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Attunement, Deprivation, and Drive: Heidegger and Animality
Gerard Kuperus

With the German *Stimmung*, which can be translated as “mood,” or, better, as “attunement,”¹ Heidegger describes the being of the human being as “being-there” (*Dasein*). This *Dasein* is always in a mood or attunement. For it can be (not) in the mood for something; it can be in one of its moods; it can be moody; or *Dasein* can be in a bad or a happy mood. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger argues that, because of our moods, our world is “never the same from day to day.”² Even scientific research does not know reality in an absolute manner, since the attunement of the researcher opens up the world it investigates: “even the purest θεωρία [theory] has not left all moods behind it.”³ Although this perhaps appears as a limitation, our attunements, in fact, make the world accessible in the first place: they open up the world to us.⁴

In his 1929-30 lecture course, the *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*,⁵ Heidegger describes the opening up of the world through our being attuned, in opposition to the poverty in world that, according to Heidegger, characterizes the being of the (non-human) animal. While our constant attunement constitutes the very accessibility to the world, the animal is poor in world, as it can only behave towards the objects that it encounters. It lacks the kind of opening up of the world that is made possible through our (human) attunements.⁶

In this essay, I discuss the poverty in world of the (non-human) animal, as analyzed by Heidegger. Heidegger himself admits that it is a somewhat obscure statement, and that it only seems to have meaning in relation to the *Dasein* of the human animal: the animal is poor in

world, yet it is not completely deprived of world.⁷ Although Heidegger's analysis in his lecture-course pertains primarily to the concept of world, he does provide an interesting analysis of the difference between the human and non-human animal. It is particularly interesting in that he does not describe the human being as an animal with logos, or as an animals with rationality, nor does he describe humans as political animals, as is often done in the tradition. Alternatively, it is precisely the *ability to be attuned* that constitutes the particularity of human existence, according to Heidegger.

In his lecture course, Heidegger discusses three different forms of poverty and deprivation. First of all, the above mentioned poverty in world of the non-human animal, second, the poverty in the being of contemporary *Dasein*, and, third, the deprivation of world in the fundamental attunement of profound boredom. In this essay, I will discuss these three forms of poverty or deprivation, where the goal is to offer a preliminary analysis of Heidegger's distinction between the human and the non-human animal.

Poverty in World: The Being of the Animal

In the second chapter of his lecture course, Heidegger draws his famous distinction between the human being (*Dasein*), the animal, and the stone, by their respective having and not having of world. Heidegger states that the stone is "worldless," that the animal is "poor in world," and that the human being is "world forming."⁸ The thesis that the animal is poor in world is Heidegger's "point of departure" for his analysis, which results in a comparison between, on the one hand, the stone and the animal, and, on the other hand, between the animal and the human being.⁹ The animal's existence lies between the stone and the human being. But what does it mean to be "between" them? What does "poverty in world" mean? The poverty in the world of animality is,

as Heidegger indicates, the most obscure of these three theses, and – as we will see – has a meaning *only* in comparison with the other two.

Heidegger starts the analysis with a comparison between animal and man, a comparison between poverty and wealth. The animal possesses less: “less in respect of what is accessible to it, of whatever as an animal it can deal with, of whatever it can be affected by as an animal, of whatever it can relate to as a living being.”¹⁰ The world of the animal is limited: the bee’s world, for example, is limited to its hive, blossom, and other bees. It is not only that the domain of the animal is quite small, but “the extent and manner in which an animal is able to penetrate whatever is accessible to it is also limited.”¹¹ This means that the animal is not able “to know” things around it. The human animal, instead, has a world that is much richer: it is greater in range, and it is able to extend this range. Human animals can explore new areas, while the bee will only busy itself with its hive, blossom, and other bees. We are also able to penetrate much deeper in our world than the animal can. This difference in depth can be found, for example, in the idea that the bee “does not know the stamens of these blossoms *as* stamens, it knows nothing about the roots of the plant and it cannot know anything about the number of stamens or leaves...”¹² These examples of relation to beings fall outside the range of possibilities for the bee. It falls outside the possibilities of animality to have access to beings *as such*. The human being, in contrast, can penetrate into the range of the “as such:” we can experience beings *as beings*. The human being’s range is, compared to the animal’s range, not only fundamentally different in the sense of this accessibility of beings as beings, but is also larger and can be extended: it is a penetrability that can “penetrate ever more deeply in this penetrability.”¹³ Hence the world-formation of man is “the extendibility of everything that he relates to.”¹⁴ In other words – both horizontal (a wider range) and vertical (deeper penetration) expansion is possible. For the

animal, in contrast, no horizontal or vertical expansion is possible. There can be expansion for the animal, but this is only possible within its own range. In this vein, the bee can, for example explore a new field with blossoming flowers, but it cannot explore a whole new area. This differentiation in penetrability between non-human and human animal can be characterized as a difference in the accessibility of beings.

How then is animal existence characterized in contrast to *Dasein's* possibility to relate to beings as such? Heidegger defines the animal's poverty in world as deprivation: "What is poor here by no means represents merely what is 'less' or 'lesser' with respect to what is 'more' or 'greater.'"¹⁵ This does not mean that a hierarchy is set up between the animal and the human being, or between different animals, which would mean that the animal is less in being poor. To be poor, instead, has to be understood here as a "*being deprived* [*Entbehren*],"¹⁶ which is not a lack or deficiency, but pertains to the *way in which* it is poor. This "way" pertains to the lack of attunement of the animal, or "how it takes this deprivation [...] *the way* in which it is *in a mood* [*zu Mute*] – *poverty in mood* [*Ar-mut*]." ¹⁷ As the translators suggest, with the expressions "*zu Mute*" and "*Ar-mut*," Heidegger here refers in the German to the mood of the animal, or rather, to the lack of mood.¹⁸ In this way, deprivation – poverty in world – is, as Heidegger argues here, not to be understood as "poor" or "meager" (like the poor flow of water in a river), but rather, as "poverty in mood."

Poverty in mood, or lack of attunement, is described as captivity (*Benommenheit*). The organism "drives itself towards its own capability for ..." ¹⁹ Any capability, for Heidegger, requires a drive (*Trieb*): there is no capacity without a drive, and only "something that is capable, and remains capable, is alive."²⁰ The drive and capability of the animal requires some sort of a unity, which cannot be characterized as personhood, but is an absorption in itself: the animal

“intrinsically retains itself and is intrinsically absorbed in itself.”²¹ This absorption is characterized as captivation, which is a necessary condition for the animal: it “can only behave insofar it is essentially captivated.”²² The animal is constantly driven by instincts, such as the instinct to collect and store food. To illustrate this, Heidegger mentions the bee – one of his favorite examples. The bee flies towards a particular scent; it is driven towards this scent “for the purpose of collecting and storing food.”²³ Heidegger questions whether a bee knows what it is doing. He refers, in this regard, to a scientific experiment in which a bee’s abdomen is cut away. When it is fed honey it keeps sucking from a large bowl of honey. Because its abdomen is cut away, the bee loses the honey, and never “becomes full.” Yet, it keeps sucking honey “even while the honey runs out of the bee from behind.”²⁴ This proves, for Heidegger, that the bee by no means is able to recognize the presence of too much honey; it simply keeps sucking it into his body, following the mere drive to collect honey.

Normally – when there is no cruel biologist cutting away its abdomen – the bee will stop sucking when it cannot take anymore, when it is full. Another drive will immediately occupy the bee: the drive to bring the honey to its hive. Now, with the honey running out from behind, it “is simply taken [*hingenommen*] by its food.”²⁵ This instinctual being taken “towards ...” “excludes the possibility of any recognition of presence.”²⁶ It is a “specific inhibition” in which the animal does not have a comportment towards beings, but merely behaves (*benahmen*), without any apprehending (*vernehmen*).²⁷ The “possibility of apprehending something as something is withheld [*genommen*] from the animal,”²⁸ it is taken away from it in its being captivated (*benommen*). The animal is thus taken (*hingenommen*) and captivated by beings, such that it cannot come to a stop; it can only behave through a behaving towards beings. The instinctual drivenness is “a being driven from one drive to the other.”²⁹

Heidegger describes this captivation as taking place in a ring, which encircles the animal, and is “constituted by the reciprocal drivenness of its drives.”³⁰ Within this ring nothing appears simply *as* something. Heidegger illustrates this with female insects that eliminate the male partner after copulation. This implies that another animal is never simply there as another living creature, but is there as sexual partner, and, when the sexual aspect disappears, as prey. The animal, therefore, does not grasp a being *as such*, but grasps all beings merely in terms of its behavior.

The encircling ring – the surrounding environment to which the animal has access – is, as Heidegger calls it, a “disinhibiting ring.”³¹ While the animal does have access or openness to the world within this ring, this access is characterized as drivenness and behavior. It is – as Heidegger argues – the “*encirclement* which makes possible the behavior in which the animal is related to other things.”³² This relatedness is not a comportment towards beings; rather, the animal “opens itself up to what is other in approaching it.”³³ In the above mentioned examples, we can see that this approach is always an approach of something as ... (prey, partner, etc.) within which that which is approached never is understood *as such*. This openness as approach is a disinhibition [*Entthemmung*]; a not being able to stop, a mere drive from one drive to the other. The disinhibiting ring is, therefore, not to be understood as “a kind of encapsulation;” instead, the animal opens up a sphere, “the animal surrounds itself with a disinhibiting ring.”³⁴ The ring is thus not laid down by an external force, as it were, but is constituted from out of the animal itself. The life of the animal is “the struggle [*Ringen*] to maintain this encircling ring or sphere.”³⁵ The animal is being taken as such; its driven existence is an open absorption in the ring, which is constituted and maintained by the animal itself.

Human Poverty

In the preceding pages, I have discussed Heidegger's analysis of the animal's poverty in world. The animal is captivated in a ring within which it is driven and within which it behaves towards objects. Within this ring it is opened up and captivated. In what follows, I will discuss how Heidegger describes the existence of *Dasein* as it is captivated in the everyday, and how its loss of captivation in the form of profound boredom relates to the poverty in world and the captivation of the animal. The guiding questions in this regard are how Heidegger distinguishes our everyday captivation from the captivation of the animal, and how the deprivation experienced in fundamental boredom differs from the deprivation of the non-human animal.

Heidegger criticizes contemporary *Dasein* for constantly occupying itself with the beings that surround it, within which – one could say – *Dasein* forgets itself. *Dasein* is absorbed with all kinds of responsibilities, tasks and appointments. In completing these, we have become an indifferent one, a no one, because we busy ourselves with the beings that surround us, with the “present-at-hand” and the “ready-to-hand.” We occupy ourselves with those things that we can handle with our acquired skills. We are – as one could say – lost in the things. Our identity has been lost in the beings with which we occupy ourselves. We have become – as Heidegger himself expresses it – an “undetermined I.”³⁶

It seems, at first glance, that the situation of contemporary *Dasein*, determined as an “undetermined I,” is closely related to the poverty of the animal. The animal is driven towards beings and *Dasein* is occupied with beings. As discussed above, Heidegger states that all capacities involve drives. Such a general formulation seems to be applicable both to animal and

to human beings, as they both have capacities, which are enabled through drives. However, Heidegger draws a clear distinction between the *behavior* of the animal, characterized as *drive*, and the *comportment* of the human being, characterized as *action*. Human comportment is a “doing and acting,” while the behavior of the animal is a “*driven performing* [*Treiben*].” An “instinctual drivenness, as it were, characterizes all such animal performance.”³⁷

However, the distinction between behavior and action remains quite indeterminate. Is the comportment of the human being, within which its “behavior” is an acting upon beings, radically different from the animal behavior as drive? The animal only behaves towards beings, while *Dasein* can know things *as such*. Yet, Heidegger’s claim is that in our everyday occupation and acting upon beings, we are absorbed and forget both about the “as such” of the beings upon which we act, as well as about our own being. This oblivion seems to bring us closer to the animal world, as we merely “behave towards” beings, without knowing them “as such.” Heidegger nevertheless maintains that there is a fundamental difference between the animal behavior and the acting of *Dasein*.

As discussed in the introduction, Heidegger describes the human animal as a being-in-the-world that always involves an attunement or mood. Attunements open up the world. The animal, on the other hand, is described as a poverty in mood and is said by Heidegger to lack *Dasein*’s kind of accessibility to the world. The only relation the animal has to the world is through behavior. As opposed to this deprived world of the animal, even the deprivation of *Dasein* is determined as mood or attunement. In order to shed more light upon the concept of attunement, I will next discuss Heidegger’s analysis of profound boredom.

The first part of Heidegger’s lecture-course starts with an analysis of deprivation or poverty in the form of boredom. Boredom is an attunement directly related to our captivation through

“the everyday,” the immediate and prevalent occupation with everyday life that entails an attempt to avoid boredom. In his analysis of boredom, Heidegger distinguishes three different forms: (1) becoming bored *by* something, for example, while waiting for the next train, (2) being bored *with* something and the passing of time belonging to it, for instance, at a dinner-party, and (3) *profound boredom*. I will leave the first two forms of boredom aside and focus on profound boredom, which is characterized as “it is boring for one” [*es ist einem langweilig*].³⁸ In this case we are not bored with or bored by something, but, rather, we *experience indifference*, i.e., the emptiness of our existence. The “it” of “it is boring for one,” “is the title for whatever is indeterminate, unfamiliar,” which is nothing else than “one’s own self that has been left standing, the self that everyone himself or herself is.”³⁹ We are thus familiar with this “it,” as it is *who we are*. We are, on the other hand, estranged from this familiarity, which has become an “it.” Our own self vanishes. “Name, standing, vocation, role, age and fate as mine and yours disappear.”⁴⁰ All these parts of our identity, of who we are, emerge into the “undifferentiated no one.” We, i.e., contemporary *Dasein*, have become no one. *Dasein* has disappeared into the everyday, which, earlier in the course, is described as a being held captive (*gefangen*).⁴¹ We are imprisoned by the beings that surround us. Earlier I described Heidegger’s use of the word “*benommen*,” which characterizes the captivation of the animal. The imprisonment of contemporary *Dasein* is, on the other hand, captured with the word *gefangen*. This choice of words is significant, since it suggests that, in contrast to animals that are simply *taken by* that towards which they are driven, we are held captive. While our everyday existence is in general perhaps not so different from this animal existence, Heidegger’s language already suggests that human beings have the possibility to escape the captivation of their everyday existence, while animals do not have such a possibility in their “being taken.”

Such an escape is offered in the attunement of profound boredom, which is a loss of the power that we have in our everyday being.⁴² It is an elevation beyond “the particular situation in each case and beyond the *specific beings* surrounding us there.”⁴³ The particular situation – within which we find ourselves attuned – and the specific beings that surround us do not simply leave us empty, but they do not have any particular value to us. We could even suggest that we are not even bored with the beings that surround us, but “all and everything appears indifferent to us.”⁴⁴ In this “being left empty” things do not disappear, but they show themselves as a whole in their indifference. Heidegger characterizes this as “*Dasein’s being delivered over to beings’ telling refusal of themselves as a whole.*”⁴⁵ The beings that surround *Dasein*, which in its everyday existence keep *Dasein* busy, do not tell anything, they refuse themselves as a whole. This telling refusal of beings as a whole is a lack of possibilities; there are no possibilities offered. This “being left empty” is the first moment of profound boredom.

It is perhaps not easy to conceive this attunement, especially since Heidegger does not give any examples, in contrast to the first two forms of boredom. One is not bored as one has to pass time, nor is one bored by the conversation or behavior of others during a social gathering, but one is bored in a more fundamental way. The lack of examples in the description of profound boredom might in fact give a hint here. In this attunement of profound boredom we are not being bored by, or being bored with *something*, as in the two examples that were given earlier; rather, *all things lose all meaning*. In profound boredom, things are *indifferent*, instead of *boring*. In response, we are, as we will see, necessarily thrown upon ourselves.

When boredom arises we mostly struggle against it. When we are bored we try to escape it and put it to sleep, by trying to relate to something that has meaning for us – something that can drag us from this uncanny attunement into a more pleasant one. Heidegger describes profound

boredom in a radically different way, namely, in the sense that this attunement seems to be attractive. In this connection, Heidegger writes: “it would almost be presumptuous to close ourselves off from what this attunement wishes to tell us.”⁴⁶ Profound boredom, in this way, is a “telling refusal” that brings with it a “being held in limbo,” a *Hingehaltenheit*, i.e., a being held back, being in the state of a stance, or brought to a halt. This being held in limbo is the telling refusal that “is in itself a *telling*.”⁴⁷ For, it points to the very possibilities of the activity of *Dasein*. This is not a speaking about, or a dealing with, possibilities, “but in its telling refusal it *points to them* and makes them known in refusing them.”⁴⁸ Precisely in not telling, the moment of “being left empty” tells us something as a “dawning.”⁴⁹ What is announced in this dawning are the unexploited possibilities of *Dasein*: it shows *Dasein* in its possibilities. In other words, the indeterminate character of profound boredom takes away the concrete possibilities and forces us to contemplate upon our very determination. The telling refusal is, then, a lack of possibilities that entails an understanding that this attunement must tell us something about our very existence and about our possibilities.

The above described situation of the everyday, within which *Dasein* has become undifferentiated as a “no one,” is reversed in the attunement of profound boredom. When it is boring for one, the undifferentiated I becomes bored by that which has made her into this “no one.” The beings that have made one undifferentiated, become undifferentiated *for* one. “Beings as a whole refuse themselves tellingly, not to me as me, but to the *Dasein* in me whenever I know that ‘it is boring for one.’”⁵⁰ A call is – so to speak – made, to that which is forgotten in one’s occupational existence, i.e., one’s very existence in the world.

The “impoverishment” or emptiness described by Heidegger here is thus, in fact, not only a deprivation or poverty, but – paradoxically – brings a certain wealth, we could say. For, indeed,

in the deprivation of world, new possibilities are given, new possibilities are “calling.” This poverty points to that which “properly makes *Dasein* possible.”⁵¹

The reversal of the situation of the “undifferentiated I” into the indifference of the beings can also be found in the notion of “entrancement.”⁵² Here the metaphor of captivation in the sense of imprisonment (*gefangen sein*) comes again into play. While Heidegger uses the words *Bann* and *Gebanntsein*, translated as “entrancement” and “being entranced,” the verb *bannen* can also mean to ban or excommunicate. Accordingly, *Gebanntsein* can mean being excommunicated.⁵³ We can understand this as a being banned from that which *Dasein* ultimately can be and is: *Dasein* has been excommunicated from its very possibilities, because of its occupation with or imprisonment in the beings that surround it. In profound boredom, this situation is reversed when *Dasein* is excommunicated from those beings that have kept it imprisoned.

The meaning of entrancement, on the other hand, should not be forgotten here either. To be banned from the everyday is not possible without *Dasein*'s being entranced. To be entranced in the situation is to show the ultimate possibilities of *Dasein*, which is not possible without banishment from beings. It is precisely the double meaning, of entrancement and excommunication, which plays a decisive role here. In order to be entranced in this profound attunement, on the basis of which access to beings *as such* is gained, *Dasein* needs to be freed from the beings with which it is occupied in the everyday. This attunement involves a negative experience of excommunication, within which *Dasein* is ultimately bored with the everyday.

What, however, is that which entrances *Dasein* in such a way that *Dasein* is bored through and through by the beings that surround it? What is this strong force that attunes one in such a way that the everyday is banned, that one's power in the everyday is given up by letting oneself be overpowered by this boredom?⁵⁴ The ban from the everyday, and entrancement into the

moment of vision, is caused by an entrancement of time: “*what entrances* is nothing other than the *temporal horizon*.”⁵⁵ The time of the clock, the time of measurement has stopped flowing in the “it is boring for one” (*es ist einem langweilig*: one has a long while). It is not time that has stopped that entrances, but it is “rather the time beyond such flowing and its standing.”⁵⁶ Entrancing time is the temporality of *Dasein*, it is “the time which in each case *Dasein itself as a whole is*.”⁵⁷ It is thus not that point in time at which boredom arises – that point where time comes to a stance – but it is “the whole expanse of the entire time of *Dasein*,”⁵⁸ which entrances, and, at the same time, excommunicates us from everyday beings. This time that entrances and bans, the very temporality of *Dasein*, is that which constitutes not merely finitude, but is essentially making *Dasein* possible.

Heidegger’s critique of the tradition of metaphysics comes to the surface of Heidegger’s text here: *Dasein* is not to be understood as something present-at-hand, but, instead, as temporal. The temporality constitutes its very essence. *Dasein*’s freedom in this respect is its possibility to free itself, to open itself up to itself. It should be emphasized here that this freedom as openness, which shows our own existence as essentially temporal, is not to be understood as a ready-to-hand answer. It does not lead to the ultimate truth; rather, “this path leads straight into the dark.”⁵⁹ While our occupation in the everyday creates a “safe haven,” profound boredom opens us up as temporal beings.

Heidegger characterizes the path into the dark as a particular and specific attunement that involves emptiness as “the very *absence of any essential oppressiveness* [Bedrängnis] *in our Dasein*.”⁶⁰ Emptiness is thus “not a pure nothing,” but “lack, deprivation, need.”⁶¹ Heidegger, interestingly, uses here the word *Entbehrung*, the same word he uses, as we have seen, to describe the animal’s poverty of world.⁶² I have suggested above that this lack of any essential

oppressiveness in contemporary *Dasein* is quite close – as close as we can get, maybe – to the animal world. Heidegger describes us here as “servants of slogans, adherents to a program.”⁶³ This characterization seems close to the characterization of the bee as a servant of his drive to collect honey. In the very least we can say, at this point, that Heidegger’s criticism of contemporary men, of which “none is the custodian of the inner greatness of *Dasein* and its necessities,”⁶⁴ points towards lack, need, and deprivation. What is missing in our occupation in the everyday is the *Geheimnis*, the mystery, in our *Dasein*, and thus “the inner terror that every mystery carries with it and that gives *Dasein* its greatness remains absent.”⁶⁵ This mystery is, as Heidegger implicitly argues, a possibility only of *Dasein* (it gives *Dasein* its greatness). It is perhaps this possibility of *Dasein* that draws the most distinct limitation with the animal being.

The particular boredom Heidegger is describing here is caused by a specific being left empty, a “fundamental emptiness.”⁶⁶ This is covered over or hidden by the “contemporary restlessness,” but it is also shown in the occupational existence in the everyday. We concern ourselves, according to Heidegger, only with learned competencies that can be instilled. That which cannot be instilled, that which brings terror, is set aside. Boredom, now, arises from out of *Dasein* itself, it gives a sign, it announces as a telling refusal, “the telling absence of any oppressiveness.”⁶⁷ The refusal of oppressiveness does not announce something that can be understood in advance, and it is therefore not a need that oppresses. Rather, the mystery in our *Dasein* is announced in this being left empty. The “most extreme demand” is made upon man here: “*it is that Dasein as such is demanded of man, that it is given to him – to be there.*”⁶⁸ This is the resolute disclosedness of *Dasein* itself, an openness towards its very existence. In this moment of vision (*Augenblick*) *Dasein* is brought before its own *Dasein*. *Dasein* is opened up here not as

“something that one takes for a drive in the car, as it were, but something that man must specifically take upon himself.”⁶⁹

In its everyday occupation *Dasein* is blind to its own being-there. The fundamental attunement of profound boredom can grant vision, announced as a lack in the form of a need, the “most profound need,”⁷⁰ as Heidegger argues. In the everyday we are imprisoned or held captive (*gefangen*)⁷¹ by the beings that surround us. We are banned from this captivity in the fundamental attunement of profound boredom. This excommunication is at the same time an opening up as resolute disclosedness, a rupture of the captivation, i.e., a liberation of imprisoned *Dasein*. The moment of vision demands the “innermost necessity of the freedom of *Dasein*.”⁷² In order to be free, one first has to be excommunicated from those things that hold one captive.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I have analyzed Heidegger’s conception of contemporary *Dasein*’s poverty as a lack of oppressiveness – a lack of urge (*Drang*) – and the poverty of the animal as a deprivation of world. The animal’s poverty consists in the idea that it can only behave in an instinctual drivenness, while *Dasein* can comport itself towards beings; it can experience beings *as* beings. An example of the lack of comportment in animal life is the female insect that can only *behave towards* other animals, such as the male insect, which it takes as prey or as sexual partner, while it cannot grasp the animal *as* animal, disconnected from any kind of behavior. Every relation of the animal involves behavior, while comportment towards another being *as being*, is impossible.

An important question in this respect is whether human beings in their everyday existence are radically distinct from this instinctual behavior. Heidegger critically analyzes contemporary

Dasein as occupied in the everyday, absorbed by the beings that surround it. *Dasein* uses, manipulates and acts upon these beings, and in doing so it loses itself in this everyday existence, within which it lacks any oppressiveness. It is this everyday where *Dasein* feels at home. The occupation with beings that surround it is a drive (*Trieb*) to be at home, a drive away from the uncanny feeling of homesickness that is experienced in the experience of profound boredom. This “home” is already different from the world of the animal, as we – in contrast to the animal – can apprehend the beings that we act upon *as beings*. Home can be understood here as that which we apprehend. Apprehending is, as shown above, something impossible for the animal: it can only be captivated (*benahmen*); it cannot apprehend (*vernehmen*).

Heidegger’s lecture course is original, in that it does not show (or describe) human beings as rational animals, or as animals with language (*logos*), as has been done throughout the history of philosophy. For the concept of “apprehending” is not central to the division between human and non-human animal. Since, as we have seen, instead of defining human beings as rational animals, Heidegger defines the human being as attunement: “*Dasein as Dasein* is always already attuned in its very grounds. There is only ever a change of attunement.”⁷³ While the animal is drivenness from drive to drive, *Dasein* is a being attuned from attunement to attunement. The difference between *Dasein* and animal is, then, primarily a difference between comportment and behavior. The animal’s incapacity to be comportted lies in the lack of the possibility to experience beings *as beings*. The animal, in Heidegger’s analysis, keeps going, without ever coming to a stop; the animal merely behaves and is not attuned. Human beings, instead, do not merely *move toward*, but can *keep a distance*; they are not absorbed in their worlds as the animal is. We humans *can* come to a stop in our otherwise driven existence.

Heidegger describes the most radical halt as the fundamental attunement of profound boredom. In this fundamental halt, caused by a lack of oppressiveness, we lose our drive of the everyday. This lack of drives leads us straight into the dark, where we do not feel at home, into feelings of “being left empty” and “being held in limbo” (*Hingehaltenheit*).

It is striking that Heidegger describes this situation as deprivation, since, for *Dasein* deprivation is not a lack of attunement, but rather, an emptiness as a mood of poverty.⁷⁴ Deprivation as mood is quite distinct from the animal’s deprivation of world. As I suggested above, in the comparison of the respective worlds of animal and *Dasein*, the deprivation of the animal is a poverty in mood, a lack of mood. Although Heidegger never actually writes explicitly that the animal cannot be attuned, by describing animality as, on the one hand, being *taken by and absorbed into* its drives, and human existence, on the other hand, as always *being attuned and as having the ability to be fundamentally attuned*, Heidegger implicitly suggests this.

In its being captivated (*benommen*), the animal is taken by (*hingenommen*) and absorbed in (*eingenommen*) its drives. *Dasein* also becomes captivated in the everyday, yet is not taken by beings, but acts upon them. This suggests that *Dasein* always keeps a distance and, therefore, in its becoming absorbed in its occupation with the beings that surround him, *Dasein* can also free itself from its captivation, by being banned from the everyday. In this situation it is driven through an entrancement. This entrancement turns out to be the very temporality of *Dasein*, its very essence. To experience oneself in one’s possibilities through a complete loss of the concrete possibilities that surround one in the everyday, is something that is by no means accessible in animality. While *Dasein* is captured in its everyday occupation with the beings that surround it, the animal is not imprisoned, but “taken by,” which leaves no room for escape. It can only *behave towards* those beings, as determined through its drives.

The captivated animal is described as living in a ring that is constituted and maintained by the animal itself. *Dasein* also seems to have such a ring, yet it has quite a different accessibility to this ring. Its world – the ring – can be expanded both in width and in depth. *Dasein's* relation to the world is then characterized as “a peculiar transposedness to the encompassing contextual ring of living beings.”⁷⁵ This brings us in no way on the same level as the animals, as we are held captive “in a quite specific way.” We exist in the midst of beings, which captivate us “not on the basis of any particular influence or impression. No, we are captivated from out of our essence.”⁷⁶ This essence, for Heidegger, seems to consist in the ability to be constantly attuned. While the animal is absorbed in its being driven and therefore incapable of experiencing anything *as such*, *Dasein's* openness is “a being held toward,” within which the world opens up in a particular way through the attunement that provides this openness in the first place.

Heidegger's descriptions of the everyday existence of *Dasein* and of animality initially give the impression that the two forms of being are rather close, while in his actual analysis a clear distinction is drawn. This conclusion can be explained by the fact that Heidegger is very critical towards contemporary *Dasein*, who leaves aside any provocative, or metaphysical questions, and takes up only those things that can be easily instilled. This means that *Dasein* leaves aside the question concerning the essence of its own being. To avoid this question, it hides in the everyday, trying to avoid any homesickness, such as that which the experience of profound boredom brings. Accordingly, *Dasein* is described as always already attuned and capable of keeping a distance towards the beings that surround it; it can grasp beings as beings and, therefore, it can experience their very existence. Such an experience requires a loss of world, a deprivation as mood. A loss of world seems to be impossible for the animal, as it is absorbed in the beings that are accessible to it, and as it cannot escape this absorption. The animal loses itself

in its particular way of being open, so to speak. It is therefore poor in world: it has some access, but no possible attunement within which it is confronted with its own essence. *Dasein's* loss of world, on the contrary, is not a deprivation of world, but brings new opportunities for human *Dasein* (which are impossible for animality).

In conclusion, we can say that whereas the animal is always already deprived of world, *Dasein's* possibility to be deprived (paradoxically) brings *Dasein* its richest possibilities; indeed, it gives *Dasein* “its greatness.”⁷⁷ What I here refer to as *Dasein's* “the richest possibilities” is precisely what creates the abyss between the captivation of the animal and the entrancement of *Dasein*. The animal is, in its own drivenness, absorbed, without having any possibility to free itself, given that there is no possibility to stop its drive and to be fundamentally attuned. For Heidegger, the animal can only behave *towards beings*; its attunement is never changed towards a mood in which it relates to a being *as a being* or to its own being.

¹ *Die Stimmung* first of all refers to the tuning of a musical instrument, and *die Stimme* is the human voice. For this reason, I prefer the translation “attunement” above “mood.” Heidegger sometimes uses the term in conjunction with *bestimmen* (to decide, determine, or ascertain), or *Die Bestimmung* (determination, destination, or vocation). As we will see, one’s attunement can contain a certain call that can determine one’s destination.

² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Macquarrie and Robinson. (NY: New York, Harper and Row, 1962), p. 177. [German Text: *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen, 1993) (based on 7th edition, 1953), p. 138].

³ Ibid.

⁴ In this sense, attunement is perhaps a harmony or tuning with the world. It is also worth mentioning that in his lecture course, Heidegger does not use the concept *Befindlichkeit*, which in *Being and Time* seems to be equated with *Stimmung*.

⁵ M. Heidegger. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, World, Finitude, Solitude*. (IN: Bloomington, 1995). Hereafter, cited as *FCM*, followed by appropriate page number(s).

⁶ The animal is a “poverty in mood [Ar-mut]” *FCM* p. 195. In his interpretation of Heidegger’s lecture course Alasdair MacIntyre misses this point entirely when he takes the poverty of world of the animal as a lack of possibility to grasp the world as a whole (Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals*, Open Court, Chicago and La Salle, 1999, p. 47). MacIntyre ties the notion of “poverty in world” to the non-language possessing animal (p. 50). Yet, in describing *Dasein* as a being always attuned, Heidegger attempts to overcome the traditional way of thinking the human animal as an animal with language, or

reason. Poverty in world is, therefore, not (as McIntyre suggests) a poverty in language or reason, but a poverty in mood, or attunement.

⁷ *FCM*, p. 195.

⁸ *FCM*, p. 177.

⁹ *FCM*, p. 185. It is questionable whether we can transpose ourselves into a stone or into an animal. Heidegger touches upon this problem in §43 (and he will later, chapter 4, part 2, discuss it in greater detail), where he discusses the accessibility of life: “How are living beings as such – the animality of the animal and the plant-character of the plant – originally *accessible*? [Heidegger’s emphasis] Or, is there no possibility of any original access here at all?” (*FCM*, p. 179). The question concerning our accessibility to the stone (the non-living being that does not have access towards anything) is left aside entirely. David Krell argues in this regard that the question of accessibility is a central problem. “World” – the concept through which Heidegger defines the animal, the stone, and *Dasein* – is, according to Krell, the “‘accessibility’ to the beings in one’s surroundings” (David Farrell Krell. *Daimon Life, Heidegger and Life-Philosophy*. (IN: Bloomington, 1992), p. 116).

¹⁰ *FCM*, p. 193.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *FCM*, p. 195.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* Derrida, in *Of Spirit*, discusses Heidegger’s language of poverty in detail and suggests the further development of a language of alterity in the analysis of animality: “it has an *other* relationship.” Although Heidegger does avoid anthropocentrism, Derrida claims that he still takes “the measure of man,” since the animal is defined as lacking the kind of world that *Dasein* has. Jacques Derrida. *Of Spirit, Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. (IL: Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p 49.

¹⁷ *FCM*, p. 195.

¹⁸ This translation can be justified by Heidegger’s use of the word *Zumutesein*, which means “to be in a mood.” Nevertheless, there might be another meaning of the words *Mut*, *zu Mute*, and *Ar-mut* in play here. To use these words for mood is a rather unconventional usage in 20th-Century German. For *Mut* is mostly translated as “courage,” and *Zumutesein* might also refer to *Zumutung*, which means “to demand.” This would imply here – since Heidegger discusses the deprivation of the animal – that the animal is poor in *being challenged* (i.e., in facing a demand), and that the animal is poor *in courage*. Heidegger, however, talks (in this context) also about the *poorness of man*, which implies that contemporary *Dasein* is poor in the sense of not being challenged, insofar as *Dasein* does not have the courage to face a demand.

¹⁹ *FCM*, p. 228.

²⁰ *FCM*, p. 236.

²¹ *FCM*, p. 238.

²² *FCM*, p. 239.

²³ *FCM*, p. 241.

²⁴ *FCM*, p. 242.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ This experiment makes one wonder what would happen to a human being if it could take in an infinite amount of food. Does a human being stop eating before it has a feeling of fullness? Some treatments of obesity, such as gastric stapling, attempt to instill a feeling of fullness by reducing the size of the stomach. In other words, the drive to eat is (it turns out) reduced by a boundary that does not come from any apprehension, but from a feeling that is perhaps similar to the feeling of the fullness of the bee. In developing new methods to treat obesity (for example, through hormones), researchers often use rats to

experiment upon. In such experiments it seems to be presupposed that our drive to eat is similar to that of animals. Hence, there is a question regarding whether our limitations in our drive to eat are different from the limitations in the bee's drive to collect honey.

²⁸ *FCM*, p. 247.

²⁹ *FCM*, p. 249.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *FCM*, p. 255.

³² *FCM*, p. 254.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *FCM*, p. 255.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *FCM*, p. 143.

³⁷ *FCM*, p. 237.

³⁸ *FCM*, p. 134.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *FCM*, p. 135.

⁴¹ *FCM*, p. 128.

⁴² *FCM*, p. 136.

⁴³ *FCM*, p. 137.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *FCM*, p. 139.

⁴⁶ *FCM*, p. 136.

⁴⁷ *FCM*, p. 140.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *FCM*, p. 141.

⁵⁰ *FCM*, p. 143.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *FCM*, § 32.

⁵³ The dictionary entrance for the verb "bannen" is: "1. banish, expel; put under the ban; excommunicate [...]" *The New Cassell's German dictionary*, Based on the editions by Karl Breul, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1958.

⁵⁴ *FCM*, p. 136.

⁵⁵ *FCM*, p. 147.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *FCM*, p. 148.

⁵⁹ *FCM*, p. 150.

⁶⁰ *FCM*, p. 163.

⁶¹ *FCM*, p. 162.

⁶² For example, *FCM*, p. 195.

⁶³ *FCM*, p. 163.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *FCM*, p. 164.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *FCM*, p. 165. On p. 195, Heidegger discusses the lack of *Mut* (courage/ mood) of the animal. It seems to be, though, that both *Dasein* in its lack of oppressiveness, and animality in its lack of courage, have this lack of *Mut* to take up this most extreme demand (*Zumutung*).

⁶⁹ *FCM*, p. 165.

⁷⁰ *FCM*, p. 166.

⁷¹ *FCM*, p. 128.

⁷² *FCM*, p. 166.

⁷³ *FCM*, p. 68.

⁷⁴ *FCM*, p. 195.

⁷⁵ *FCM*, p. 278.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *FCM*, p. 164.