level of the „they”, and anxiety appears when we open the way to authenticity. Anxiety is placed at the ontological level, while fear is ontically defined. Anxiety helps Dasein to choose to choose because it reveals to Dasein authenticity as possibility, and because it is a forerunner of inauthenticity, anxiety also reveals to Dasein the level of everydayness. Anxiety puts forward to Dasein the Being-in-the-world with the present and the past of Dasein, as well as with the responsibility for its future. It is free to reach authenticity, to get rid of the averageness of the „they”, which is represented by the fatal fall. Despite the fatal fall into the „they”, it can choose and reach the authenticity, where it can deal with itself honestly, where it can understand death as a possibility, where it can escape the norms, and it escapes from the everyday life and from everything that takes away its freedom. „Dasein is revealed to itself as Being-possible”.¹⁴

Dasein chooses to choose and it does not obey the flow of ordinary things. At the level of the „they”, this flow confers the comfort which makes it run away from anxiety, from confronting itself, but at the level of anxiety, it regains the possibility to choose. If at the level of the „they” we are dealing with many limitations, when it comes to anxiety everything is uncertain, the only un-limiting limitation of Dasein is the fact that it is aware of its finitude and its death as its ownmost possibility. This possibility of Dasein is not a limiting one, but it is a possibility which Dasein owns in the resoluteness to discover and choose itself.

Anxiety, as an integrated part of consciousness, calls Dasein to choose. If the fall is fatal, at one point in Dasein’s existence, the anxiety is a breakdown that can push Dasein to authenticity; it is a breakdown that may not be produced if it’s not caused by Dasein. Dasein chooses to be anxious and in this way, it attains freedom. In anxiety, Dasein is called by the consciousness to be free, to be aware of the temporality of

¹³ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962, p. 1231.

¹⁴ A. Keikhaee and S. Bell, „On the Concept of Anxiety in Heidegger’s Thought”, in *Intl. J. Humanities*, 23(1), 2016, pp. 1-26, p. 7.

existence, and to understand its original guilt. We are free towards death because, in this way, we are aware of the finitude. If the fear means to be locked in existence, anxiety is persistence in non-existence. Anxiety has a critical nature, and the beings are grounded in the Being in general: „Anxiety, then, for Heidegger is critical, as it confronts nothingness on route to an authentic existence where being finds grounding in Being”.¹⁵

Neither fear, nor anxiety should be compared to the concept of fear and anxiety from psychiatry, because they are ontological concepts, placed at the boundary between an authentic and inauthentic existence: „Anxiety as a mental health issue is not equivalent to the anxiety that we are in our average everyday-ness and must be conceptualized and approached in a much different manner”.¹⁶

When we are afraid, we are vulnerable in front of what is threatening. In anxiety, our existential positioning is changed. We are our possibilities and not our vulnerability. This does not mean that anxiety steals the world from us, but it only changes our existential positioning. Dasein individualizes itself through anxiety and frees itself because the entities within-the-world, those it was afraid of or those it should have used in a certain way, do not have meaning anymore.

The consciousness of the world is different from the call of the consciousness towards alienation. This strange area of Dasein frees Dasein from the domination of the world, snatching it from being at the mercy of the „they” and pushing it towards itself. Nothingness is not a „not to be” or a negation, but it is revelatory for Dasein. In anxiety, Dasein individualizes itself and in its individuation, it hears the call of its consciousness, which makes Dasein liable for its existence. Anxiety does not offer Dasein through its freedom a series of norms it should obey, but it makes it capable to choose to choose and it is free to choose its existence. The freedom of Dasein implies responsibility for its existence, before being a responsibility for Others. Given the fact that Dasein is with one another, it is free in its possibilities, but it is responsible for the world it lives in.

Therefore, the freedom of Dasein is accomplished in transcendence, rather than in immanence. Freedom is given to Dasein through thrownness, but it chooses deliberately to become anxious in order to manage this freedom. At the level of the „they”, once fallen, the

¹⁵ D. Caivano and H. Murphy, „Revealing and Acting: Anxiety and Courage in Heidegger and Arendt”, in *Spectra*, 6(1), 2017 <https://doi.org/10.21061/spectra.v6i1.4001.400>, pp. 1-11, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

freedom of Dasein is lost. Dasein does not consent to the abduction of its freedom, it lives the illusion of its deliberate choices, but if it is not anxious, it loses this freedom.

At the level of the „they”, Dasein is powerless and it cannot distinguish between what is concealed and what is true. Anxiety represents the relationship of Dasein with death. Through the fact that anxiety helps Dasein to be the master of itself, it helps it to be towards death and to be its master. Death is imminent; it is something that is in front of us, in our horizon of experience. When it comes to death, we are dealing with the absolute individuality of Dasein and death is still an unfulfilled possibility of Dasein.

Anxiety is a constitutive state of mind of Dasein, a variation of fear, which guarantees the freedom of Dasein. By calling Dasein towards its consciousness, by defining its relation to death, this deliberate choice of Dasein is part of its constitution of Being. It can be anxious and through the fact that anxiety makes Dasein choose to choose, it can understand that it is free into death, and that it can fulfill itself as a complete Dasein, understanding death as a possibility.

Conclusion

Anxiety is that mood of Dasein that places it between authenticity and inauthenticity and which offers it the freedom to choose. This special positioning of Dasein allows it to make use of its existence exactly how it desires. Anxiety is not a random mood, but it is a superior state of mind that prevents Dasein from being lost in the anonymity of obedience.