

---

## To things themselves. Martin Heidegger's contribution to the meta-theory of the I-subject

Paolo Milanesi\*

ABSTRACT. – The author claims that during psychoanalysis the psychoanalyst implicitly seeks (using implicit theories) the patient's being and this would be auspicious but, according to Heidegger's thought, he also considers it difficult or perhaps impossible due to an oblivion of the being as a result of the traditional metaphysics based on Cartesian thought. Hence, he exposes, in a brief explanation, a part of the philosopher's thought and suggests bringing the Heideggerian ontology into the psychoanalysis room. Through the opening of his being man 'exists' and existence indicates only the *ex-sistere* of human life, his 'ekstatic' character in the sense of his 'being outside himself' and being exposed to 'possibilities', to his 'not yet being', which needs to be 'planned' and decided. The Author proposes a parallelism with some concepts of Michele Minolli's meta-theory of the I-subject and also mentions a reinterpretation of the concept of investment understood as signification and expression of being; lastly, he questions whether in the analytic process the couple, patient and analyst, can get in contact with each other's 'being' or whether this is just pure utopia.

*Key words:* To be; possibility of being; openness; projection; metaphysics.

### Introduction

What happens in the psychoanalysis room? What do we look for as psychoanalysts? We could simply say that we are searching for the patient, or rather trying to understand who the patient 'is'.

Who 'is' the patient?

I believe every psychoanalyst tries to answer this fundamental question.

In other words, we could say that we are searching for the 'being' of the patient and that ultimately, we accompany the patient towards entering in contact with his/her being and it is plausible that we pursue this in an implicit way, through the use of implicit theories.

---

\*Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Psychoanalyst and SIPRe - IFPS Supervisor. Lecturer at the SIPRe course of high specialization in Psychoanalysis of the Child in the Family. Member of the Cultural Association "OttoCentro". E-mail: paolomilanesi@icloud.com

## Implicit theories

Which are these theories? First of all, I must state that they are theories that are historically situated (the *Weltanschauung* or worldview); furthermore, following the indications of Professor Claudia Baracchi (2020) it is useful to revisit the etymon of the word theory, from the Greek *theoria* (θεωρία), made up of *thea* (a show as in theatre) and *horan* (to see); paying particular emphasis to the ‘seeing’ as the outcome of the action of a sense organ which establishes the theory in the sensory realm. Even in an imaginary sense, ‘seeing’ like ‘touching’; touching as a meeting of glances and thus of lights: the interior light of the human eye meets and touches the light of the world, from which we get the philosophical ‘view’. Hence, the juxtaposition theory and practice is overturned and given new meaning: practice and sensory experience precede the theory which derives from these and not the other way round.

It is to this meaning of theory that I refer to when I mention ‘implicit theory’. Again, we always have an (implicit) theory to represent our approach and our movement towards the knowledge of something that concerns man.

There are also theories that are studied in books but in the end every theory is implicit. These accompany us and organize themselves in time, structuring our own ‘being’ through our stories and condensing it into an idea, which is implicit, of a human that, willingly or not, we carry within ourselves.

These theories are very important, they even include aspects of the subjectivity of the psychoanalyst that are not always acknowledged by the analyst such as their own implicit relational knowledge (Lyons-Ruth, 1998) that can be considered an (implicit) theory; so too for this reason it is useful to bring them to light (for example with personal psychoanalysis) because even if they are not known, or maybe exactly for this reason, they act in our being with patients, in the way we present ourselves to them and in the investments we make with them. No matter how much we try and work to make these theories explicit, within which I include even our own epistemological referents, this is not always possible and so, often, our clinical work remains in part invisible to our eyes.

Consequently, an important question emerges that concerns these epistemological-theoretical referents of the psychoanalyst. On the one hand the psychoanalyst is connected in a general sense with the idea of being a human that resides within the psychoanalyst and with the idea that he/she has of how a human being evolves and can change, on the other hand, and in a more specific sense, he/she has to deal with the objective and with the method of analysis.

It is thus important that the psychoanalyst is, as far as possible, in touch with his/her real intentions regarding these two issues and knows that their influences overlap in part; moreover, it is possible that there is an

incongruence between the implicit theoretical referents and those to which the psychoanalyst considers to explicitly refer to.

The biggest incongruence, I would even say a universal Western implying, concerns the 'being' that we think we are accommodating but that instead remains hidden, it remains 'forgotten' (Heidegger, 1971).

In other words when we say, 'I am', or 'the patient is': what do we mean?

When Michele Minolli wrote: '*I am and I love you*' or, '*The Ego-subject asserts itself*' (Minolli & Coin, 2007), what does he mean? What is the meaning of that I am? And what is the point of it asserting itself?

Every theory (implicit, explicit, psychoanalytic, and not) that is the basis for therapeutic intervention, conveys an idea of 'being' human; but, in the wake of Heidegger's way of thinking, this in truth 'hides' the sense of being. It is inevitable to therefore ask this ontological question of the sense of being, of how to see it and accommodate it.

## Heidegger and phenomenology

According to Heidegger, phenomenology means: *to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself* (Heidegger, 1971, p. 303). This refers full-bore: 'to things themselves'.

Ontology therefore identifies itself with phenomenology. The phenomenological concept of phenomenon means that the being of the being auto-manifests itself, in its meaning, in its modifications and in its derivatives. 'Behind' the being of the being there cannot be absolutely anything else that 'does not appear'. Behind the phenomena of phenomenology there is nothing more.

'Being covered' is the opposite concept of 'phenomenon'. *Phenomenology is the science of essences: ontology* (ibid). Consequently, the point is to ask ourselves what is being and what sense does it have? The question is crucial and as I have already mentioned, the answer to it is often implicit but erroneous.

What is the sense of being? From this point forward let us consider the terms 'being' and 'object' as synonyms; the first originates from philosophy and the second is typically used in psychoanalysis. Heidegger maintains that the history of Western philosophical thought has 'forgotten' the sense of being and that it is now understood fundamentally as 'simple-presence' (Heidegger, 1971); the term presence in this case must be interpreted in the sense of an 'existing' being and the term existing should be understood traditionally as present in reality, objectifying reality itself.

If for certain aspects, in present common sense, the word 'existence' indicates the subsisting in effective reality, contrastingly for Heidegger existence indicated uniquely the *ex-sistence* of human life, its 'ekstatic'

character in the sense of its 'being outside itself' and being exposed to 'possibilities', to its 'not yet', that demands being 'projected' and decided (Vattimo, 1971).

*Above 'reality' is possibility. The comprehension of phenomenology consists exclusively in seizing it as a possibility* (Heidegger, 1971, p. 308). The German term for existence *Dasein*, literally means 'being there' and this expresses well the fact that existence, for Heidegger, is not defined only as a passing beyond that transcends reality given in the direction of 'possibility', but that this surpassing is always about something, that is, it is always concretely situated: *there is*. 'Existence, *Dasein* and being in the world' are almost always synonyms. All three concepts indicate the fact that man is situated in a dynamic way, that is, in the world of 'potentiality for being' or even, as Heidegger will specify in 'Being and Time', in the form of a 'projection' (Heidegger, 1971).

The sense of being of man has been undermined in its foundations since the birth of anthropology (initially from the Ancient Greek way of thinking and then subsequently from Christianity) (Heidegger, 1971), whose insufficient ontological grounds have penetrated into psychology and subsequently into psychoanalysis.

Traditional anthropology is based on two implying: The conception of man, at the time of Greek tradition, as a rational animal; animal understood as a simple presence and occurrence. Rationality understood as an instrument that is more elevated, whose way of being is not less obscure than that of the being that is conceived (Heidegger, 1971). The other implying at the basis of the conception of the being and the essence of man has theological origins: '*we make of man our own image and similarity*'. This theological infiltration in anthropology has brought about a conception of the being of man that is no different from being God, and even if in the course of modern times the Christian definition has been de-theologised, the idea of transcendence, according to which man is something that exists beyond a physical level, has its roots in Christian dogmatics and this idea of transcendence, for which man is something more than an intelligent being, has exerted its influence in various ways (Heidegger, 1971). These two implying indicate that in defining the essence of man we have forgotten the problem of its being, considering it as obvious in the sense of being simply-present and common to all other real objects.

## Descartes and the dichotomy of mind and body

The implying of Greek tradition and the theological one intersect in modern anthropology and in psychology through the methodological approach that is inspired by Cartesian thinking founded on the separation

between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, that is, mind and body. The theoretical foundations of traditional psychoanalysis have been influenced by the Cartesian doctrine of the mind, understood as isolated (separate), and this has determined a consequent division of the subjective world into two categories: internal and external. The reification of this separation is thus the conception of the mind as an entity that is positioned between other objects, 'something that thinks', with its own contents, compared to the external world from which it remains foreign. In Western culture, Cartesian philosophy has infiltrated in the course of the centuries into the common way of thinking and, through the implicit concept of isolated mind (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992) it has also entered the psychoanalytic field in a permanent manner, but in the last 40 years certain theories have shown an attempt at reorienting the basis of psychoanalysis deviating from their Cartesian conceptual derivation: the *relational track* of Psychoanalysis in particular, represented by the works of Mitchell & Aron (1999) and the meta-theory of the I-subject by Michele Minolli (2015).

If before, we spoke about isolated subjectivities (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992) that were separately 'curable', today minds are no longer considered isolated but intrinsically interconnected (Aron, 1996; Beebe & Lachmann, 2002; Milanese, 2015; Tronick, 2007). We have moved from a mono-personal psychology to a bi- or multi-personal psychology (Aron, 1996; Lichtenberg *et al.*, 1996; Mitchell & Aron, 1999), from an intrapsychic idea of development to an interactive conception (Milanese & De Robertis, 2013; Tronick, 2007).

This evolution in psychoanalytic discourse indicates, without a doubt, a movement towards overcoming a Freudian vision that is totally inscribed in the positivist and reductionist 19<sup>th</sup> century scientific paradigm that is based on concepts like cause-effect linearity, linear time, the fragmented search and deconstruction of constituent elements of a phenomenon, an idea of reality as unique, objective, external and separate/independent from the observer; in short, a passage to what is defined as the complex paradigm, which seems to overcome the ancient Cartesian conception (Bocchi & Ceruti, 2007). Instead, I believe the breakthrough of complexity is not enough and is probably not even directed at overcoming the oblivion of being intrinsic to various theoretical approaches aimed at understanding human beings. It is not sufficient to recognize the dichotomizing effect of Cartesian thought to overcome the dichotomy: this dichotomy is insinuated in the end of being and cannot be overcome 'in theory', but only in the 'effective ways of being'.

Referring again to Descartes, indeed, it is necessary to say that in *cogito ergo sum* he never explained the sense of 'sum' and thus even the *cogitationes* remain ontologically indeterminate (Heidegger, 1971), *id est*, again they are employed, in the various disciplines of study, in an implicitly obvious way as something that is a given, whose being does not raise any

doubt. The problem remains outstanding regarding its ontological foundations and this is identifiable even within the concept of 'mind' as expressed above.

*'(...) if we posit an 'I' or subject as that which is proximally given, we shall completely miss the phenomenal content of Dasein. Ontologically, every idea of a 'subject'-unless refined by a previous ontological determination of its basic character-still posits the 'subjectum' along with it, no matter how vigorous one's ontical protestations against the 'soul substance' or the 'reification of consciousness'. The Thinghood itself which such reification implies must have its ontological origin demonstrated if we are to be in a position to ask what we are to understand positively when we think of the unreified Being of the subject, the soul, the consciousness, the spirit, the person.'* (Heidegger, 1971).

We can say that without this preliminary analysis, the definition of subject is ontologically inadequate: *'For the ontological concept of the subject characterizes not the Self-hood of the 'I' qua Self, but the selfsameness and steadiness of something that is always present-at-hand. To define the 'I' ontologically as 'subject' means to regard it as something always present-at-hand. The Being of the 'I' is understood as the Reality of the res cogitans.'* (ibid.)

Thus, normally, the topic of relationship with the being on behalf of man and of various psychological, anthropological, sociological theories etcetera, has not been touched upon, in fact it is hidden, mystified through objectivizations, and indeed forgotten.

### A new way of thinking about the being

The Heideggerian idea is that man has 'potentiality for being'. The 'potentiality for being' represents the sense itself of *existence*. To discover that man is that entity that *is* because he relates with his own being and his own possibility, that is, that he is alone as he 'can' be, this means discovering

---

<sup>1</sup> *'Descartes has narrowed down the question of the world to that of Things of Nature [Naturdinglichkeit] as those entities within-the-world which are proximally accessible. He has confirmed the opinion that to know an entity in what is supposedly the most rigorous ontical manner (see footnote on next page) is our only possible access to the primary Being of the entity which such knowledge reveals. But at the same time we must have the insight to see that in principle the 'roundings-out' of the Thing-ontology also operate on the same dogmatic basis as that which Descartes has adopted (...). Being in general the horizon within which its intelligibility becomes possible, so that readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand also become primordially intelligible ontologically for the first time, only then can our critique of the Cartesian ontology of the world (an ontology which, in principle, is still the usual one today) come philosophically into its own.'* (Heidegger, 1971)

that the general and specific character of man, his nature or essence is existence. '*The essence of man lies in his existence*' (Heidegger, 1976).

Terms like nature, essence or existence should be written inside of quotation marks because they are dense with historical meaning and liable to great misunderstandings; if indeed we say that man is defined by his 'potentiality for being', that is, from the fact that he relates to his own being just like to his possibility, what sense is there in speaking for him of essence and nature? According to traditional metaphysics, when we speak of the nature of an entity, we mean the collection of constituent characters (ontic<sup>2</sup>) that this entity possesses and without which he is not what he is. But to say that the nature of man and of the 'potentiality for being' is the same as saying that his nature is not to have a nature or essence. From this the affirmation that existence precedes essence comes about. All complexity emerges from the meaning of the word 'existence': something that exists is understood generally as something real, that is, as mentioned above, something simply present. Besides, the supreme being of metaphysics, God, is also eternal, *id est*, with a total presence that is universal and unmodifiable (Vattimo, 1971). However, if man is 'potentiality for being' his way of being is that of possibility and not of reality. To say that man exists cannot therefore mean that he is something that is a given, because in fact, what he has that is specific and that differentiates him from things is precisely the fact that he can relate to possibilities, and hence the fact of not existing as a reality that is simply present. The term existence, for man, must be comprehended in the etymological sense of *ex-sistere*, being outside himself, overstepping simply present reality, in the direction of possibility. If we understand this term existence in this way, it can only be applied to man.

Michele Minolli (2017) would say that life is what is, that each one of us is what we are; and he believed that the deepest and most difficult level to reach is going to 'experience first-hand' this level without long digressions on what we should or would like to be. Michele Minolli stated: '*it is not a question of giving up, it's about reaching what we are and starting from there, not from what we are not.*' I think it is useful and possible to give more grounds to this simple yet profound statement. The way to do this takes root in asking ourselves the ontological question of the sense of being and how to accommodate it; in moving towards 'things themselves' through the use of Heidegger's phenomenology starting from Husserl (1992), who was for that matter his teacher.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ontic is a neologism introduced by Heidegger to distinguish the determinations that refer to the entity in its immediacy and thus in its categories according to the traditional way of thinking, understood according to a non-philosophical attitude, that must be distinguished from ontological determinations that refer to the entity considered in its 'essence', that is, in its specific way of being.

The phenomenon, understood phenomenologically, is always and only that which constitutes being, and the being is always the being, even in that object that we call man.

Thus, the study of the being of man highlights, not the collection of properties that determine his reality, but always and only the possible ways of being of man himself. *‘That kind of Being towards which Dasein can comport itself in one way or another, and always does comport itself somehow, we call ‘existence’.*

It is interesting to note that the resonance and the meanings that are activated in us when we read this article and when we meet the words that respectively decline or conjugate the noun being or the verb to be. Some disorientation is possible that makes you oscillate between understanding being or even better *Dasein* (while one reads), and objectifying the content of what is written, considering it *res cogitans*. *Dasein* has in itself the capacity to understand itself in being in some way.

*‘Understanding potentiality for-Being, which, in its Being, makes an issue of that Being itself. In every case, I myself am the entity which is in such a manner.’* (ibid.)

How must we act in the psychoanalytic setting in order to search for the being of patients? What are the implications that guide us? Where is our being? Where are we?

The essential basis of *Dasein* cannot be found by exhibiting the objective content of ‘something’, but rather its essence consists in the fact that this must be its being every time as it is its being.

*Dasein is understood always by starting from its existence from a possibility that this possesses of being itself or not (...) these possibilities of being it either has itself, or it runs into them, or it has always grown in them (...) Existence is decided, in the sense of possession or loss, exclusively by every single Dasein* (Heidegger, 1976).

## Things of the world

Being means ‘being-in-the-world’. The world is not ‘essentially’ a world of things that are ‘simply present’, of objectified things, before this it is part of the being who is being, *id est*, an existential, a ‘being within’ In a later stage of his way of thinking, Michele Minolli (2017) argued that the ‘Ego-subject’ is other, ‘is’ its context. Hereafter, I think I can state that Minolli did not examine this vision in depth, maybe because he felt it was too philosophical perhaps. To see in objects an objective reality of things that are simply present means forgetting and losing the being of man in the object itself. Following the epistemology of complexity, we can say that there is no possibility of objectification and that there is not a truth in the object that can



be discovered and subjected to universal laws: this is undoubtedly shared, but that does not modify the existential statute of one's way of being. In reality, man continues to hide himself from being and from himself: he flees into the object, he does so by also proclaiming himself gnoseologically immersed in a 'complexity. The object is primarily part of the being of man, and only in a second instance does it acquire being something simply present; it is not out there as an unknowable itself, nor in a different reality according to different points of view, that of the observer's gaze or the method of observation according to the 'complex' perspective; before all this, the object is discovered thanks to the 'openness' of being of *Dasein*.

Thus, the complex epistemological vision does not change the sense of man's existence, it repositions it in the oblivion of itself through a movement that does not change the ontological plane of knowledge. A true movement of plane inevitably implies a disturbance in those who know, a disturbance that sees the observer as no longer external on the horizon but introduces the observer in the 'observed' itself, joining the visions through a phenomenological experience that is felt as distressing loss such as in those who discover themselves in front of themselves and of the world as they are (Heidegger, 1971).

A unified vision of man and of the essence of the unity of man, which are without doubt sustainable, should be searched for in the '*being-in-the-world* as a unified referent', removing them from implicit and irresistible objectifying/forgotten tendencies.

Before they are simple presences, the things we encounter in the world, are 'tools' for us, that is, they are not first of all 'in themselves' but they are first and foremost in relation to us as 'instruments' and as 'meanings', their being is radically and constitutively in relation to the 'projection' of *Dasein*. Centuries old common mentality and philosophical thought is shaken to the core and thus the 'true' reality of things is that which we gather 'objectively', with a disinterested gaze that is typical of, among others, the Hard Sciences. Carrying on with the critique of the epistemology of complexity, I like to believe that the assumption of impossibility in understanding reality objectively, which has taken hold in the last few decades thanks to this epistemology, in truth seems only enunciated and not 'undertaken'. In my view even in this vision the concept of knowledge of reality is based on traditional ontology, that deposits in the object (separate from the 'world') the possibility of finding a form of knowledge of the object itself, even if it does not yearn for the unveiling of objective, absolute and unmodifiable knowledge any longer. To say that a truth in the object (entity) does not exist, is in itself an assumed truth that moves the simply present entity to search for something that is situated at an *ontic* level, bypassing the ontological problem at the base of it. To overcome the fractioned, Cartesian, and positivistic epistemology is an endeavour that cannot not involve the sense

of being. From the words of Umberto Galimberti (2005) we get important support to this idea: *'Entity is that which indicates every determination of reality (...) 'To be' is that which 'entifies' the entity, that which makes it an entity and non-entity.'*

Man is a generator of meanings, and the world is the environment of significance in which being is always 'thrown'; *worldliness* is thus interpreted as the totality of references to significance and the coincidence between world as the totality of 'instruments' and world as the totality of 'meanings' reveals itself as crucial (Vattimo, 1971).

For *Dasein*, being in the world is equivalent to being originally intimate with a totality of meanings. First, the world is not a collection of objects with which, at a later stage, it can relate with, attributing meaning and function to these. Things are always already given with a function, that is, a meaning; they can appear to it as things only when they are inserted into a totality of meanings which it already has. In other words, we could say that the world is given only when we already (originally, before every experience) have a certain heritage of ideas, and even perhaps, certain prejudices, which guide us to discover the things of the world (Vattimo, 1971). Rooted in these concepts there is an important change of perspective: *Dasein* is substituted with the complex vision proposed by the epistemology of complexity that, as I have mentioned, remains in the oblivion of being and 'complicates' the possibility of understanding man's most precise being. According to the vision expressed in *Being and Time*, the subject does not have the world in front of it, *Dasein* participates in the world with all of itself, it does not only observe it (Heidegger, 1971). Following on from this, the words of Jaspers (1947) can be useful in clarifying this difficult configuration, he writes about the being: *'With the progressive manifestation of all phenomena that a being encounters, it retreats as such. This being that is not an object (that is always circumscribed) nor a totality that configures itself as a horizon (that always circumscribes), we call Umgreifende (...). In itself Umgreifende actually does not appear but in Umgreifende all things appear to us.'*

Between the internal and external of ourselves there is, in a way continuity, the world is part of us, as a constituent of *Dasein*, even if we do not determine it. It is not in front of us as we are used to thinking but, in reality, belongs to us as an essential element of our existential situation. The world must be 'opened', and in fact is opened (discovered) as a world in which we are, as 'being in' and in this, man generally hides himself.

### *Emotional and Relational states*

Heidegger (1971) confronts the problem of relationship dynamics, when he deals with the topic of 'Being-with', an ontological-existential structure.

This sits side by side and co-originate with the existential Being in, that, as we have seen, represents Being-in-the-world. The *Dasein*, that is the being that is, at the same time co-originate a Being in and Being with. The Being with indicates the *Dasein* of another person that, together with my *Dasein*, exists in the world.

It is now necessary to introduce a notion that Heidegger (1971) calls 'emotional state'. This can, in my opinion, be equated to what Daniel Stern calls 'vitality affects' (Stern, 1985). A sort of slight physiological activation on an emotional basis that constantly accompanies the baseline state of daily living, in different moods, that must be literally understood as a way of being oneself, feeling one way or another, the affective moods in which we happen to be in. In this, *Dasein* is driven firstly to oneself, not in the form of self-perception, but rather in the form of 'self-emotional state' that is directed exactly to this 'thrown' being, but then immediately removes itself.

*Dasein*, in so far as being-in-the-world not only has always, as already stated, a certain comprehension of a totality of meanings, but also always has a certain affective mood; so things are not only already given meaning in a theoretical sense, but also in an emotional one; thus *Dasein* is always and originally in an emotional state that accompanies the understanding and interpretation of the world, a type of initial global grasping of the world that in some way establishes comprehension itself. In the affective state we find ourselves 'being' without being able to give a reason for it and the *Dasein* cannot be of the world (and hence things cannot be given to it) if not in light of an affective mood that, fundamentally, does not depend on it; consequently the affective state presents us with the fact that our original way of taking and understanding is something that escapes us in its foundations.

The emotional state opens the *Dasein* in its 'thrownness' (Heidegger, 1971) and this is very different from ascertaining a psychological state; furthermore this does not have the character of a reflexive comprehension, in the sense that every immanent reflection can encounter 'lived experiences' only because the emotional state has already opened up the being. The simple emotional mood is at the base of the openness of being, more originally than every perception of the self, but also correspondingly, can close the being more resolutely than any non-perception. This is observed in certain depressive forms in which the *Dasein* becomes blind towards itself.

The emotional state assaults us and it is barely a reflexive perception that it catches out the *Dasein* in its lack of reflection when it immerses and submerges into the world. This does not come from outside, nor from inside, it arises in the being-in-the-world itself as a modality and has always opened the being-in-the-world in its totality, making it only possible to move towards it (ibid). This makes me believe that man has a need for relations second only to the openness to one's own being and interactions are fundamental for the future of the being itself, in its possibilities, but

relationships are not the basis of being. The true basis is *Dasein* itself, first and most importantly, is that it understands the being and opens a horizon within which objects become visible. However, the horizon transcends and precedes (not necessarily in chronological order) the objects: and the *Dasein* as such is not a 'foundation' in the sense of the metaphysical principle of sufficient reason: *Dasein* cannot be, in turn, founded, and because it is precisely this that opens the horizon and the world in which every founding relationship is positioned. *Dasein* is not a simple presence because it is none other than projecting (ibid).

*Projecting has nothing to do with comporting oneself towards a plan that has been thought out, and in accordance with which Dasein arranges its Being. On the contrary, any Dasein has, as Dasein, already projected itself; and as long as it is, it is projecting. As long as it is, Dasein always has understood itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities (...). Furthermore, the character of understanding as projection is such that the understanding does not grasp thematically that upon which it projects - that is to say, possibilities. Grasping it in such a manner would take away from what is projected its very character as a possibility and would reduce it to the given contents which we have in mind; whereas projection, in throwing, throws before itself the possibility as possibility, and lets it be as such (Heidegger, 1971).*

*Thus: As being, it has taken the definite form of a potentiality-for-Being which has heard itself and has devoted itself to itself, but not as itself. As existent, it never comes back behind its thrownness (...). Thrownness, however, does not lie behind it as some event which has happened to Dasein which has factually befallen and fallen loose from Dasein (...) To this entity it has been delivered over, and as such it can exist solely as the entity which it is; and as this entity to which it has been thus delivered over, it is, in its existing, the basis of its potentiality-for-Being. Although it has not laid that basis itself, it reposes in the weight of it, which is made manifest to it as a burden by Dasein's mood (...) And how is Dasein this thrown basis? (...) Existing, it must take over Being-a-basis (Heidegger, 1971).*

I would define these processes 'implicit' like the theories that I mentioned above, just as the notion of being is implicit, *Dasein* is not obtained from objects or subjects of the world, given that these are given at the start in the openness that the *Dasein* itself operates with its own openness and founding the projection, which indicates a transcendentalism of the object and a relating before and more fundamentally to the being rather than to the object/subject (Vattimo, 1971).

We could rethink some psychoanalytic and relational concepts in light of these foundations. One way of rethinking it could be via the notion of 'investment'. This concept must be thought of as being totally detached from pulsation investment as understood in the Freudian sense (Freud 1915-1917). We could think of the investment on the object or on others as a way of 'being-in-the-world', like 'being-in' and 'being-with'. *Dasein* finds

'possibilities of being' giving sense<sup>3</sup> to the object or to another as defining on a certain level its own existence, that is, its own possibility of being. *Dasein* does not simply 'be', but rather manifests, that is, it 'signifies'. In other words: the investment on another is the meaning and thus the expression of being. We could imagine various 'levels of understanding' of this investment, *id est*, of 'contact' with the personal meaning (felt as one's own) taken on by the object in function of the expression of its own possibility of being. These levels of understanding could be compared to 'presence' like that conceptualized by Michele Minolli (2015). What does it mean that the human being is a producer of meanings and expresses its own being in investment? These words expressed in this manner pay the debt of oblivion of being and produce a dichotomy between the subject and the presumed meanings that it expresses and that we think originate from it. There could exist, based on this idea, a subject with a (reified) mind that produces 'objective' meanings that are placed outside in a reality which in turn is pre-existent.

To say that the Cartesian *cogito* has created a dichotomy does not mean experiencing this dichotomy yet. The human being does not exist *a priori* of the meaning that is intrinsic to investment. This meaning 'is' being; and allows us to feel existent in so far as it is inserted in the 'possibility of being'.

'I feel that I exist because inevitably I invest' and, following this reasoning, every expression of the self is investment and hence expression of being: this is Michele Minolli's statement of self (*ibid*). It would be correct to say that the human being does not give a sense to what it does or to its expression, but it is the 'doing' itself that expresses the sense of its being. It would be interesting to analyse the origin of the investment of a child and from there the possible existential contact with investment he/she feels as their own. Every human being is in fact in the condition of relating to its investment, welcoming it as its own and thus welcoming their own being.

*Dasein* is made in a way so that in being it comprehends something as being. Therefore, it can understand and, in truth, always understand its own being (Heidegger, 1971). The action of consciousness of consciousness, as conceptualized by Michele Minolli (2015) is understood as the most evolved level of expression of a human being, and I believe it echoes in Heidegger's words when he writes:

---

<sup>3</sup> *When entities within-the-world are discovered along with the Being of Dasein - that is, when they have come to be understood - we say that they have meaning. But that which is understood, taken strictly is not the meaning but the entity, or alternatively, Being. (...) Meaning is that wherein the intelligibility of something maintains itself. That which can be Articulated in a disclosure by which we understand, we call 'meaning'. (Heidegger, 1971).*

*Genuine listening of the call of conscience is equivalent to self-understanding of Dasein in its most pure potentiality for being (...) Dasein, which understands the call, in listening obeys to the most proper possibility of its existence. It chose itself (...) In understanding the call, Dasein lets its most proper self-act based on the potentiality for being that it has chosen. Only in this way Dasein can be responsible (Heidegger, 1971).*

It could be interesting and even more clarifying to compare the concept of love according to Minolli (2016) and Binswanger (2020).

The latter worked on a critique of the foundation of Heideggerian ontology that emerged in his theoretical work on love, understood as ‘being-with’. Heidegger believed that it was possible to explain love as an ontic phenomenon that derives from the ontological structure at the base; Binswanger, on the other hand, speaks of love as a way of being and shows that love can not only constitute an ontological structure of existence, that is, in alternative to the Heideggerian one, but also brings a further connotation of existence in completely different terms.

According to Binswanger (ibid), the way of being in love, of being-together-in-love, of being one-with-another-in-love, is not one among many possible ontic manifestations of *Dasein* but can be constituent of the ontology of *Dasein* in humans, if *Dasein* is considered constitutively and intrinsically a being-with. In this case the (amorous) relationship rises to the foundation of being. It does not mean mere sexual love, amorous passion, romantic love destined to death, ideal platonic love, religious supernatural love, but it means exactly the union of two or more existences, of the active union of care one-to-another that constitutes the transcendence of ourselves, of the egoic selfhood, in a ‘we’. Heidegger thinks the being of *Dasein* is ‘always mine’ while for Binswanger:

*(...) we cannot adopt this approach to Dasein as being always mine (...) for us it's important to show that the 'us' of love and the identity of Dasein as love does not mean openness of 'us' (of being) for myself, but rather, if we can employ this expression, the openness of 'us' for ourselves, is even more important (...) it shows that the identity of love does not provoke an egocentric identity, but an 'Usness'. In this sense openness of being, the 'us' of being in love, is not openness through which Dasein (as always mine) is 'for me', but 'openness through which Dasein (as 'Usness') is there for ourselves, for 'Me and You', one for another and this, in turn, does not coincide with Dasein in the world, but is as one with Dasein of the 'world' of one with another. Even here we are dealing with a completely new problem (Binswanger, 2020).*

Personally, as stated above and in line with Heidegger’s way of thinking, I believe that it is more plausible to think that *Dasein* becomes constitutively and intrinsically a ‘being-with’ and thus opens up to the interaction with the other, ‘only’ when faced with the assumption of one’s own null foundation

that allows openness of *Dasein* and thus of being. The expression 'us' tells us of this essential opening: '*Dasein* and its opening'.

According to Michele Minolli (2014), in the dynamic of the discovery of another who is separate and distinct in the affirmation of the self, in the push for self-affirmation, in the fight for recognition, *self-consciousness is the basis for the continuous future as a couple in which everything is amiable because my affect, my aggression and my genitality, are me. A 'romantic' love without sunset because I 'am' and I love you. I 'am' in the self-consciousness of desires and of the recognized needs as my own and 'I am in the love that I know as my own' for you.*

Therefore, being as a prerequisite of love: I 'am', and I love you, that is being, undertaken first-hand and felt as my own, this transmits mature love for another. I believe I can state that even for Minolli love did not constitute a fundamental existential in a Heideggerian sense but was considered a being who had the possibility of developing in the future.

## Conclusions

The statement 'man exists' does not answer the question if man is real or not but the question relative to the essence of man and when we ask the question: who man is or that particular man or patient, we put ourselves in the objectifying perspective of who is looking at another person or object but the categories of person or object block everything to do with being and the story of being. Thus, the essence of man, of who man belongs to, that particular man and patient is determined based on the '*ekstaticity*' of *Dasein*; to the openness of the patient to his/her possibilities of being that have yet to be fulfilled. Metaphysics (the Western way of thinking) represents the object in its being and thinks that the being of the entity in its presence is thus. But in this manner, it does not comprehend the being as such and does not understand the difference between being and object, it does not ponder it. The basic question is whether the essence of man is tied to the being or not and/or if it must still be asked in a way that the being, understood as such, can be thought of by man; ultimately the thought closes in front of the simple fact that man 'is', in its essence, alone in so far as it is 'called' by the being and it is only man's way of being and man himself is destined to think of the essence of his being (Heidegger, 1976),

Is it utopian to think that the psychoanalyst can carry the patient and himself along the path of comprehension of the essence of one's being? Otherwise, it is said, it is told, it is intellectualized 'we revolve around it', we 'act' as in traditional metaphysics, we remain on an ontic level.

We are talking about a humanity whose existence is not based on the reality of '*ego cogito*', just as we are not talking only about the reality of

subjects that in interacting reach their ‘selves’. We are talking about *the ekstatic instance in the truth of being* (Heidegger, 1976). In this thought, we must think something simple: the thought of being is simplicity (ibid). The difficulty does not lie in the fact that we must draw on some particularly deep sense and that we must construct complicated concepts; it is about de-structuring and letting thought enter a questioning framework ‘being able to experience’ and let go of the habitual opening of the intellect (ibid).

As intellectualized thought does nothing but block the possibility of being involved in the ‘what’ of the thought, we keep it safe in relation to the possibility of shattering against ‘the thing’ itself: *And so ‘philosophizing’ about failure is separated by a chasm from thinking that is a failure* (ibid).

#### REFERENCES

- Aron, L. (1996). *A meeting of minds: mutuality in psychoanalysis*. The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, New Jersey, USA.
- Baracchi, C. (2020). *Filosofia antica e vita effimera. Migrazioni, trasmigrazioni e laboratori della psiche*. Petite Plaisance, Pistoia.
- Beebe, B., & Lachmann, F. M. (2002). *Infant research e trattamento degli adulti. Un modello sistemico-diadico delle interazioni*. Raffaello Cortina, Roma (2003).
- Binswanger, L. (2020). *Forme fondamentali e conoscenza dell’esserci umano. Amore e amicizia come forme della vita autentica*, trad. it. a cura di Discipio D., Tab Edizioni, Roma. (versione digitale).
- Bocchi, G., & Ceruti, M., a cura di (2007). *La sfida della complessità*. Paravia Bruno Mondadori, Milano.
- Freud, S. (1915-1917). *Pulsioni e loro destini*. OSF, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino (1989).
- Galimberti, U. (2005). *Il tramonto dell’occidente nella lettura di Heidegger e Jaspers*. Feltrinelli, Milano.
- Heidegger, M. (1971). *Essere e tempo*. Longanesi, Milano.
- Heidegger, M. (1976). *Lettera sull’umanismo*. Adelphi, Milano (1995).
- Heidegger, M. (2002). *A che i poeti? in Holzwege sentieri erranti nella selva*, trad it. a cura di V. Cicero, Bompiani, Milano.
- Husserl, E. (1992). *L’idea della fenomenologia*, Carlo Sini (a cura di). Laterza, Roma-Bari.
- Jasper, K. (1947). *Von der Wahrheit. Philosophische Logik, trad. integrale di Diego D’Angelo, Della verità. Logica filosofica*. Bompiani, Milano 2015.
- Lichtenberg, J. D., Lachman, F. M., & Fosshage, J. L. (1996). *The clinical exchange*. The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, New Jersey, USA
- Lyons-Ruth, K. (1998). Implicit Relational Knowing: its Role in Development and Psychoanalytic Treatment. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 19(3), 282-289.
- Milanese, P., & De Robertis, D. (2013). Il bambino clinico e il bambino osservato di Daniel Stern. L’attuale esigenza di andare verso il bambino contestuale. *Ricerca Psicoanalitica*, 24(3), 47-82.
- Milanese, P. (2015). Sviluppo psichico: peculiarità dell’infanzia o processo in continuo divenire? *Ricerca Psicoanalitica*, 26(2), 63-92.
- Minolli, M., & Coin, R. (2007). *Amarsi, amando. Per una psicoanalisi della relazione di coppia*. Borla, Roma.
- Minolli, M. (2014). *Dispense di Psicoanalisi della relazione di coppia*.
- Minolli, M. (2015). *Essere e divenire. La sofferenza dell’individualismo*. FrancoAngeli, Milano.



- Minolli, M. (2016), *Che aspetti ad andartene? L'amore nella cultura ipermoderna*. Alpes Italia.
- Minolli, M. (2017). Comunicazione personale.
- Mitchell, S.A., & Aron, L. (1999). *Relational Psychoanalysis. The emergence of a tradition*. The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, New Jersey, USA.
- Stern, D. N. (1985). *Il mondo interpersonale del bambino*. Trad. it. Boringhieri. Torino, 1987.
- Stolorow, R., & Atwood G. (1992). *I contesti dell'essere. I fondamenti della vita psicologica*, trad. it. Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 1995.
- Tronick, E. Z. (2007). *The Neurobehavioral and social-emotional development of infants and children*. Norton & Company, Inc. New York.
- Vattimo, G. (1971). *Introduzione a Heidegger*. Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari.

---

Conflict of interests: the author declares no potential conflict of interests.

Ethics approval and consent to participate: not required.

Received for publication: 4 April 2021.

Accepted for publication: 12 October 2021.

©Copyright: the Author(s), 2022

Licensee PAGEPress, Italy

*Ricerca Psicoanalitica* 2022; XXXIII:540

doi:10.4081/rp.2022.540

*This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Noncommercial License (by-nc 4.0) which permits any noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited.*

