



## The Meaning of Life in Heidegger's Philosophical Pedagogy

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Research Article



### Abstract

In this article, we inquire into the concept of meaning in pedagogy through Heidegger's philosophy. Since metaphysical systems reduce the Being of humans, due to the dominance of subjectivist and worldlessness views, they tend to suffer from the crisis of nihilism, which has made its way into various ontological sciences, especially pedagogy. In this article, we tackle the elements that culminated in such meaninglessness in pedagogy in terms of dualism, worldlessness, absence of existentials, and finally the posteriority of Eros and Pathos to Logos. Now, since the philosophies of Nietzsche and Heidegger extensively deal with the issue of meaning, and in particular, Heidegger in *Being and Time* grapples with the concept of the *meaning of Being* by analyzing *existentials*, here we decided to discuss meaning by drawing on the existentials of *understanding* and *attunement*, and from this perspective, we look for a way out of the crisis of nihilism in pedagogy. Discussion of the meaning of *being-in-the-world* and the *prior precedence of Eros over cognition and Logos* is also helpful for overcoming the crisis of nihilism in pedagogy. That is, if *pathos, eros*, and the existentials of *understanding* and *attunement* are taken seriously in pedagogy, then pedagogical meaninglessness might be resisted by appealing to worldlessness and subjectivism. In fact, the revolution that sparked in Heidegger's philosophy, in which pathos was deemed prior to logos and the question of meaning was rendered possible by turning to existentials, opened the way for a pedagogy based on existentials.

### Keywords

Existentials, Attunement, Understanding, Meaning of Being, Pedagogy.

Received: 2023/06/15 ; Received in revised form: 2023/07/10 ; Accepted: 2023/07/18 ; Published online: 2023/07/20

Heydari, A. & Askarizadeh, F. (2023). The Meaning of Life in Heidegger's Philosophical Pedagogy. *Journal of Philosophical Theological Research*, (Special Issue on "Comparative Philosophy of Religion"), 25(3), 131-153. <https://doi.org/10.22091/jptr.2023.9164.2858>

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## Introduction

To explain the concept of the meaning of life, we should begin with “I” because I (*das Ich*) evokes a meaningful or meaningless concern. It is, therefore, better to begin with an analysis of the position of “I”. In the epistemological tradition, “I” stands outside of, and looks at the world, and the ego chooses *Gegenstands* and takes them inside, and then, they become objects of knowledge. The main problem of “I” is how to bring the outside in and recognize it. Accordingly, “I” is primarily located inside this duality (inside-outside) as if it has no way out of this dualism except to find an intermediary to bring the outside into the inside.

In this way of looking at the world, knowledge of the outside world is contrasted with knowledge of the inside world. The outside world belongs to *Gegenstands* between which there is no difference, whereas the inner world belongs to the subject and the rational self that knows and reflects within itself in this inner world. The important point to consider here is that the knowing ego does not have a way to the outside world except through an intermediary, and indeed, it is isolated. In this way, it is the isolated ego or the introspective subject that must know the outside world. So the hidden assumptions of epistemology are as follows: first, dualism or the separation of the outside and inside worlds; second, the Being of Human is formed “with a being-objectively-present-together of a spiritual thing thus constituted with a corporeal thing” and that the subject’s inner self or spirit is contrasted to the irrational and disordered outside world. Third, man and his life are constituted by his rationality, in which the *corper* and pathos do not play a crucial role.

The subject (I), as a knower with the essence of thinking, intends to know so that it can account for the separation of the outside and inside worlds and can bring the outside world inside albeit in a void (free from any moods, pathos, physicality, and eros). Here, intention just means will, period. In such a non-phenomenological and completely subjective intention, the subject learns, teaches, and lives without a relation to the environment (*Umwelt*) and to other subjects, but this is indeed to ignore Heidegger’s statement that “the being of this being is always mine” (Heidegger, 2002, p. 42). Therefore, the subject’s relationship with its being, which is the essence of its being, becomes objectively present (*Vorhanden*). In this sense, to entities such as these, “their Being is ‘a matter of indifference’; or they ‘are’ such that their Being can be neither a matter of indifference to them, nor the opposite. Because *Dasein* has, in each case, mineness [*Jemeinigkeit*]” (2002, p. 43). This state of affairs can be seen both in the Cartesian and Kantian traditions, which indeed date back to

the philosophical tradition of the Middle Ages, where there is also an understanding of intentionality and in which theory is prior to knowledge and practice (the Thomist tradition). Now, this article aims to *explore the concept of meaning and what subjectivism does with meaning and life*. That is, whether we turn to the world—things come to be in our purview (*Blick*)—when the above preliminaries are true, or we have no relationship with them.

In this way, it may still remain unclear how the above discussion is related to meaning and meaninglessness. It is evident, nevertheless, that in terms of this disproportionality and dualism, the *world of things* is not the *world of "I"*, and their essences are not the same. According to Descartes, *the substance of physical things in general is their extension* (Descartes, 2008, p. 15). The "I" is not concerned with (*Besorgen*), and merely turns to, what is not inside it (that is, what is outside). Therefore, in this kind of encounter with the world, "I" does not belong anywhere and is isolated and homeless. This homelessness and dropped-marble-likeness of things create a crisis of meaning because there is no cord to hold fast to, and a human being becomes a knower with an *autonomous ratio*. The subject's autonomous intellect exists in itself and creates a persistent will for the subjective "I" to intend and turn toward things. Furthermore, it is located *a priori* in time and space, and because of this being-in-Newtonian-time-and-space, it lacks historicity and temporality. Such an autonomous being causes a crisis of meaning because it is not clear what mediates between the outside and the inside, or alternatively put, what kind of relation the isolated "I" has to his world.

### **Heidegger and Nietzsche's yes-saying**

In this section, we discuss Nietzsche's *yes-saying* and his critical positions on the subject in terms of a dualistic and disembodied view. A keyword in Nietzsche's philosophy is *yes-saying*. Saying "yes" to ourselves and to life is a way of bringing us closer to what we have forgotten, which is nothing but *Being* accordingly, Nietzsche thinks about the crisis of meaning with the thesis of *saying yes to Being*. First, we have to address the question of how yes-saying happens and which tradition it is against. Yes-saying appeared in opposition to the common tradition of no-saying to Being, including "herd ethic", moral apparatuses (as slave ideology), utilitarian morality (taking a consumptive view of the world and sacrificing everything for welfare), Kantian morality, etc.: "slave morality always first needs a hostile external world" (Nietzsche, 1989, p. 37). That hostile world is human existence, as well as teleological thinking in *On the Teachers of Virtue*. Zarathustra thought to

himself that the saint did not hear the news that “God is dead” and it is not possible to say yes until those valuable apparatuses that have trapped human existence collapse. Then “God had to die so that man can say yes to himself and the resurrection and salvation of superman begin” (Ritter, 1971-2007, p. 161). In *On the Teachers of Virtue*, Nietzsche describes *courses to teach virtue* in which the human existence is attacked and *Being* is concealed with subversive orders. Heidegger continues his positions in the manner of *Gelassenheit*. In fact, Heidegger says yes to Nietzsche’s critique of the rational subject, but he says no to Nietzsche’s alternative: the merely corporeal subject. Heidegger completes Nietzsche’s corporeal subject, which is still in metaphysical dualism, with the existentials of attunement, understanding, and discourse. Here, a question can be asked about what kind of relationship Logos has with Eros. So, why *Eros* is deemed the fundamental position of every true speech (*jegliches eigentliche echte Reden*) as well as *Logos Eroticus*. In fact, the question and the practice of destroying the meaning and Being of life were initiated by Nietzsche, which Heidegger expanded with his *Gelassenheit*, talking about the relationship between *Logos* and *Eros*. Heidegger explicitly rejects that philosophy is love of knowledge, even saying that “it is not love that loves knowledge, but knowledge is lover and love (*Wissen is das Liebende und die Liebe*)” (Heidegger, 2015, p. 52); indeed, philosophy is metaphysical love and eros.

Heidegger’s stance implies that *logos* is not the foundation of knowledge and the learner’s journey toward the truth, but rather Logos itself is founded upon *Eros*. Heidegger believes that pathos is the foundation, and is prior to logos. In fact, by analyzing various meanings of pathos and the relationship of these meanings with important concepts such as Being, character, embodiment, and logos, he examines pathos in the context of Aristotelian thought, and unlike Aristotle who sees pathos as a complement to logos, he takes *pathos as the foundation of pathos* (Oele, 2012, p. 19). Therefore, it can be said here that contrary to the *subject’s neutral state* in learning and knowledge, in Heidegger’s thinking, the foundation of logos and everything that is based on it happens to be founded upon pathos and eros. Therefore, the teacher-student *Dasein* does not exist in a void, free from the *world*. This indicates the revolutionary passionate spirit in Heidegger, which is absent from the pedagogical domain.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger refers to the functions of human sensory powers and highlights a feature that he calls *Deutungsleistung*, which can be called the signification or meaning-conferring function. An explanation of this concept in Heidegger’s thought requires some preliminaries. One such

preliminary is that Heidegger holds that *Dasein* is entangled with the world and lies outside of the common dualism, referring to it as *being in the world*. The idea is that it is not possible to make a decisive separation between *Dasein* and the world as two *distinct substances*, as in the Cartesian view, nor is it possible to eliminate one substance and highlight the other. In Heidegger's view, Being and *Dasein* create a universality and comprehensiveness that provide the main foundation of the *meaning of life* in a wide-ranging interaction that he calls *geworfener Entwurf*; that is, thrown projection.

To shed light on this term, that is, *thrown projection*, let us in the first place take into consideration the projection, that is, *Dasein's* projection. For Heidegger, the most important characteristic of a human thrown into this world is his *disclosure* to Being, therefore *Dasein* can be said to be prior to this world, which has been prepared for him in different ways. To illustrate the relationship between *Dasein* and *Being* (i.e., *Sein*), Heidegger mentions a set of characteristics in *Dasein*, in addition to the verbal similarity between *Dasein* and *Sein*, which can be called the *existential characteristics* of his *Dasein*. These characteristics are grounds in *Dasein* that pave his path towards Being. Heidegger highlights two existential characteristics in *Dasein*. One is called *Befindlichkeit* (attunement). In paragraph 29 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger says, what we ontologically, that is, from an ontic point of view or from the point of view of *being*, refer to as *attunement* is called *Stimmung* (mood), which is widely known and at the same time intertwined with our *everydayness*. We humans are always *tuned* (*gestimmt*) based on a *mood*. As pointed out before, for Heidegger, man is *Dasein*. The word *Da* in *Dasein* indicates a potential in a person for moving towards Being, and *Da* involves two meanings, *here* and *there*. The idea is that *Dasein* means that *a human can go out (ex) of itself (istence)*; that is, *existenz*. This fluid aspect of a person has made him a *privileged being* who can open many horizons even though he *fell* into the world. This dual nature of *Dasein* places him in a position between *realism* and *idealism*. We use Heidegger's own terminology to properly explain this middle position. In "The Worldly Character of the Environment Announces Itself in Entities Within-the-World", Heidegger introduces the world as a condition of possibility (*Bedingung der Möglichkeit*). He writes, "When the world does not make itself known, that is the condition for the possibility of what is at hand (*Zuhandene*) not emerging from its inconspicuousness (*unauffällig*). And this is the constitution of the phenomenal structure of the *being-in-itself* (*An-sich-sein*) of these beings" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 75). From this passage, we can understand that *being-in-itself* derives from the previous meaningful structure of beings, a structure

called the world. In this previous meaningful structure, we are in a deep meaningful connection with all beings with whom we coexist in this *referential context*. Under such circumstances, none of the beings will be revealed in a noticeable way. They are in a deeply connected affinity and presence within the world. Heidegger describes such a primary *unity* between *Dasein* and beings as a state in itself. From this perspective, the world and its beings have an implicit and non-thematic presence, and therefore this is a condition for the possibility of the phenomenology of phenomena. The task of the phenomenological approach is to clarify this *implicitness* of the world and turn it into a *phenomenon* (something that is apparent).

Roughly speaking, cognizance of the world occurs when beings come out of their *network of semantic references* and become *objectively present*, turning into subjects of theoretical considerations in this sense, in which way they lose their primary semantic *relationship* with the world. This is the starting point of a variety of alienations between *Dasein* and the world. Such a context has led to a brand of realism in the history of Western philosophy, in terms of which humans are aligned with other beings and lose their status as *existences*. In the realistic conception, the human mind is deemed a mirror that represents (*re-präsentieren*) and presents (*vor-stellen*) the images of beings. But later, this philosophical account of knowledge came to be criticized and created a new direction in accounting for knowledge. In the *idealistic* approach of modern philosophy, *the relationship between the subject of knowledge and the world is severed and human consciousness is placed in opposition to the world*. That is, we are dealing, on the one hand, with thinking essences, and on the other hand, with *bodily nature (extension)*. To put an end to this realism-idealism conflict, Heidegger begins by noting the inherent distinction between *Dasein* and other beings, without equating *Dasein* with them, although he places *Dasein* in the position of the *openness of beings*. This means that *Dasein* “knows” the relations between them under a general understanding of the existence that is already established. At the same time, Heidegger notes that establishing this priority (*Vorrang*) for *Dasein* should not cause *Dasein* to lose its relationship with beings and become an isolated mind. With his interpretation of the world, Heidegger opens a third way between these two opposing views, to the effect that the world establishes a relationship between *Dasein* and beings in the sense that both belong to the world. In other words, *Dasein* discovers beings by being-in-the world, and beings reveal their belonging to the world by being in the world. Beings are in deep correlation with each other within a *meaningful referential context*, which has already been formed in the *way of the opening of Being to Dasein*. *Dasein*, which also

enters these relations and contexts, has a deep and yet implicit understanding of this *meaningful referential context*. Time and again, Heidegger explains that *Dasein* always understands the beings of the world in the structure of “*something as something*” (Heidegger, 1997, p. 62). From here, we can understand that the “classroom” does not appear as a plurality of *sensory data* for *Dasein* in the first place, but it implies a kind of previous meaningfulness for *Dasein*, a home as something that allows self-expression. According to Heidegger, this structure of *something as something* finally reaches the inherent moment of *Dasein*, which is the *existential concern* of *Dasein* (*Sorge*). In this way, at the foundation of the referential structure of beings, we reach the ultimate *telos*, which is the mode of existence of *Dasein*. This way of Being-*Dasein*, which is the result of his encounter with Being, lays the ontological foundation of the world. In this way, a synthesis is established between the realistic and idealistic approaches, which is based on *Dasein's understanding of Being* (1997, pp. 201-202). *Dasein*, due to its understanding of its finitude due to *awareness of death* and the resulting *anxiety*, establishes a relationship with the absolute, which, based on this horizon and the subsequent totality, determines the relationships of beings with each other. From here, we can see that the problem of the meaningfulness of life for *Dasein* is deeply related to the significations of beings on that *referential whole*, and whenever such relationships are distorted, *Dasein* tries to make it true based on its distance and proximity from the understanding of Being.

### **Questioning the meaning of Being in Heidegger's earlier works**

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger considers *Dasein's* effort to find the meaning of Being as a result of a basic question in *Dasein's* structure. In paragraph 2 of the book *Being and Time*, he paid attention to the need to ask the meaning of being. In his opinion, raising the question of being makes sense when there is a strong relationship between that which is asked about and that which is to be found by the asking. According to Heidegger, the questioning of the meaning of Being depends on the fact that the questioner has a kind of relation of being with that which is to be asked about (here Being), so that in the light of this relation of being, he can reach that which is to be found by the asking, which is indeed a concrete answer and in relation to a special being, that is, human being in the widespread realm of Being. We know that, that which is to be found by the asking is to Heidegger the analysis of the existential characteristics of *Dasein* in order to reach meaning-containing of Being (that

which is asked about) by referring to them (the existential elements of *Dasein* to turn to being). Before *Being and Time*, Heidegger also considered this point in his previous works:

Heidegger's earlier lectures are full of frequent references to the question and its connection with human nature. In Heidegger's earlier view, the questioning of the questioner being does not arise from random thoughts, predetermined scientific formats, or inferior products of the "great industry of problems": posing questions; questions are not random thoughts and events, nor today's "problems" that are taken out with a profound gesture, from citations, book learnings, and written documents. The questions arise from confronting the things themselves, and the thing itself is where the [viewer's] eyes are (Heidegger, 1999, p. 4).

Heidegger's clear and harsh position against the modern industry of question-raising has shown itself with a milder expression in the lecture on Aristotle's phenomenological interpretation and before that, in the epoch-making lecture of the winter of 1919. Therefore, the "question" can be considered at least as, if not the main concept, one of the basic concepts that Heidegger deals with in this era through content analysis and relying on a wide range of direct references. The how, reasons, and method of giving priority to the "question" and its entity and *Being* in Heidegger become more obvious under the light of his earlier works. The fact that it is based on examining the general scope of the question in philosophy and presenting a historical sequence of its emergence in Heidegger's analysis before and in the publication of *Being and Time*.

Heidegger distinguished between two types of philosophical questions at the beginning of the 1930s (Heydari & Hatmian, 2020, pp. 119-134). These two questions are also useful in understanding his approach to "questioning" in the earlier era:

1. The "key question" in the metaphysical tradition: "What is being?" Heidegger considers metaphysics as a name for the question-raising ability of philosophy in its historical tradition and analyzes all the different metaphysical questions using the guidance of a single key question; a question that questions the principles, sources, or foundations. This question refers to what in ancient Greece was called  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  and goes back to the principle or cause. From Heidegger's point of view, this principle cannot be found in the world because it is related to the essence of things and shows itself only by analyzing their entity. All metaphysical questions, in their wide variety, go back to and are reduced to this key question. Therefore, if we use the language of the First Teacher, Aristotle, philosophy in the framework of the "key question" is

constantly looking for the “being” and other questions are guided through this question (Blok, 2015, p. 306).

### The mood (attunement) of *Dasein*

To disclose these horizons, one should observe the attunement that provides the conditions for his existence. This attunement accompanies man's relationship with himself and his relationship with the world in a *practical* way. According to Heidegger, even people who have a neutral cognitive encounter with this world have attunement. Heidegger believes that attunement is prior to the intentional aspect of human *Beings*. “It comes neither from ‘outside’ nor from ‘inside’, but arises out of Being-in-the-world, as a way of such Being” (Heidegger, 1997, p. 137), which allows for cognitive (*kognitiv*) domains. In other words, existential attunement, which expresses *Dasein*, shows that a person's first relationship with the world is the result of the requirements of practice, which finds an ontological aspect in the next levels. Heidegger expresses the opposition between the practical and theoretical horizons of *Dasein* in the following phrase: “It is precisely when we see the ‘world’ unsteadily and fitfully in accordance with our moods, that the *ready-to-hand* shows itself in its specific *worldhood*. Theoretical looking at the world has always already flattened it down to the *uniformity* of what is purely *objectively present*, although, of course, a new abundance of what can be discovered in pure determination lies within that uniformity” (1997, p. 138). *Dasein*'s attunements are so fundamental that one cannot go beyond them and, in fact, they provide the conditions for the possibility of actions and life (*Bedingungenmöglichkeiten*).

Drawing on Heidegger's attunement terminology, it may be said that the world of *Dasein* is disclosed in the virtue of moods. It seems that human attunement and moods are the means by which they are connected with the world and which provide possible conditions for them to face the world; otherwise, no such confrontation would have taken place. From this interaction between *Dasein*'s attunement and the world's openness to him, it can be seen that man (*Dasein*) is not the only factor in giving form to the world. That is, *Dasein* is not an autonomous subject, but the *structure of Dasein's world* is also such that it is revealed in a *meaningful dialogue* with *Dasein*.

“Our mood, our *Being-attuned* is Prior to all psychology of moods” (1997, p. 134) and it is impossible to imagine the possibility of the absence of attunement. Every learner–teacher finds himself in an attunement, in the

world. Da-sein is always already brought before itself, it has *always already* found itself, not as having perceived oneself to be there, but as finding one's self in attunement (1997, p. 135). Learners-teachers are never free from attunement and they are always affected by the mood. Therefore, the student cannot be considered something that should be simply shaped by *criteria*. How he *finds* himself in the world basically affects how he encounters his surroundings such as home, school, etc. In fact, the attunement of the teacher's *Dasein* is important in his way of looking at the world, through which it is *possible* to allow *Dasein* to face the world in a different way. In this way, it can be said that a person always understands the world with his attunement, and it has a disclosed future. In fact, the mood of the teacher and the student can be described under the *existential condition* of attunement. Attunement means that everyone finds themselves in the world. Such ways of Being, and finding oneself in the world should *appear* in pedagogy and create openness.

Thus, attunement and mood are *prior* to scientific cognition, they can be perceived as pre-reflexive perception. For example, attunement can be understood through the skin and the sense of smell, so it is in this way that we are related, and react to them and have a kind of non-verbal judgment about them. We somehow find ourselves in an attunement and mood; that is, they occur to us and are experienced by us. They are the basis of the world of life, but they cannot be given *scientific objectivity* and put into *conceptual language*. Accordingly, clear objectification removes moods. Therefore, what is anthropologically decisive for the world of life as the foundation of science is lost in terms of scientific pedagogy, but education and pedagogy must start from where the child-educator lives and experiences (Danner, 1984, p. 184). Attunement and mood play a major role in the occurrence of experience based on the student's *life*. An understanding of attunement enables us to understand the teacher's world and makes it possible for the teacher to express himself.

In this way, "no one is without basic attunement, for example, no one enters the forest or any other place without fundamental attunement, even a blind person. In this sense, we always enter a space with attunement. Therefore, it is in events that a person carries a part of his lived-world with him" (Brinkmann, 2019, p. 495). Accordingly, the learner always has a basic attunement relation to things, which comes from the surroundings (*Umwelt*), memories, his preconception of things, etc., and with it he enters the space and educational situations. When the student and the teacher understand basic attunement and moods, they understand the world in which they live. As a result, to conceive them independently of attunement is to ignore their *existential condition*. The

learner's attunement and moods in his world create openness to his possibilities or, to the contrary, close his possibilities. Therefore, the type of a learner's confrontation with the atmosphere of education and her teacher is not *subjective* in any way.

### Understanding

Early in this article, we pointed out that, in addition to the attunement existential, Heidegger mentions another character that opens its way to Being. For him, this second existential character is *understanding*. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger links the discussion of *understanding* to the *projection* of *Dasein* and the *possibilities* of *Dasein*. He reminds us that when we use the word *verstehen* in German, we are talking about understanding in different contexts, which is often considered a way of *potentiality for being*: (*einer Sache vorstehen können, ihr gewachsen sein, etwas können*). That is, the potentiality to prepare something; having the ability to do something. With this consideration, understanding is connected to *Dasein's* projection and potentiality. On page 143 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger notes that to understand how to ride a bicycle or to understand how to roll a cigarette is to be able to *deal* (*Umgang*) with these things. In other words, *Dasein* is *aware* of the possibilities offered by the wheel, cigarette paper, and tobacco. Therefore, to understand something is to be aware of the possibilities hidden in that thing, which we know how to actualize. Heidegger then compares the two existential characteristics *Befindlichkeit* and *Verstehen*, saying that while in *Dasein's* attunement, its thrownness is highlighted, in understanding, *Dasein's* projective component is especially important.

### Neglecting the existentials of *Dasein* and the crisis of nothingness (nihilism)

In this way, it can be said that the existential of understanding does not adequately address *ultimacy* in its common and Aristotelian sense, just as Nietzsche questions the teleological understanding of the world by criticizing *teleology*, asserting that teleology encompasses *Beings* and destroys the experience of living beings and life. Therefore, in such a landscape, thinking about the *present*, which is steeped in tradition and the future, is sacrificed to a *telos* that is far away, which then leaves the tradition in a rigid state and causes the historicity and temporality of human understanding to undergo a crisis. Nietzsche says, "... The figs fall from the tree: they are sweet and good. And as they fall, their red skin rips. I am a north wind to ripe figs" (Nietzsche,

2019, p. 394). It is the teachings themselves that have departed the immature state like this! They should be educated to eliminate the danger of *nihilism* that has been revealed to us with the *tradition of uniform education and a rigid moral system*.

With the will to power, we should pick up an ax to carve out the figure that is hidden within the stone of the tradition; an ax for reading history vividly... an ax on the rough stone of history to make it *alive*; an ax that is mine and “I” should know which part of the stone to carve with it! The self that axes, the self that whips the truth, is the self that “is head and heart” and “is not just a cold head and a broken heart” (2019, p. 74). If the head and heart are together, they can find a *situational* understanding. It means that the “self” is neither the mind alone nor the heart alone! Rather, it is both of them together, which create a *new language* by saying yes to *nature* and saying yes to *Being* and *historicity*, and saying no to strict morality and *opening a new way*. Rigid and systematic ethics lead us to nihilism, which is compared to a black snake that crawls into the shepherd’s throat (2019, p. 170). Nietzsche uses this horrifying metaphor for nihilism and the crisis of meaning, which rigidifies and encloses *Dasein*’s understanding and attunement. In fact, rigid systems cause meaningful and nihilistic crises in education and ethics by giving portraits of a savior and teleological models in which no reconstruction takes place.

Here, Heidegger mentions seemingly contradictory concepts, which are nonetheless complementary to each other, and their combination, which is indeed the combination of *Dasein*’s existential attributes, provides *Dasein* with allowing an ecstatic existence. These concepts include the fading of power in the dimension of attunement and the falling of *Dasein* and the concentration of power in the dimension of its understanding and projection; passivity and activity; the dimension of preservation and maintenance (*Afektion*), and the dimension of consistency and innovation (*Konstitution*), the dimension of acceptance (*Rezeptivität*), and the dimension of creativity (*Spontanität*).

It can be seen from here that *Dasein* forms a relationship based on praxis and pragmatism with the world due to being thrown into the world and the attunement that connects it with the world, on the one hand, and due to the understanding and characteristic of projecting, on the other hand. On page 145 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains these relationships as follows: *Da* has the character of disclosure in *Dasein*, and this arises from *Dasein*’s potentiality for being (*Seinkönnen*). *Dasein*, as a relative of Being which is aware of this kinship, can realize its existence, and the most significant representation of this realization is its disclosure to Being, and the basis of this disclosure is the

occurrence of *Dasein* in the world. Due to having understanding, *Dasein* can give consistency to this being-in-the-world. *Dasein*'s potential to exist or to be (if these phrases are properly understood) requires space for realization (*Spielraum*). *Dasein* creates this space based on its projective character. The greater the presence of the theme (*Thema*) in these projections, the greater his potentiality for being will be. However, *Dasein* projects itself on the possibilities that the world has provided him with; that is, its *projection-based activities* are deeply tied to its world rather than a plan independent of the world. If *Dasein* projects, it is because it is constantly projecting; that is, projection is its essence because it has a contingent character. Heidegger uses the word (*responsorich*) to explain the relationship between the projection of understanding and the thrown projection of *Dasein* in the world. This means that there is a form of response between these two: that one (understanding) addresses the world (*ansprechen*) and the world prepares an appropriate response (*entsprechen*). As we pointed out before, Heidegger reaches the concept of the significant (*Deutung*) through *t* interaction, which results from the mutual responses of finding and projecting. This is a special combination of thrown projection. *Dasein*, which is involved in giving consistency to the world, performs a practical activity.

### **Another layer of existential understanding**

Heidegger goes on to show another layer of existential understanding, reminding us that understanding is not necessarily explicit (*expliziet*). Heidegger writes that the character of the projective understanding is that it does not have a theoretical approach to what is the purpose of planning; that is, the possibilities, and does not thematize it in the first place. When understanding is detailed and thematized, it is called interpretation (*Auslegung*). Heidegger notes that the concept of interpretation in its narrow sense is an expression of the relationship of the reader of a text with the text, but in its broad sense, it is the expression of the relation of *Dasein*; that is, falling into the world with the projective feature of his understanding. If interpretation (*Auslegung*) is the creative, active, and thematic dimension of *Dasein*, this interpretation always has the structure of *something as something* (*etwas als etwas*) (Heidegger, 1997, p. 149). *Dasein*, when faced with objects, defines them in the form of categories (*Klassifikation*) or in the board of properties (giving them character). These definitions are secondary to sense formations or meaningful forms (*Sinngebild*). That is, before they are categorized into categories and characteristics, objects are in a meaningful

package in the world, which is subsequently interpreted and detailed.

Here, it is obvious that Heidegger, in an effort to explain the nature of universities (*Das Wesen der Universität*), asserts that all knowledge only deals with the part of Being that is represented in beings. This approach, which Heidegger calls regional ontology, requires a larger realm that gives meaning to these regional reflections. Heidegger's attempt to reconcile Max Weber's and Oswald Spengler's conflicts about the task of the university indicates that he wants to go beyond the limits of knowledge in Weber's view as a *profession* (Weber, 1946), to show that Spengler's belief in returning spiritual energy to German humanities (Spengler, 1991) requires a precise understanding of the origin and *beginning* of this force, which is Being.

Drawing on the principle of *thrown projection*, Heidegger notes that *Dasein* turns to its possibilities in order to actualize its existence. *Dasein*'s possibilities, in the core sense of the term "possibility," are the contexts in which *Dasein* can implement its *potentiality of Being*. This means that such possibilities while rooted in the history and tradition of *Dasein*, can take new forms relative to his existence. It is from here that *Dasein* can be perceived in relation to Being and in its future interactions, it can develop new forms of meaning that are *Ereignis*. In such a sense, the event is a deep transformation in the relationship between *Dasein* and the world, which is helped by Being and is a way out of the narrow interpretations arising from regional ontologies, which often lead to a form of epistemic and political totalitarianism in the process of development.

From here, we can see that educational institutions are obliged to always take into account the state of regional knowledge based on the thrown projection as a characteristic of *Dasein*, and prepare *Dasein* to face meaningful events in these meaningless times.

### **The ontological unity of *Dasein* and the world**

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger shows the combined link between the falling of *Dasein* and the projective nature of its understanding by turning to the difference between hearing and hearkening: "Hearkening is phenomenally still more primordial than what is defined 'in the first instance' as 'hearing' in psychology—the sensing of tones and the perception of sounds. Hearkening too has the kind of Being of the hearing which understands. What we 'first' hear is never noises or complexes of sounds, but the creaking wagon, the motorcycle. We hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the fire crackling" (Heidegger, 1997, p. 163).

It can be understood from these remarks by Heidegger that there is an ontological similarity between us and objects and between the imperceptible and the perceptible. Various versions of dualism that arise from metaphysical thought, including the separation between what is in the realm of the senses and what is not in this realm, darken our understanding of the proportionality and similarity that exists between us and the world. According to the common view in metaphysical epistemologies, perception is a kind of representation. This means that objects become mental images and then they are understood via the mechanisms of our minds. In *Der Satz vom Grund*, Martin Heidegger has a very deep contemplation on this, to the effect that it is not the case that, in the first place, the audible and the visible enter our hearing and vision; that is, they are “never just sensory recordings” (*niemals ein bloß sinnliches Aufnehmen*) so that we can subsequently hear and see them. The pre-existence of the sensing subject (the human being who perceives the sensations) and the perceptible (hearings and observations) and their being-in-the-world allows such relativity. In other words, in this givenness, a relationship between sense and the perceptible is formed, and hearing and seeing become possible.

From here, we can see that there is no gap between *Dasein's* hearing, seeing, and understanding. We are the ones who directly hear, see, and understand the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, and the fire crackling. In this process, our ears and eyes are not separated from our personal experience, and contrary to the *theory of representational knowledge*, it is not as if there is a gap between *us* and our *sensations* so that imaginations (*Vorstellungen*) stand between us and them. For Heidegger, *Vorstellungen* are secondary and derivative categories. Heidegger further emphasizes that “of course we hear through [*durch*] the ear, but not with [*mit*] the ear. The ear is the *sensory organ* of something that mediates [*ermittelt*] the audible for us. Therefore, when the human ear becomes dull, that is, deaf, as the case of Beethoven shows, we still hear, and perhaps we hear more, and perhaps our message is greater than what we heard before” (Heidegger, 1997, p. 70).

From the above discussion, it follows that there is a unity between what we see and hear. It is necessary to consider and respond to this unity. Our sensory perceptions are answers to questions that arise from our encounters with beings, and this answer takes place in a *context* that is given and is a *gift* from the *Being*. This way of becoming an audience (*ansprechen*) and this mutual interaction with seeing and hearing (*entsprechen*), etc. are due to the similarity and ontological unity between us and our world. This unity indicates a deep connection between our sensory powers and *Dasein's* thinking. With this consideration, our sensory organs project things in their perceptible designs

that have previously been sheltered in our existential thinking. Heidegger further writes:

Because our hearing (*Hören*) and seeing (*Sehen*) is never a mere sensuous reception (*ein bloß sinnliches Aufnehmen*), it is therefore inappropriate to claim that thinking (*Denken*) as hearkening (*Er-hören*) and seeing (*Er-blicken*) is only meant as a transference, namely as a transference of the supposedly sensuous into the non-sensuous. The concept of “transference” and of the metaphor rests on the distinction, if not outright separation, of the sensuous and non-sensuous as two separate realms. Establishing this distinction between the sensuous and the non-sensuous, the physical and the non-physical is a fundamental feature of what is called metaphysics and decisively determines Western thinking. With the insight that the aforementioned distinction between the sensuous and the non-sensuous remains insufficient, metaphysics loses the rank of the authoritative way of thinking. (Heidegger, 1997, p. 72)

If our sensory organs project things in their sensual projects that have previously been sheltered in our Being thinking, this is because the way of Being of *Dasein* is being possible, and what is meant by this possibility is an existential possibility, which is the originator and basis of any other possibility. In the description of paragraph 31 of *Being and Time*, Luckner called this possibility meta-possibility: “It is not possible to attribute ability or capability to *Dasein*, because *Dasein* is not a present-at-hand being. The possibility of *Dasein* is not an essential ability or a talent in his depth, but it is a kind of meta-possibility, that is, based on Heidegger’s opinion, the existential possibility is to be free [...] for the most authentic ability to be (Luckner, 1997, p. 123). *Dasein* owes its meta-possibility to being. This special feature of *Dasein* has made it prone to place other beings on two levels of reading to-hand and present-at-hand. In other words, the corporeal structure of *Dasein* in a genetic relationship with its structure is a being turning towards Being and determines the occurrence of Being (*Seins-Ereignisse*). Therefore, a number of researchers based on the position of *Dasein*, which is the foundation of the division for reading to hand and present-at-hand beings, have referred to the corporeality of handiness and corporeality of presence based on the manner of disclosure of *Dasein* (Ghoreyshi & Karbasizadeh, 2021, p. 362). In this view, it is believed that “in corporeality of presence, the physical body plays a constitutive or causal role in knowledge-based processes. However, in the corporeality of handiness, the essential role of the

ready-to-hand instrumental body is emphasized in knowledge-based processes” (2021, p. 362). At the end of their article, these researchers explain both aspects of *Dasein's* physicality based on the temporality of the care structure of *Dasein*, which is based on the death-familiarity of *Dasein* as its most authentic ability to be. Hence, fundamental ontology provides a large capacity for *Dasein's* corporeality, “although Heidegger himself did not put forward such notions of corporeality” (2021, p. 359). But, this issue is followed by other commentators such as Merleau-Ponty, dealing with which is out of the scope of this paper.

### **A scrutiny of the nature of the crisis of meaninglessness**

Here, Heidegger confronts us with an important question: do we undertake the task of categorizing objects (*Gegenstand*) by using linguistic tools; that is, with the help of propositions and statements? Or from the very beginning, we realize the meanings (*Deutungsleistung*) through a simple perception free from propositions? The ready-to-hand is always understood in terms of a totality of involvements. This totality need not be grasped explicitly by a thematic interpretation (Heidegger, 1997, pp. 149-150). Heidegger admits that the meaning is formed through *Dasein's* encounter with the world according to his disclosure, which is obtained through *Dasein's* attunement and is later represented in terms of propositions and sentences. Considering this *something as something* in the realm of logical sentences and propositions, that is, in the realm of *logic*, is a branch of the interpretation of objects in the light of the disclosure of *Dasein*. Therefore, in the world of possibilities, it was in conformity to *Dasein's* character of projective understanding. Therefore, an understanding of statements and logical sentences depends on understanding them in the existential contexts of *Dasein*. In Heidegger's terminology, *Dasein* as existential and hermeneutic is prior to *Dasein* as propositional and apophantic, and this is where Heidegger talks about the pre-structures of interpretation and subsequently the circularity of hermeneutic interpretation. It means that the object of interpretation must be understood beforehand.

Understanding is pre-thematic and implicit, while interpretation is thematic and explicit. To give a detailed account of what a hammer is, it is necessary to know how we work with a hammer (*umgehen*). In other words, we can interpret a text when we have already understood it. So the structure of meaning is rooted in the existential constitution of *Dasein*; that is, in the understanding that interprets (1997, p. 153).

Heidegger suggests that the circle of understanding is not a circle in which

any random kind of knowledge may move; rather, it is the expression of the existential fore-structure of *Dasein* (*Vorstuktur des Daseins*) (1997, p. 153). This existential pre-structure of *Dasein* has three components: fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception (*Vorhabe, Vorsicht, Vorgriff*), a detailed description of which should be left to another occasion.

Heidegger notes that, in fact, thematization of any subject requires a proper question about it, elaborating the *formal structure* of questions: Andreas Lukner used the formal structure of the question to thematize the issue in the following example: “What is your name?” which is addressed to a person named Rebecca. He then explains that, in this question, the name is (*Gefragte*) that which is asked about. Rebecca is that which is to be found by the asking (*Erfragte*), and the addressee of the question is that which is interrogated (*Befragte*) (Luckner, 1997, pp. 14-16). If we did not have a rough understanding of the name, we would never have been able to search for Rebecca (*Erfragte*). In the question of Being, which is lost in every *Dasein*, *Gefragte* is a being as *Dasein* with which we have already had a relationship in the context that involved meaningful significance. Due to the predominance of the metaphysical thought that has obscured *Gefragte* and put beings in the place of Being, *Erfragte* has also become darker and darker. Heidegger believed that this wrong detour was the *beginning of nihilism*. On Heidegger’s sensitivity to such questioning, Gadamer underscores the difference in his approach to education and other people who are often professors and prominent people, admitting that “Heidegger was evidently a teacher with a clear and strong passion for the ‘taught’ who pulled his students into a ‘whirl of radical questions’ (Hodge, 2015, p. 78). Now it is necessary to ask the question, “What is Being?” Let us explain *Befragte* by analyzing its characteristics, which are ontological (that is, *Dasein*). Perhaps our persistence in analyzing the ontological characteristics of *Dasein*, as a relative of Being, will provide the preparatory conditions for going beyond nihilism. Of course, according to the elements of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology, which is derived from an analysis of the ontological characteristics of *Dasein* (man), we should be looking for a plan arising from the understanding of *Dasein*, which provides a way for giving meaning when referring to the nihilistic world. Heidegger believes that the fundamental attunement of anxiety (*Angst*), which is caused by the existential of death and being-towards-death, gives the conditions under which the projective nature of *Dasein* heralds the possibility of a new form of the emergence of Being. It goes without saying that, associated with such a demand, we must clarify the nature of the current crisis of meaninglessness, which is inspired by the dominance of technology

(*Gestell*), whose foundations are derived from *Dasein*-projection, which has disclosed the world through Greek-Hellenic attunement, and has continued since 2500 years ago and now it occasionally brings a new achievement from its old reservoir.

## Conclusion

In the pedagogical approaches of the new age, avoiding and rejecting the question of the Being of the being, and the relationships of the teacher and the student with themselves, the other, and their surroundings have been marginalized. In such a view, apart from the fact that the existentials of understanding and mood are ignored, the relation of Pathos and Eros with the educational situation is also forgotten. Unfortunately, in common approaches to the philosophy of pedagogy, the trainer or trainee are considered as beings with specific definitions, in which the inherent meaning, which is the source of creativity and potential, is hidden and both of them fall into the trap of moral systems, identical norms, categories, and predetermined behaviors, and stated definitions, and this leads to a broader way toward nihilism. In other words, in the current era, trainers and trainees are caught in a state of crisis and futility by losing their relationship with the surrounding world and the generative source of their potential and world. This article showed that *Dasein* is thrown within the relations of language and tradition from the beginning, and it has a common and inauthentic (uneigentlich) understanding of them in the first place, which is often corporeal, moody, passionate, and based on Pathos, which does not follow the common discourse of the separation of the body from the soul, which represses Being and its proportions. Therefore, the relationship of the trainer and the trainee with things and the surrounding world creates an understanding which is not predictable and of a reflective type, and it is of high importance to pay attention to such an understanding in the path of education so that the trainer's transcendence can be assisted within it and it can be given opportunities to have an open understanding of its relationships and potential. Therefore, as some suggest, anything can be done by *Dasein* with foresight and anticipation. For instance, the soil that is moved by the gardener's spade and the text that becomes meaningful for the reader along with his intentions. Foresights are often not conscious and implicit in the movements of *Dasein*. Given this fact, it can be said that the trainer's and trainee's understanding of the world and their relationships is corporeal and earthly (Bodenhaftigkeit) and does not rely on the theory of separation of the body and the soul, in which the commands of the brain play a central role and is not derived from a special commander called the Brain. Therefore, it is

necessary that the educational environment always takes into account the “corporeal” understanding of the trainer and the trainee, and regardless of the components of understanding and meaning, temporal characteristics should not be considered for the teacher and the trainer as a starting point in the field of conventional knowledge.

Given this consideration, it can be said that, for example, an Iranian baby searches for its own meaning, and in other words, it is located in the existing relationships exactly at the same time as it is born. According to typological studies, we know that songs, proverbs, and legends which are transmitted in different ways in our oral literature (*Geworfenheit*), are considered the three important and influential genres in the education of children in Iran, and oral and verbal arts have been used to educate Iranian children. What is provided to children in this way, due to its deep existential connections, does not have specific goals and inherent predictability, rather, the baby is placed within an existential understanding and interpretation of the world from the very beginning, and perhaps it can be said that the baby is called to the world and understands itself in relation with such a world by hearing lullabies, songs, proverbs, seeing, sensory means, and bodily movements. It can then be inferred why Heidegger considered the constitution of *Dasein* to being in this world. The fundamental existential characteristics of *Dasein*, that is, being thrown on the one hand and projection on the other hand, place *Dasein* in its universal relations, and from this point of view, the educational possibilities regarding its being itself (self-being) cannot be considered without existential understanding and temporality of *Dasein*; but at the same time, *Dasein* is always open to the future and open to all the unknowns, in this state of being thrown, to the extent that it can contribute to Being in the creation of new historical moments (*entwerfen*).

Among the most important components of pedagogical and educational spaces such as classrooms is the belief in educators whose understanding is tied to corporeality and factuality, and therefore, the main source of pedagogical and educational activities is mainly based on a deep connection with such conditions. Given such considerations, it is wrong to recommend the realization of the common possibilities in modern education systems arising from similar subjects or humans without initial understanding and independent of tradition and history.

In such a case, predictions influenced by engineers to reach a specific

answer are inauthentic. The trainer should be considered as a guide who gradually fills the voids and empty spaces of the curriculum of life by taking care of the universality and understanding of the teacher. In fact, this filling with life means that the trainer appeals to relationships tied to the trainee's understanding. Therefore, it is not possible to start from an idealistic or beyond-his-life understanding based on instructions or advice.

In conclusion, dealing with the existentials of *Dasein* is a way to open up to the positions of a trainer and trainee. In this article, in addition to existentials, the important role of the relation of Pathos and corporeality with existentials has been given special attention in a way that cultivating and considering them in pedagogy opens the way to event-like projections.

### **Ethics declarations**

### **Conflict of interests**

The authors have no competing interests.

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