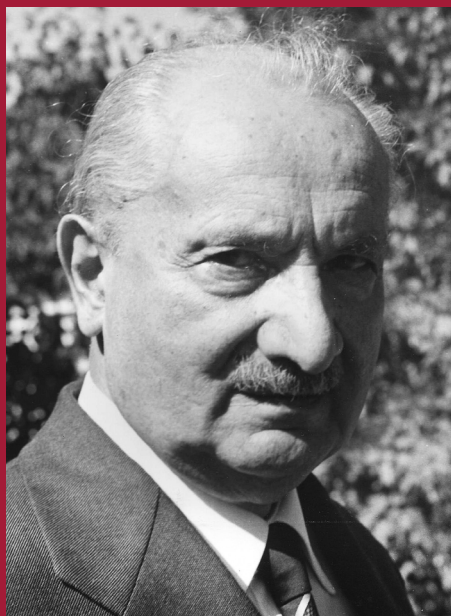


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# Heidegger und die Psychiatrie



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<https://doi.org/10.5771/9783495995587>

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# Heidegger and the Future of Psychotherapy

## 1. Introduction

To date Martin Heidegger's thought has had little impact on mainstream clinical psychology and psychiatry. This is primarily because its potential for effecting a radical re-envisioning of psychotherapy has not been clearly communicated to therapists, due in part to difficulties with the language of his fundamental ontology.<sup>1</sup> Just as important, however, has been the ongoing misguided identification of psychotherapy as a form of medical practice, which has precluded practitioners from being open to Heidegger's unique view of the other. In a time such as ours, however, when the work of the therapist<sup>2</sup> is being distinguished from that of so-called »helping professionals,“ Heidegger's analytics of existence [*Daseinsanalytik*] might finally come to have a wide audience.

The key figure in any consideration of Heidegger's contribution to psychotherapy is, of course, Medard Boss (1903–1990), the Swiss psychiatrist, psychoanalyst and founder of therapeutic Da-seinsanalysis [*Daseinsanalyse*],<sup>3</sup> a psychoanalysis [*Psychoanalyse*] without the Unconscious—in effect, a psychoanalysis without the psyche.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Heidegger has been plagued by a confusion of tongues since four of his essays were first published in English translations as: Martin Heidegger, *Existence and Being*, Garden City 1949.

<sup>2</sup> I have adopted the German word *Therapeut* instead of »psychotherapist« to refer to the Heideggerian therapist. The German word for psychotherapist reflects the origins of the practice with the Greek *Therapeutes*.

<sup>3</sup> »Da-seinsanalysis« (hyphenated and capitalized) was Boss's preferred translation of *Daseinsanalyse*. Medard Boss, *Zollikon Seminars*, Evanston 2001, ix (»Preface to the American Translation of Martin Heidegger's *Zollikon Seminars*« from Spring 1990).

<sup>4</sup> Written for an American audience of psychoanalysts: Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, New York 1963. It bears little relation to his earlier Medard Boss, *Psychoanalyse und Daseinsanalytik*, Bern 1957. Boss tells us that he approved the American title (Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 3), which would correspond to *Psychoanalyse und Daseinsanalyse*, a title that never appeared under Boss's name. The American Psychological Association eventually awarded Boss the »great therapist award« in 1971. The psychiatrists and psychoanalysts did not honor him in this way. Boss wanted to remain in good standing with his audiences in New Haven, Cambridge, and Berkeley, where he had recently lectured (1961–1962), by acknowledging Freud's intellectual creation and claiming that Freud was in a sense a closet existential analyst. He is nevertheless deeply critical of Freud's metapsychology and philosophical allegiance to the natural sciences: »We need not be surprised that Freud's psychodynamic and economic theories have found widespread acceptance in contemporary psychology, particularly in America. Basically, today's technique-oriented thinking—which has to a large extent subjugated the behavioral sciences as well – is at a loss to explain anything except on the basis of physicalistic and energetic principles such as are found in Freud's theory«, Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 103. The bulk of the book consists of »a daseinsanalytic re-evaluation of psychoanalytic therapy and theory«, »a daseinsanalytic re-evaluation

Boss is only now beginning to receive the serious attention he deserves, not only for his unique historical position—spanning personal relationships with Freud and Jung and the beginning of the era of cognitive-behavioral re-education therapies and so-called psychopharmacology he witnessed in the 1950s—but also as the partner in what was perhaps Heidegger's only sustained intellectual collaboration, the Zollikon seminars (1959–1969), the protocols of which were first edited for publication in 1987 by Boss.<sup>5</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, Boss was also likely Heidegger's existential analyst and, in a sense, Heidegger served in the same capacity with Boss.<sup>6</sup>

Although Boss identified as a psychoanalyst throughout his career, his existential analysis is a psychoanalysis in name only, one that he reluctantly renamed *Da-sein*-analysis.<sup>7</sup> Boss, the physician and psychiatrist, practiced *as* a doctor but not *like* a doctor. He preserved his professional status outside the consulting room, while *inside* its precincts his *praxis* was not medical. It was not »intervening,“ but rather »way-making« looking after [*Fürsorge*].

Boss used the couch and invoked Freud's »fundamental rule« and, like Freud, paid special attention to dreams, to which he devoted two volumes (1953, 1975).<sup>8</sup> As with Freud, what he said he did and what he actually did as a therapist, however, were likely two very different matters. Since Boss's *Nachlaß* remains sealed in the library of the city of Zurich (some of it for up to 90 years), until we have access to it and

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of the psychoanalytic doctrine of the neuroses,« and a discussion of »the impact of *daseins*analysis on traditional psychoanalytic techniques.« The source of Freud's fundamental phenomenological »heart« is not clear, however. In a letter to the author, Anna Freud (1980) wrote that her father had not read Heidegger. He was, however, a close friend of Ludwig Binswanger.

<sup>5</sup> When comparing the editions of the Zollikon seminars, I will refer to the Boss edition, Martin Heidegger, *Zollikoner Seminare*, Frankfurt am Main 1987; the English translation by Franz Mayr and Richard Askay, Evanston 2001; and *Gesamtausgabe* edition, Martin Heidegger, *Zollikoner Seminare*, hrsg. von Peter Trawny (GA 89), Frankfurt am Main 2018. With the publication of GA 89, Heidegger's extensive notes for the seminars are now finally available. Boss's edition, which contains material related to the seminars (fragments from letters and »records« of conversations) must be reexamined in light of the notes. I have made a start at this in my *Medard Boss and the Promise of Therapy*, London 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Miles Groth, »Medard Boss's *Daseins*analysis of Martin Heidegger. Reflections and a Conjecture on an Unexplored Aspect of the Zollikon Seminars,« in: *Existential Analysis* 26 (2015), 270–276.

<sup>7</sup> To this day *Da-sein*analysis is confused with Ludwig Binswanger's existential analysis (psychiatric *Daseins*analysis), an approach to which the former is related only by the German word *Daseinsanalyse*. See Ludwig Binswanger, *Being-in-the-World*, New York 1963. Binswanger's book appeared the same year as *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis* and only one year after the publication of Heidegger's *Being and Time*.

<sup>8</sup> This is a significant area of Boss's contribution to therapy. For his *first* dream book, published in 1953, he wrote that »at a conservative estimate, during twenty-five years of practice as a psychotherapist I have been told of about 50,000 dreams by at least 500 different people.« His clinical notes from 1947–1951, he tells us, document »11,200 dreams by neurotics, by analysts in training, and by normal acquaintances.« *The Analysis of Dreams*, New York 1958, 9. The latter sample may include a dream by Heidegger. See *Zollikoner Seminare*, Frankfurt am Main 1989, 308. As we will see, Boss rejected the »utter arbitrariness« of Freud's theory of dream formation and interpretation, which, Boss argues, had been the source of the latter's need to »create« the Unconscious but often only reflects the «fantasies of the interpreter» (*Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 100, 98). Summarizing the first dream book, Boss reminds us that dreams are not pictures or images found inside a sleeping psyche, but rather that the *dreaming state* has »a character of ›being-in-the-world‹ and of being open to the world which, though different from the waking state, is just as ›real‹ and fully a part of existing» (*Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 129).

to the full correspondence between Boss and Heidegger (and others) on the topic of psychotherapy, we can only speculate about his *praxis*.<sup>9</sup> My interest in Medard Boss is both as the therapist who first understood the meaning of Heidegger's analytics of existence for therapy, but also as a medical doctor who attempted to create a bridge from psychiatry and medical practice to what is finally emerging as a genuinely human therapy, one not beholden to the medical model.<sup>10</sup> While he wrote of »the patient,“ he always encountered »the other.«

It is not generally known that his motivation to see the distressed other in a different way was influenced as much by a personal crisis late in life as by his work with Heidegger.<sup>11</sup> I believe it was the combined effect of this spiritual awakening and Heidegger's mentorship that led to Da-seinsanalysis as Boss envisioned and practiced it.

Boss's most important paper on *praxis* is »Encounter in Psychotherapy (1964).«<sup>12</sup> Based on what can be found there and in comments he made elsewhere in his publications, beginning as early as in his book on the paraphilias (1947)<sup>13</sup> and on through *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis* (1963) to material in the Zollikon seminars (1987), I will conclude this contribution with a sketch of the highlights of what I believe a *fully realized* therapy grounded in Boss's ideas might look like—a fully developed therapeutic Da-seinsanalysis. Given limitations of space, my review of Boss's *praxis* will focus on his book written especially for American psychiatrists and psychoanalysts.

## 2. Intervening and Way-making Looking After

A crucial distinction between two kinds of looking after [*Fürsorge*] already alluded to was made by Heidegger in his seminal work *Sein und Zeit*. It serves to clarify what the therapist can provide in an age when the staples of modern psychiatry, psychotropic

<sup>9</sup> The same problem exists in relation to *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis* itself, the original manuscript of which is not currently available. It will also be important to see more than a few pages of the extensive mark-up by Heidegger of Boss's manuscript for his final, systematic work, the *Grundriß der Medizin und Psychologie*, Bern 1971. See *Von der Spannweite der Seele*, Bern 1982, 222–225.

<sup>10</sup> Miles Groth, »Medicine and Dasein-therapy. Medard Boss and the Beginnings of a Human Therapeutics,« in: *Free Associations: Psychoanalysis and Culture, Media, Groups, Politics* 76 (2019), 60–88.

<sup>11</sup> See Miles Groth, *Boss and the Promise of Therapy*, 99–122. In this »workbook« I hope to provide some clues towards a full realization of Boss's Da-seinsanalysis. I also discuss a period of deep self-examination in Boss's life marked by his visits to India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1956 and 1958. The Zollikon seminars began in 1959, the year in which Boss published his charming record of his visits and experiences, *Indienfahrt eines Psychiaters*, Pfullingen 1959 (4<sup>th</sup>, expanded and illustrated ed., Bern 1987). Boss spoke of it as his favorite book.

<sup>12</sup> Medard Boss, »Begegnung in der Psychotherapie,« in: Medard Boss, *Von der Psychoanalyse zur Daseinsanalyse*, Wien 1979, 287–294. Originally given as a lecture, the text is now available in a translation by the author as »Encounter in Psychotherapy,« in: *Daseinsanalyse* 37 (2012), 31–48.

<sup>13</sup> Medard Boss, *Sinn und Gehalt der sexuellen Perversionen. Ein daseinsanalytischer Beitrag zur Psychopathologie des Phänomens der Liebe*, Bern 1947. Cf. the 3<sup>rd</sup> expanded ed., Bern 1976, which contains »Ein Vorwort und ein Nachwort. Zugleich ein Versuch einer Differenzierung zwischen psychiatrischer Daseinsanalyse und psychiatrischer Anthropologie.«

medications, are now known to be ineffective for what they claim to do and when the multiplicity of evidence-based modalities of psychotherapy have yielded a dismal rate of improvement in patients.<sup>14</sup>

Heidegger described an alternative to intervening [*einspringend*] looking after, which is the model of medicine and current psychotherapies, that he termed way-making [*vorausspringend*] looking after.<sup>15</sup> The distinction is found in § 26 of *Sein und Zeit*, »Das Mitdasein der Anderen und das alltägliche Mitsein« [»The Co-existence of Others and Everyday Being-with«]. This section of Heidegger's *magnum opus* is unknown to most contemporary psychotherapists, yet when read in the context of a discussion of therapeutic encounter, it captures the essence of what the genuine therapist does. A parallel discussion of the discussion in § 26 is found in Heidegger's lecture course from the Winter Semester 1925–1926, which was contemporaneous with the completion of *Sein und Zeit*.<sup>16</sup> Oddly enough, neither Boss nor Heidegger made explicit reference to the text during the Zollikon seminars. The closest Heidegger came to doing so was during the July 8, 1965, meetings when he discussed being-with [*Mitsein*] and coexistence [*Mitdasein*].<sup>17</sup>

In *Being and Time*, § 26, Heidegger sets the stage for making the distinction between intervening looking after and way-making looking after by reminding the reader that

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Shedler, »Where Is the Evidence for »Evidence-Based« Therapy?«, in: *Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 41 (2018), 319–329. Shedler, an advocate of psychodynamic psychotherapy, estimates that if therapeutic »cure« is defined as the patient speaks of »getting well and staying well,« the current cure rate for evidence-based psychotherapies is about five percent (5 %). Given our ignorance about the mechanism of so-called psychoactive drugs and the increasing number of reports of both immediate and tardive side-effects associated with their use, the prescription of chemical agents to treat problems of living will soon see a dramatic downturn in the near future. Adjunctive cognitive-behavioral »therapies« will also be abandoned as they become indistinguishable from social work and education. Warnings about the abuse of psychiatric power in promoting the so-called medical treatment of mental illnesses have also been in circulation at least since the pioneering work of Thomas Szasz, beginning with his *The Myth of Mental Illness. Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct*, New York 1961, and *The Myth of Psychotherapy. Mental Healing as Religion*, Garden City 1978. See also Szasz's early warning about the use of so-called »tranquilizing drugs«: Thomas Szasz, »Some Observations on the Use of Tranquilizing Drugs,« in: *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 77 (1957), 86–92. These trends in psychiatry, clinical psychology, and counseling predict a sea change in what the public will accept as authentic treatment of their distress.

<sup>15</sup> A glossary of translations of key terms I have adopted and used in this contribution is found in the Appendix. As with all matters of translation, my solutions remain provisional. It is my hope that careful, consistent usage across texts may help to bring some clarity for English-speaking readers about elements of Heidegger's thinking that are relevant to therapy. Earlier explorations of how to render Heidegger in English are found in the author's *Preparatory Thinking in Heidegger's Teaching*, New York 1987, *The Voice that Thinks*, Greensburg 1997 (rev. ed., New York 2016), *Translating Heidegger*, Amherst 2004 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Toronto 2017), *After Psychotherapy*, New York 2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Adelaide 2017), and *Medard Boss and the Promise of Therapy*.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, hrsg. von Walter Biemel (GA 21), Frankfurt am Main 1976, 158, Martin Heidegger, *Logic. The Question of Truth*, transl. by Thomas Sheehan, Bloomington 2010, 154.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Zollikoner Seminare*, 144–146; Martin Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, 111–112; Martin Heidegger, *Zollikoner Seminare* (GA 89), 816–817; see Heidegger's notes for the session (GA 89), 541–544, which refer to the relevant section (§ 26) of *Sein und Zeit*.

the way of be[-ing] [Seinsart] of the existence of the other we encounter differs from extancy [Vorhandenheit] and availability [Zuhandenheit]. Such a particular being [Seiende] is neither extant [vorhanden] nor available [zuhanden], but rather is like [wie] the existence that frees it up – it is there also and with it [in the world].<sup>18</sup>

It is therefore a mistake to think of the other as somehow an »I« over against my »I« conceived of as subjects in a world of objects and other subjects. Heidegger adds that the »with« and »also« in the emphasized supplementary clause »are to be understood existentially [*existenzial*] and not categorially [*kategorial*],“ that is, not in terms of the Aristotelian categories applicable to things [*Dinge*] and gear [*Zeug*] but rather in terms of the existentials unique to human beings.<sup>19</sup>

The whole point of his preparatory fundamental analysis (fundamental ontology) in *Sein und Zeit* was to lay out and describe the existentials [*Existenziale*] unique to the human being which differ radically from the categories applicable to what is extant and available (things and gear) which would include the psyche envisioned by Freud in his various models of the mind. For Heidegger, there are no isolated »I's« that require being »connected« since the being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*] of existence (*Dasein*) is inherently in common [*mithaft*]. »The world of existence is [a] world together [*Mitwelt*].« Others are »encountered ambiently [*umweltlich*],“ not one at a time, one-on-one »in« it. Thus the problem of intersubjectivity, including the therapeutic relationship, is entirely bypassed.

Heidegger's next step is to differentiate between »negative« modes of looking after marked by deficiency and indifference [*Defizienz und Indifferenz*] and those that are positive [*positiv*]. The former modes preclude the other from coming into focus in his uniqueness, but rather designate him as representative of a type—for example, male or female, tall or short, light-skinned or dark-skinned, blond or brunette, and so on. Existential uniqueness, however, hides behind such »typical« features based on socially preconceived ideas about gender, race, ethnicity, and identity. As a consequence, Heidegger continues, most of the time existence is »characterized« by deficient modes of looking after or caring for. »People [*das Man*]« take note of the separateness of each other as *Dasein*, but quickly move to classify other »people« according to their typical features, thereby overlooking the singularity of the other.

Heidegger's example of social work [*Fürsorge*] in this passage is telling. Here we have an example of *caring for* someone without really *caring about* him.<sup>20</sup> The example follows another telling reference, this one to »the nursing of the sick body« [*»die Pflege des kranken Leibes«*]. While nursing does not interfere with the natural healing

<sup>18</sup> I cite Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, hrsg. von Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (GA 2), Frankfurt am Main 1975, 158; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transl. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, London 1962, 154. All translations have been modified.

<sup>19</sup> I choose »gear« for *Zeug* since Heidegger always thinks in terms of activities—skiing, cooking, woodworking—for which certain gear is required: tools, machines, and high-tech devices. There is swimming gear, baking gear, computing gear. A prefer »gear« to »tool« since a given tool becomes a different sort of gear depending upon the activity or use to which it is being put. »Equipment« hints too much at machinery, engineering, and the so-called STEM disciplines.

<sup>20</sup> Here *Fürsorge* is perhaps better rendered with »dealing with.«

processes of the body as doctoring sometimes does, but rather supports them, it is nevertheless a deficient mode of interaction with the other. »Dealing with« an ailing body, the person associated with it *does not matter*. For both doctor and nurse, the patient in his bed is a »case« and nothing more—an ulna fracture in Room A« or »a cardiovascular event in Room B.« To work effectively, the nurse must (like the doctor) say »I really don't care« about the *who* stretched out before her. She goes through the hopefully well-trained motions of caring for a body (»procedures«), but does not become »involved« with the existing human being.

By contrast with these deficient modes, there are positive modes of looking after in which what is in question *does matter*. The »something more« missing in the deficient modes is the something's—the other's—*importance to me*. »With regard to its positive modes, looking after has two extreme [*extreme*] possibilities.« With this we have reached the relevant distinction.<sup>21</sup>

The undesirable version of engaged (»positive«) encounter is intervening looking after. It is worth recalling the entire passage in which it is described:

It [intervening looking after] can, as it were, take away from the other his ›devotion [*Sorge*]‹<sup>22</sup> and take over his place in caring about things [*Besorgen*], [that is,] *stand in* [*einspringen*] for him. This looking after takes over what it is for the other to care about [*zu besorgen*]. The other is thereby thrown off balance, [and] he [therefore] steps back so that later he can [1] take care of what is cared about [*das Besorgte*] as something readily at his disposal [*Verfügbares*] or [2] instead completely dispose of [*entlasten*] it. In such looking after the other can become one who is dependent and dominated, even though this domination may be tacit and remain hidden from him.

Heidegger then describes the desirable positive form of looking after which will be paradigmatic for the therapist:

By contrast with the undesirable mode is the possibility of a looking after that does not so much [*so sehr*] step in as *make way* [*vorausspringt*] for the other in his existentially being possible [*existentiellen Seinkönnen*],<sup>23</sup> not in order take [his] ›devotion‹ from him but instead to hand it back [*zurückzugeben*] to him authentically for the first time. This looking after [which] in essence has to do with [*betrifft*] authentic devotion, that is to say, [with] the existing [*Existenz*] of the other and not with a *what* [Was] one cares for [*besorgt*], helps the other to become transparent to himself *in his devotion and free for it*.

<sup>21</sup> Heidegger's discussion is at the level of his fundamental ontology and we must understand the »something« as a particular human being—as *other* or *Dasein*. See note 63.

<sup>22</sup> It is well known that at the epicenter of *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger glosses *Sorge* with *cura*, citing a *fabula* by the Latin author Gaius Julius Hyginus, vgl. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2), 262. It is a story about the provenance of the unique creature, called *homo* (because it is made of earth—*humus*), which is distinguished by *heeding* and *attending* what is there (*das Seiende*). This is more than just awareness. It is exemplified in the extreme by the attitude of the therapist and, before the incursion of science into medicine, by the watchful waiting or devotion of the erstwhile physician (see Sir Luke Fildes' *The Doctor* [1891]), so different from the active interventions of the professional evidence-driven medical practitioner beginning in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>23</sup> That is to say: to make it possible for the human being to be at all, to make possible an instance of existence as an entity or particular being among all that is there, but not in its fundamental ontological meaning understood in terms of the existentials [*Existenziale*].

Elsewhere on the same page, Heidegger refers to these »extremes [*Extremen*] of positive looking after« as »intervening-dominating [*einspringend-beherrschenden*] and advancing-liberating [*vorspringend-befreienden*].« The slight shift in language from making way for [*vorausspringen*] (the Taoist gesture) to stepping forward [*vorspringen*; i.e., taking the first step] is significant for a discussion of therapy. In the first formulation (*vorausspringen*), Heidegger speaks to the stance itself, which does not take over for the other but steps aside for the other. In the second formulation (*vorspringend*), which is more directly linked to the liberating or freeing up of the other which Boss will emphasize, there is the suggestion that another instance of existence (in this case, that of the therapist) initiates a process that will illuminate the existence of the other who then becomes »transparent to himself in his devotion and free for it.« The art of therapy envisioned by Boss is based on this.

Heidegger goes on to say that both the deficient and indifferent and the positive modes of looking after the other are »guided by consideration [*Rücksicht*] and reconsideration [*Nachsicht*],“ with their respective degrees of engagement. It is tempting to translate Heidegger’s terms *Rücksicht* and *Nachsicht* with terms such as »considerateness« and »forbearance« or »tolerance,“ just as *Umsicht* has been rendered with »circumspection« (as in cautious checking). However, looking around [*Umsicht*] associated with the sort of caring for [*Besorgen*] associated with discovering [*Entdecken*] what is available [*das Zuhandenen*] is quite different from the two features associated by Heidegger with existential looking after [*Fürsorge*]. Unfortunately, only the felicity of German allows the three words formed on the same root *Sicht* (sight) to be linguistically related. It is important to recall that looking after [*Fürsorge*] refers to the existence of others while caring for [*Besorgen*] refers to things and gear, including the body treated as an object. The traditional translations have introduced blatantly behavioral notions precisely where Heidegger is at pains to avoid them.

The relevant text of Heidegger’s lecture course from 1925–1926 is even more nuanced and speaks directly to what occupied the clinicians who sat in on Heidegger’s seminars in Zollikon beginning thirty-five years later. In comparing intervening looking after with way-making looking after, what would be unique about existential analysis was already clearly articulated. Published only in 1976, the book was certainly known to Boss, but he does not refer to it anywhere in what we have of his published communications.

Then in his mid-1930s, Heidegger said this to his students: there is a [second] kind of being-with the other that does not step in [*einspringt*] and take away [*abnimmt*] his place [from him] (i.e.,) his situation [*Situation*] and problem [*Aufgabe*], but instead attentively makes way for him, so as not to take away his devotion—that is, he himself, his very own existence—[from him], but to hand it back to him, [this being] a sort of looking after that is not dominating but *liberating* [emphasis added]. This mode of looking after is that of authenticity [*Eigentlichkeit*], because in it alone existence, which looks after devotion, can arrive at itself, really be [*eigens*] itself, and in that way only become most itself [*eigenstes*] and authentic [*eigentliches*]. In such looking after, the



other existence is certainly not in that way understood wholly and primarily in terms of the world it cares for [*besorgt*] at all, but rather only in terms of itself.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, the mode of looking after first mentioned looks after [*sorgt für*] the other in such a way that procures [*besorgt*] for him a possible place to take up [*Habe*] as his spot [*Stelle*] and [as there] for his disposition [*Verfügbarkeit*]; it understands the other existence in terms of the things he should acquire [*besorgt*], with regard to which he is in distress [*Not*]; and this looking after expels [*wirft*] the other from his space [*Platz*], as it were, and considers [*besorgt*] only what is to be done to reinsert him in [what is] henceforth a protected status [*Besitz*]. In this kind of looking after, the other is treated like a nothing [*ein Nichts*], that is, like a nothing of existence; in [such] looking after he [the other] is not there as [a] real existence, but as inauthentic, and that means like some banal existence [*weltliches Vorhandenes*] that cannot that cannot get anywhere with its business.<sup>25</sup>

Applied to the therapeutic situation, Heidegger's distinction between intervening on behalf of the other and making way for the other is crucial. It is the basis for Da-seins-analysis as entirely different from all other forms of psychotherapy, including orthodox psychoanalysis (especially in its efforts at interpretation and reconstruction), the various psychoanalytic psychotherapies, and the educative cognitive-behaviorist therapies.

### 3. »Why not?«: Psychoanalysis Without the Psyche

The most important of Boss's texts on *praxis* are (1) his book for American psychiatrists, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis* (1963); (2) a roundtable discussion in which he participated in Milan, »Begegnung in der Psychotherapie« [*»Encounter in Psychotherapy«*] (1964); (3) the last part of his *Grundriß der Medizin und der Psychologie* [*Outline of Medicine and Psychology*] (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1975), the entire manuscript of which was edited by Heidegger; and (4) a late lecture given in South America, »Das Unbewußte – was ist es?« [*»The Unconscious. What Is It?«*] (1981).<sup>26</sup> All of these sources reflect the strong ongoing influence of Heidegger on Boss's views on psychotherapy which was fully in effect by 1963. As noted above, we will focus on *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*.

By 1963, with the publication of *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, Boss's new form of therapeutic *praxis* was already well established. The book was written as a follow-up to his lectures as visiting professor at Harvard, Yale, and the University of California in 1961–1962. Since the book is out of print and not readily available, I will quote from it extensively in summarizing his views on the actual procedure of *Daseinsanalyse* in contrast with orthodox psychoanalysis. It is Boss's most extensive presentation of his psychoanalysis without the psyche.

<sup>24</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (GA 21), 223.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (GA 21), 224.

<sup>26</sup> I have discussed the *Zollikon Seminars* in detail in *Medard Boss and the Promise of Therapy*.

Boss's »American« book for psychoanalysts and other psychotherapists is a systematic critique not only of Freudian metapsychology, but also of academic psychology in general. With a nod to orthodox analysts, Boss writes that »with only a few—though decisive—corrections, no other psychotherapeutic procedure but that of psychoanalytic practice is capable of helping man to break through to, and to carry out, his authentic and wholesome being-wholly-himself.«<sup>27</sup> At the same time, he immediately points out the emptiness of the terms »psyche« and »psychic, " asking: »For who is able to determine what »psychic« means basically, and what imagination is, after all?«<sup>28</sup> The »psyche« is rejected as fiction. The imagination as a psychological function is also disqualified as lacking any value for understanding mental life.<sup>29</sup> Both phenomena are *assumed* by academic and clinical psychology yet cannot be explained by it.

As in his last major work, *Grundriß der Medizin und der Psychologie*,<sup>30</sup> a case example serves as Boss's point of departure. She was »a patient who taught the author to see and think differently.« Boss »saw himself obliged to undertake a reappraisal of his whole thinking« in response to his encounter with a patient named »Dr. Cobling,«<sup>31</sup> a 36-year-old suicidal and »pre-psychotic« British workaholic and fellow psychiatrist who was the medical director of »an important psychiatric sanitarium.«<sup>32</sup> The case report reflects Boss's transformation as a therapist under the influence of Heidegger's thought. His understanding of all distress (neurotic or psychotic) that brings an individual to the therapist had radically changed. None of the theories he had studied made it possible for »him to understand the simple fact that his patient could perceive and experience something at all, and this something as something meaningful.«<sup>33</sup>

Boss wonders about what more psychotherapists and other psychologists in general accept without reflection. He does not want to dispose of psychoanalysis, but instead to mine its original gold. However, only

analysis of *Dasein* makes it possible to discover what psychoanalytic therapy essentially is. In the light of Daseinsanalytic reflection, psychoanalytic endeavor becomes transparent to the fullest possible extent and, most important, the therapeutic potentialities of psychoanalysis become fully accessible. [T]he understanding of man which is explicit in analysis of *Dasein*

<sup>27</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 284.

<sup>28</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 13.

<sup>29</sup> Kate Gordon, »Memory Viewed as Imagination«, in: *Journal of General Psychology* 17 (1937), 113–124. This is a minor classic that has unfortunately been forgotten.

<sup>30</sup> The book was translated by Stephen Conway and Anne Cleaves: Medard Boss, *Existential Foundations of Medicine and Psychology*, New York 1979. It is, however, only a fragment of the original.

<sup>31</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 10.

<sup>32</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 5. Given references in the text, we can establish that the analysis of Dr. Cobling took place in the early 1950s. This means that Boss already fully appreciated the value of Heidegger's analytics of existence for psychotherapy. He read *Sein und Zeit* during World War II while on duty as a medical officer, but his personal acquaintance with Heidegger began only in 1947. It evolved into a collaboration and friendship that lasted until Heidegger's last illness in the early 1970s. The full development of *Daseinsanalyse*, however, implies Boss's familiarity with the *later* Heidegger as well.

<sup>33</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 10.

has been present, if only implicitly, in psychoanalytic *therapy*, and has secretly guided it from its very beginning, in spite of the mechanistic theory of psychoanalysis.<sup>34</sup>

For Boss, »the insights of analysis of *Dasein* will restore the original meaning and content of Freud's actual immediate, concrete, and most brilliant observations, to which his theoretical concepts point from rather distant and abstract positions,<sup>35</sup> since »daseinsanalysis enables psychotherapists to understand the meaning of Freud's recommendations for psychoanalytic treatment better than does his own theory.«<sup>36</sup>

What ails his patient? Dr. Cobling is *in absentia* of her present [*Gegenwart*] as »something of her future approaches her, comes to meet her, [and] seeks to be included in her present.«<sup>37</sup> Boss is not concerned with diagnosis and psychopathology, but rather with the fundamental possibilities existence holds out for his analysand. »The healing factor in psychoanalysis« is the »increasing appropriation [by the analysand] of all of one's life-possibilities as *possibilities*«<sup>38</sup>—providing it is existentially informed [*daseinsmäßig*]. Specific plans for Dr. Cobling's future are not at issue, nor are any proposed. Even given the alarming content of Dr. Cobling's reported experience and her behavior, Boss is optimistic, however, since no matter how disoriented and displaced she may be, »no human being can ever completely silence the *challenge* of all that is destined to appear and to come to its being in the light of a given existence [emphasis added].«<sup>39</sup> This »challenge« is found in the other's existential *present*, which is shorthand for what Boss terms her »possibilities of living.«<sup>40</sup> As we learn, in the case of Dr. Cobling, her living present is that of a child, not the adult others take her to be, someone who is in a powerful position as a physician and psychiatrist working to help *other* human beings in distress.<sup>41</sup>

Boss therefore wonders, »how would it be if, in the analysis she [Dr. Cobling] let herself be the little child, completely, without restraint, regardless of everything.«<sup>42</sup> This would signal her recovery of and reinstatement in her present, i.e., the reappropriation of her existence. Each existence, he believes, has the same capability for realizing its essential human possibilities, circumscribed, of course, by obvious »givens« such as sex, intellectual capacity, and the like.

<sup>34</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 284.

<sup>35</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 59.

<sup>36</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 237.

<sup>37</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 12.

<sup>38</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 254.

<sup>39</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 12–13.

<sup>40</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 73.

<sup>41</sup> »Man's temporality is not but is *emerging* [*zeitigt sich*], as the unfolding of and coming forth of his existence. Man's original temporality always refers to his disclosing and taking care of something«, Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 45. I would argue that a human being's temporality, which man makes, is an equivalent expression for his *present*. As Heidegger had said in 1924, »existence [...] is *time itself*, not in time.« In the same lecture, he had been more exact, albeit challenging: »Existence is time, time is temporal [*zeitlich*]. Existence is not time, rather temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*].« For our discussion, following Heidegger, what matters is that understanding temporality (on analogy with spatiality) as a sort of container for existence is misguided.

<sup>42</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 15.

At the end of her Da-seinsanalysis, Dr. Cobling asked Boss:

»Do you know what it was in your treatment which actually cured me?« Immediately she gave the answer herself: »First of all it was the simple fact that *you were always available for me, that I could telephone you and come to you at any time, day or night, whenever I found it to be necessary*. For a long time I did not believe that somebody actually would always be there for me. Slowly I learned to trust you, because dozens of experiences proved to me that you did not let me down. *Only then I dared to live through you*, so to speak, until I felt my own strength growing. The faith in you gave me the courage *to settle down inwardly to the very ground of my existence* [emphases added].«<sup>43</sup>

In other words, the analysand lived *in and through* the therapist's own present on the way to recovering her own.<sup>44</sup> This is the essence of way-making looking after in therapy.

Boss's message to American psychotherapists and others is that

[i]f daseinsanalytic thinking actually does come closer to human reality than the thinking of natural science, it will be able to give us something we have hitherto not been able to find in psychoanalytic theory: an understanding of what we are actually doing (and of why we are doing it just this way) when we treat a patient psychoanalytically, such understanding to be based on insights into the essence of human being.<sup>45</sup>

He never ceases thinking of himself as a psychoanalyst and continues to find in it insights (albeit inexplicit in Freud's texts) into human nature. On the other hand, Boss entirely jettisons Freud's theory (metapsychology). Da-seinsanalysis, then, is psychoanalysis stripped of metapsychology. Boss was deeply appreciative of Freud's understanding of man, which he witnessed first-hand in analysis with Freud in 1925. »Luckily,« says Boss,

Freud's theoretical self-mutilation was confined mainly to his books. For in his practice Freud never ceased to permit his patients fully to experience their being human. He never treated them as telescopes, or as bundles of instincts, as he should have done if he had followed his theory.<sup>46</sup>

As Boss knew from his own experience, »Freud the therapist behaved in actual treatment as if he were cognizant of these Daseinsanalytic insights.«<sup>47</sup>

The all-important orthodox psychoanalytic concepts of »transference« and »resistance« testify to Freud's deep understanding of man<sup>48</sup> and »indisputably refer to actual phenomena of interhuman relationships,«<sup>49</sup> says Boss, but again only if understood in an existentially-informed way. Boss can therefore speak of the importance in

<sup>43</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 26.

<sup>44</sup> What stands out to the reader in 2022 is Boss's availability by phone 24/7 and even on the occasional house call. This was my own experience as a child growing up in the 1950s with my family's general practitioner, but also in the late 1960s with my first analyst. It has been my own practice since the late 1970s as a therapist. I doubt that many psychotherapists today accept more than emails and text-messages in the middle of the night.

<sup>45</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 29.

<sup>46</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 80.

<sup>47</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 241.

<sup>48</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 78.

<sup>49</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 79.

Da-seinsanalysis of “analysis of resistance”, wherein the patient is tirelessly confronted with the limitations of his life and wherein these limitations are incessantly questioned, so that the possibility of a richer existence is implied.<sup>50</sup> One might get the impression from this passage that Boss harped at patients, pointing out how their »wretched interpersonal relations«<sup>51</sup> could be replaced with better ones, if only the patients’ »restrictions are repeatedly questioned.«<sup>52</sup> I believe that would be a mistake, if we consider that Boss was a writer with a vivid way of expressing himself and that we do not know what he actually wrote here in the German original which has been rendered with »confronted with the limitations of his life« and in his characterization of the analysand’s interpersonal relationships as »wretched.« The hyperbole was in service to Boss’s point that his patients »do not know that greater freedom is available [to them].«<sup>53</sup> The upshot is that it is a feature of the child-like nature of this patient-other’s existence to not realize its—that is, Dr. Cobling’s *Dasein*’s—freedom.

As the case illustrates,

existential analysis urges all those who deal with human beings to start seeing and *thinking* [emphasis added] from the beginning, so that they can remain with what they immediately perceive and do not get lost in »scientific« abstractions, derivations, explanations, and calculations estranged from the immediate reality of the given phenomena.<sup>54</sup>

Seeing and thinking that is unprejudiced by theoretical presuppositions and their accompanying expectations of what is there to be seen are stressed.

Boss writes that

the Daseinsanalytic science of man<sup>55</sup> and his world asks us for once just to look at the phenomena of our world themselves, as they confront us, and to linger with them sufficiently long to become fully aware of what they tell us directly about their meaning and essence.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, we might say, *phenomena confront us*. A certain shining emanates from things. For its part, existence is *clearance* for the luminant phenomena to approach us. Existence thus makes way for what is already luminant. Thus mutuality of existence and all particular beings is needed by both—but the novelty here is the suggestion that the *things* first appeal to or call out to us. »Man and what appears in his light are mutually dependent on each other for their very being.«<sup>57</sup> What determines just which things call out to us is our mood or attunement [*Stimmung*].<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 234.

<sup>51</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 234.

<sup>52</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 234.

<sup>53</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 234.

<sup>54</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 19–20.

<sup>55</sup> Boss’s term »science of man« may render *Geisteswissenschaft*, but his usage of »science« is rather loose in this passage since in general he disavows all traditional science, including psychology, in his discussions of therapy.

<sup>56</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 30.

<sup>57</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 51.

<sup>58</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 100.

In general, »only analysis of Dasein enables us to recognize all encountered things as what they are—foci of referential connections encompassing heaven and earth, the human and the divine.«<sup>59</sup> Here there are echoes of Heidegger's four-fold [*Geviert*].<sup>60</sup> The passage is also a reminder of the place Boss makes for spirituality in therapy, where »the realm of the divine is similarly granted its authenticity; it is not regarded as a product of sublimation of infantile, libidinous strivings and thereby degraded to unreality.«<sup>61</sup> Consideration of the divine or spiritual is one of the unique features of his practice and lacking in nearly every form of contemporary psychotherapy, especially psychoanalysis. Freud famously understood »religious« phenomena as sublimations. For Boss, however, the divine is very much a part of human experience and among the areas of possible fulfillment of the possibilities of existence made way for by Da-sein-analysis.

Extremely important for understanding therapeutic encounter are the pair »close [*nah*]« and »distant [*fern*]« (»near« and »far off«). Closeness is understood in the way we speak of being close to someone who is dear to us, important to us. We may be close to him even when his body is thousands of miles away: »The closeness or remoteness of the particular beings which are met with« is determined by »the intimacy of our *concern* for the particular beings which reveal themselves in the light of *Dasein*, as well as by their power to appeal to us.«<sup>62</sup>

Boss is keen to distinguish Da-seinsanalysis from forms of psychotherapy with which it is often confused. »If today the label ›Daseinsanalysis‹ or ›Existentialism‹ is also claimed by so many rather obscure, confused, and confusing psychologies, analysis of *Dasein* itself should not be blamed. Analysis of *Dasein* categorically refrains from imposing some arbitrary idea of being and reality—however customary or ›self-evident‹—on the ›particular being‹ [*Seiendes*] we call ›man‹.« Therefore, »we must abstain from forcing on man explanations based on preconceived and prejudiced categories beforehand, such as »soul«, »psyche«, »person«, or »consciousness«. We must choose a manner of approach which enables us to remain as open as possible and to listen and see how man appears in his full immediacy.«<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 285.

<sup>60</sup> Martin Heidegger, »Das Ding« (GA 79), 5–23.

<sup>61</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 236.

<sup>62</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 44. It is not clear what the German original for »concern« is here. As we have seen, Heidegger distinguishes between concern about particular beings other than the human being and concern for the existence of an other. Boss seems to be referring to the former in this passage.

<sup>63</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 31–32. The translator, Ludwig Lefebre, adds a note on ›particular being‹: »Following a suggestion by Professor William Bossart of the University of California, I translate *Seiendes* as ›particular being(s)‹. Mannheim uses the term ›essent‹, which he coined. More literal translations of *Seiendes* are ›that which is‹, ›actuality‹, and ›entity‹. For a discussion of ›particular being‹ see also William Barrett, *Irrational Man*, Garden City 1958, 189, fn. 86.« This is not helpful. Two formations based on *seiend* [being], the present participle of the verb *sein* [(to) be], are (1) *das Seiende*, a neuter collective noun which refers to what is there, entities in their entirety, and (2) *ein Seiendes*, a neuter noun which refers to a single instance of what is there. (We recall also that the infinitive *sein* is a contraction for *seien*, hence the present participle, *seiend*, which visibly preserves the original orthography.) Bossart's suggestion

We conclude this section with a very brief review of Boss on »The Intrinsic Harmony of Psychoanalytic Therapy and Daseinsanalysis.«<sup>64</sup> This certainly would have attracted the interest of most American psychoanalysts who read Boss's book.<sup>65</sup> He claims that »all important passages in Freud's work pertaining to practical advice for the analyst contain the same basic terms which Heidegger, twenty years later, used to characterize human being«<sup>66</sup>. The commonalities shared by *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis* are entirely about practice.

First, there is invocation of the »fundamental therapeutic rule«<sup>67</sup> of saying everything without censoring, which is in the service of »enabling the patient to unveil himself and to unfold into his utmost openness.«<sup>68</sup> Boss explains that »no thought of unveiling hidden phenomena could have occurred in Freud's mind without his tacit awareness of man's existence as an open, lucid realm into which something can unveil itself and shine forth out of the dark.«<sup>69</sup> He attributes to Freud Heidegger's »awareness« of existing [*Existenz*]:

Daseinsanalytic understanding of man imbues the analyst with a deep respect for everything he encounters. In the psychoanalytic situation, such respect means that the *Daseinsanalyt* can follow the basic rule of psychoanalysis even more consistently than could Freud, who was hampered by his theoretical prejudices.<sup>70</sup>

In Chapter 15, however, Boss will caution that obsessive adherence even to the fundamental rule is itself subject to the Da-seinsanalytic injunction: »Why not?« This

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was ill-advised, since in giving »particular being(s)« as a translation solution, the distinction between a single instance (*ein Seiendes*) of what is there (using the indefinite article »a« or »an«) and everything that is there or what is there (*das Seiendes*) (using the definite article »the«) is lost. Lefebvre might have avoided introducing confusion had he decided in favor of a »more literal« translation, although not »that which is« or »actuality,« which have metaphysical implications. Similar problems with the collective noun and single instance noun built on the present participle *seiend* were introduced by Werner Brock, R.F.C. Hull, and Douglas Scott for *Existence and Being* (1949), Heidegger's debut in English, and by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson for *Being and Time* (1962). Later in the volume (Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 36), Boss quotes a letter from Heidegger approving of »particular being« or »being« as translations for »*das Seiendes* or *Seiendes*« (no article). Here *without* the article *Seiendes* may denote simply the plural of »[a] particular being« (*das Seiende*). Evidently, in his letter Heidegger was accounting for singular and plural usages »particular entity« and »particular entities.« The latter note is important for alluding to the ontological difference, but it does not address the distinction that is important here between *all* that is there and *an example* (or examples) of the ensemble. Heidegger may not have been his best adviser on English translations of his texts.

<sup>64</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 61–74.

<sup>65</sup> A positive review of the volume by Andrew E. Curry, »Medard Boss, Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis,« in: *Psychoanalytic Review* 51 (1964), 159–160, Curry however, overlooked Boss's dismissal of Freud's theory. Boss does invite the reader to omit reading the more philosophical discussions and focus instead on the clinical material; Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 27, so this may be an oversight on Curry's part.

<sup>66</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 61.

<sup>67</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 61.

<sup>68</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 62.

<sup>69</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 62.

<sup>70</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 235.

means being open to the analyst saying: »Why not *not* try to say everything, every single thing, that comes to mind?«<sup>71</sup>

Second, the use of the couch seems to have been *de rigueur* in Boss's practice,<sup>72</sup> with the proviso that

the rule to lie down, like all other psychoanalytic rules, must never be rigidly enforced. Lying down robs the analysand of the visual support of the physician, and leaves the patient to himself. The more immature a patient is emotionally at the beginning of treatment, the more the treatment has to resemble a child analysis at the start.<sup>73</sup>

The patient is on his own without the »visual support of the physician,« but this means that those who cannot be on their own (children and child-like adults such as Dr. Cobling, who kneeled at the couch for a number of sessions) because they are emotionally immature may need to sit facing the analyst or even assume an unusual posture or position *vis-à-vis* the analyst at the beginning. Here, again, a comparison with R. D. Laing is inevitable. We have the filmed record of Laing sitting cross-legged on the floor across from a patient and read of his extraordinary contact with »backward« patients as a young psychiatrist in a Glasgow mental hospital.<sup>74</sup>

Third, Boss endorses the often silent »evenly suspended attention« made possible by the analyst's being out of eye-to-eye contact with the analysand. This offers the opportunity of the analyst's not speaking and the analysand remaining silent for as long as she wishes, which is usually precluded when two people are sitting across from each other. Customary, expected behavior presses people who are together alone in a room to speak to each other. The opportunity offered by sitting behind the patient, however, allows for greater openness. »In silent listening, the analyst opens himself to, and belongs to, the patient's as yet concealed *wholeness* [emphasis added]; and this silence alone can free the patient for his own world by providing him with the necessary interhuman mental openness.«<sup>75</sup> The »concealed wholeness« is, as we have seen, the other's present [*Gegenwart*]. Silence (both the analyst's and the analysand's) is *freeing*, according to Boss. It requires »interhuman mental openness.« Boss does not speak of interpersonal or intersubjective *relationships* but, rather, of an encompassing ontological openness that surrounds both partners in the therapeutic encounter. I am not sure how to take Boss's usage of the term »mental« in this passage, since he always has in mind existence and not something related to mind, consciousness, or psyche. Perhaps the original is *geistig*, which can refer (as in Hegel's phenomenology) to both thought and spirit.

<sup>71</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 251. This is the sense of »being open to« that makes lightening or luminating possible. It implies being exposed and vulnerable to possibilities and being affected by them; cf. *Oxford English Dictionary*, q.v. »open« (adj.), 26a.

<sup>72</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 62–63.

<sup>73</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 63.

<sup>74</sup> R. D. Laing, *Did You Used to Be R. D. Laing?*, Santa Monica 1989 (Video). I cannot imagine Boss on the floor in his consulting room with other than a child patient—and yet, this is not impossible. A lifelong skier, Boss was nimble even in old age.

<sup>75</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 64.



The »intrinsic harmony« between psychoanalysis and Da-seinsanalysis is perhaps reflected best in seeing man as *historical*, where history is understood as »a sequence of meaningful world disclosures as they are sent into being by destiny, engaging, in an equally primordial way, human existence as the lucid world-openness as well as the emerging particular phenomena shining forth therein.«<sup>76</sup> A life history is not a series of somehow isolated »nows« strung together, but the interpenetration of an individual's so-called »Past« and »Future« as his Present. Developmental psychology, ego psychology, and the life cycle psychology are put aside.

Human existence is essentially not a physical process but primarily an historical event. This means that in every actual relation to something or somebody, existence's whole history is inherent and present, whether the historical unfolding of a certain kind of relationship is remembered explicitly or not.<sup>77</sup>

Without the burden of serving the life-historical model, Boss's view of existence understands it as occurring or playing out its own time and not, for example, running through a seamless flow of stages, the principles of developmental psychology from Freud to Arnold Gesell, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, and Lawrence Kohlberg. Unlike the physical growth and maturation of a plant or animal, existence comes to pass as history. It occurs in existential leaps—for example, from being a child to being a grown-up.

»Freedom in the Daseinsanalytic sense is the condition for the possibility of psychoanalytic practice as taught by Freud.«<sup>78</sup> This is the language of liberation and points to another similarity with orthodox psychoanalysis: »The intrinsic harmony of psychoanalytic therapy and analysis of *Dasein* becomes particularly evident in their common underlying conception of human freedom.«<sup>79</sup> Boss's emphasis on the other's freedom as the »goal« of Da-seinsanalysis is foregrounded:

Man's freedom, then, consists in his being able to choose either to obey this claim and carry out his possibilities of relating to, and caring for, what he encounters [live (»in«) his present], or not to obey this claim. If Freud had not had this Daseinsanalytic insight into human nature when actually treating his patients (regardless of whether he put it into words or not, and regardless of his theoretical formulations), he could not have become the father of modern psychotherapy.<sup>80</sup>

Of course, the patient may choose *not to obey* his own claim on himself to realize his possibilities. This, too, is part of his basic freedom. We recall that »the cure« for Dr. Cobling was the patient's having been released into her freedom.

»Evidence [...] for the intrinsic accordance between the understanding of man in psychoanalytic therapy and explicitly articulated in the analysis of *Dasein* «<sup>81</sup> is best seen in the kind looking after provided by the psychoanalyst as daseinanalyst. Thus, Boss

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<sup>76</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 65.

<sup>77</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 243.

<sup>78</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 67.

<sup>79</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 67.

<sup>80</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 67.

<sup>81</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 72.

eventually makes explicit reference to the text in *Sein und Zeit* relevant to the work of the therapist with which we began, admitting that

in thus summarizing Freud's recommendations for the best therapeutic attitude we have quoted from Heidegger's description of the two main ways of man's caretaking for a fellow being. Could anything give more striking evidence of the intrinsic concordance of Freud's tacit understanding of man—inherent in his practical advice to psychotherapists—and Heidegger's elaboration of the basic features of man's existence than the fact that it is possible to let one author speak for the other in this matter?<sup>82</sup>

And here we find the deepest consonance or »intrinsic harmony« of Freudian psychoanalysis and Boss's Da-seinsanalysis.

»The analyst, Freud would say, should never act in a way which we may best characterize now as ›intervening care [*einspringende Fürsorge*]‹.«<sup>83</sup> Instead, Freud

characterizes the analytic attitude positively, as essentially having to be an »anticipating [*vor(aus)springende*]« care. In this mode of care the analyst does not intervene or interfere on behalf of the patient. He is, rather, in advance of the patient in his existential unfolding. He knows what the other has in store for himself. The analyst does not take over for the patient but tries to hand back to him what has to be cared for so that it become an actual concern. I understand this to be the other's *present*. Such taking care (on the part of the analyst) consists in his concern for the ›basic‹ care (i.e. the existence) of the other person and not to a particular item he has to care for. It helps the other person to become, in his caring, transparent to himself and free for his existence. Such anticipating caretaking and being ahead necessitates the analyst's prior ›analytic purification‹, continues Freud. Only then will the analyst be able to keep the »playground [*Tummelplatz*]« of the transference situation free of obstructions and limitations which are due to his unresolved »complexes.«<sup>84</sup>

Chapter 15 of *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, »The Psychoanalytic ›Why?‹ and the Daseinsanalytic ›Why Not?‹," is the culmination of the work and may stand as the watchword of Boss's Da-seinsanalysis. In psychotherapy, the question »Why?« points to the imagined (never remembered) past. The »Why not?« offered by the analyst surges up in the patient's liberated present, recovered thanks to the model of the analyst's own present. What bears emphasizing is that none of this is concerned with specific planned future behavior, although obviously the realization of inherent possibilities that have been estopped unfolds in new or revived acts and patterns of experience and behavior as existence continues to unfold. Boss rejects causal explanations of the patient's situation based on the psychoanalytic »Why?« since »no event in the life history of a person can ever be the ›cause‹ of neurotic symptoms. Personal experiences merely initiate inhibitions against fully carrying out all possible interpersonal and interworldly relationships.«<sup>85</sup> In this passage, Boss briefly reverts to the language of everyday psychiatric practice in speaking of interpersonal relationships. This is offset

<sup>82</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 74, n. 18; Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (GA2), 122 ff.

<sup>83</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 73.

<sup>84</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 73. Boss will eventually argue for the unintelligibility of the notion of transference.

<sup>85</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 248.

for the observant reader, however, by his use of the term »interworldly," which makes clear his fundamental view of existence as being-in-the-world. To speak of the relation between analyst and analysand (*Dasein* and *Dasein*) is to speak of the relation between two worlds.

The therapist's ongoing question about the patient (not *to* the patient) is »Why does he still, this very day, not dare to free himself of the restricting mentality of his childhood?«<sup>86</sup> The emphasis is on the present »moment« of therapeutic encounter, the occasion of a given session of analysis. A patient who gestures, changes posture, moves from the couch to kneel or sit up »is still capable of expressing what she wanted to express only in the language of gestures appropriate to a small child. Conceptually articulated thinking and talking about the experience must necessarily destroy the validity of the experience.«<sup>87</sup> In such instances, what is displayed in action speaks more truthfully about the analysand's being-in-the-world. Saying »Why not?« to such an action acknowledges it as »a way of talking in the language [the patient] *had* [emphasis added] mastered« and »would have been in compliance with Freud's [fundamental] rule« to say everything and hold back nothing that comes to mind.<sup>88</sup> Note well that the analysand thus »speaks« in her physical sensations (perceptions), gestures, and posture. Remaining silent is possible only for creatures that can speak and is, for Boss, therefore a form of uttering [*Sagen*].<sup>89</sup>

#### 4. Existential Therapy After Boss

I do not claim that Boss would approve of what I say next as amounting to a legitimate extension or »realization« of his ideas, but I believe the praxis I will describe is true to what I heard from Boss when we met and talked about Da-seinsanalysis in 1976 shortly after Heidegger's death and can be inferred from what he said to me then.<sup>90</sup>

The key term in existential analysis is *Begegnung*—encounter. A clue to how Boss thought of encounter in therapy can be found in a little known text in which Boss spoke of the »preverbal understanding in the *present* [emphasis added]« of the other which

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<sup>86</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 249.

<sup>87</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 249 f.

<sup>88</sup> Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 250.

<sup>89</sup> In a charming reference, Boss asserts that the analyst »should be able to play the *selfless* [emphasis added] role of the eighteenth camel of the ancient Arab legend,« Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis*, 259. Here *selfless* means both without expectation of self-gratification *and* without making use of one's self, that is, the *persona* (mask) of a father, mother, sibling—and, perhaps, physician.

<sup>90</sup> I believe the essence of existential analysis can also be found in the work of Jan van den Berg and R. D. Laing. In both cases, the way also leads directly back to Heidegger's analytics of existence. Perhaps to the surprise of some readers, I would add to the list a representative of the British school of psychoanalysis, Wilfred Bion.

any two human beings who meet share.<sup>91</sup> He had experienced this in his meetings with his Kashmiri spiritual mentor, Govind Kaul, and I believe it served as a model for Boss of the *sine qua non* of therapeutic encounter for his subsequent *praxis* as it was carried out after 1960.

Therapy may be in order when this present [*Gegenwart*] is abandoned.<sup>92</sup> In that case, and always at the initiative of the other, the therapist strives to meet the other at such a preverbal level of understanding »in« his displaced present that is given *jenseits* any features of the other's personality. Existential analysis is, then, a therapy that takes place where existence »stands out,“ an *ekstasis* of the other's present. But how does the therapist arrange for such a meeting? What does he do? What is he to *be* to the other sitting there across from him or stretched out comfortably on a couch nearby? He does this, I would suggest, precisely by *being nothing in particular* [*nichts*] to the other to the greatest extent possible. He is neither doctor nor psychiatrist, not a parent or teacher, counselor or friend. Any attempt at being nothing to an other is a challenge to sustain, but it is the canny craft of therapy. Such mutual being already in the present of the other is only a different way of expressing the notion of co-existence [*Mitsein*], which we can now also describe as providing the preverbal context of experience.

A second element of therapeutic *praxis* I have distilled from Boss's comments on *praxis* is more difficult to describe, yet it is immediately evident, once again in Boss's experiences with his Indian mentor in India. In the most general terms it is *taking the other seriously*. This is not necessarily mutual, especially at the beginning of therapy, and it may remain unidirectional, from therapist to other, for a long period of time over many meetings. It is decisive when the therapist offers the other an opportunity to *recover his present* by stepping aside and making way for the other. In existential analysis it is perhaps the ultimate gesture of taking the other seriously—of way-making looking after. It is a tacit recognition of the other's existence. This is not a given at birth, as I have argued elsewhere.<sup>93</sup> Existence is realized during infancy and, I would suggest, occurs in the experience of being taken seriously by someone—usually the mothering figure. It is mediated by language, the mother tongue as we call it, even when the infant has no idea what the sounds emitted by its mother signify and marks the transition from the preverbal matrix to a verbal world together [*Mitwelt*].

But how does one know he is being taken seriously as an adult—as an analysand? Being taken seriously is being experienced as a *who*, as existing (*Existenz*), and not as a *what*. Here there is to begin with essentially no difference between everyday life and the therapeutic situation. In the latter setting, however, way-making concern [*Fürsorge*] for the freedom of the other prevails. Above all, the particularities of the other's body

<sup>91</sup> Medard Boss, »Foreword,« in: Govind Kaul, *Govind Amrit*, Bombay 1975, 1–2. See my discussion of this remarkable text: Miles Groth, *Medard Boss and the Promise of Therapy*, London 2020, 116–119. The text was communicated to the editor of Kaul's book in a letter from Boss dated November 23, 1970.

<sup>92</sup> The text is in English and Boss may have rendered his idea with another word. His English was very good and that he did not choose »presence« (another possible translation of »*Gegenwart*«) rather than »present« is significant.

<sup>93</sup> See Miles Groth, *After Psychotherapy*, 75–176.

and its socioeconomic profile—accidents of genetically transmitted physical features, ethnicity, age, and the rest—are of no importance except as details to be »put in parentheses« (phenomenologically bracketed) to the greatest extent possible. It mirrors the therapist’s attempt to be nothing to the other we have described. We may speak of it as taking the other as no one in particular.

For the existential analyst, then, what is *the matter* with the other? Nothing. For Daseinsanalysis there is nothing *wrong* with the other, a view borrowed by forms of psychotherapy based on the medical model. Existence alone is the matter [*Sache*]. All particularities add up to a *what*—an identity, a personality, a legal entity, a body as an ensemble and unity of material and functions—and so does any diagnosis. Way-making looking after, however, is concerned only with the *who* of existence. Reference to a *what* requires that part of speech we term a noun. Reference to the relative pronoun *who* circumvents that. The *who* of therapeutic encounter is thus ultimately nameless and without an identity. Precisely ridding existence of this baggage is, of course, also the goal of Eastern practices of the kind that attracted Boss first to Hindu philosophy and then to Zen—and to Heidegger’s analytics of existence.

Of course, we are beholden to what language demands of us in the therapeutic setting, but in such a fix we must abandon to the greatest extent possible precisely what we wish to preserve and that is the non-reification of the other’s existence. We eventually speak to each other. Unlike his orthodox psychoanalytic colleagues, I suspect Boss did not sit behind the other speechless.

In sum, I experience that I am taken seriously when only my present is of concern to the therapist. This can happen only when nothing I have done (or say or imagine I have done) and nothing I desire or wish for is taken seriously by the therapist. *That* is reserved only for my existence.

*Appendix: Key Terms*

<i>Analyse</i>	analysis (taking apart), as in <i>Psychoanalyse</i> , <i>Daseinsanalyse</i> (n.)
<i>Analytik</i>	analytics (a distinguishing of elements within a whole structure) (n.)
<i>analytisch</i>	analytic (referring to both <i>Analyse</i> or <i>Analytik</i> ) (adj.)
<i>Dasein</i>	existence (n.)
<i>Daseinsanalyse</i>	existential analysis (n.)
<i>daseinsanalytisch</i>	existential-analytic (adj.)
<i>Daseinsanalytik</i>	analytics of existence (n.)
<i>daseinsanalytisch</i>	existential-analytical (adj.)
<i>daseinsgemäÙe</i>	existentially informed (adj.)

<i>daseinsgemäßig</i>	existentially-informed (adj.)
<i>einspringend</i>	intervening (adj.)
<i>existentiell</i>	existential (ontic, entitative), Existentialist (adj.)
<i>Existenz</i>	existing (n.)
<i>Existenzanalyse</i>	analysis of existing (n.)
<i>Existenzial</i>	existentive (element of the structure of the being [ <i>Sein</i> ] of existence) (n.)
<i>existentzial</i>	existentive (pertaining to the <i>Existenziale</i> ), existentially (adj., adv.)
<i>existentziale Analytik</i>	existentive analytics (Heidegger's project in <i>Sein und Zeit</i> ) (n.)
<i>Existenzphilosophie</i>	philosophy of existing (n.)
<i>existieren</i>	to ek-sist (v.)
<i>existiert</i>	ek-sists (v.)
<i>realiter existiert</i>	is really there (v.)
<i>Existieren</i>	ek-sisting (n.) (cf, <i>Existenz</i> )
<i>Seiende</i>	what is there (all there is) (with the definite article) <i>and</i> a being (taken individually) (with the indefinite article) (n.)
<i>vorausspringend</i>	way-making (also <i>vorspringend</i> ) (adj.)
<i>vorhanden</i>	extant, existing (adj.)
<i>Vorhandenheit</i>	extancy, availability (n.)
<i>zuhanden</i>	available (adj.)
<i>Zuhandenheit</i>	availability (n.)
<i>Zu-sein</i>	to-being (to-ness) (n.)