

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

The Burden of Being

BACHELOR THESIS

Bratislava, 2013

Áron Maccicza

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

The Burden of Being

**The Comparative Analysis of Paul Tillich's and Martin Heidegger's
Concept of Existential Anxiety**

BACHELOR THESIS

Study Program: Liberal Arts

Field of Study: 3.1.6. Political Science

Thesis Supervisor: Mgr. Mgr. Peter Šajda, Phd.

Qualification: Bachelor of Science (abbr. "Bc.")

Submission date: 30.4.2013

Date of defense: 13.6. 2013

Bratislava, 2013

Áron Maccicza

Declaration of Originality

I declare that this bachelor thesis is my own work and has not been published in part or in whole elsewhere. All used literature and other sources are attributed and cited in references.

Bratislava, 30 April 2013

Signature: _____

The Burden of Being

The Comparative Analysis of Paul Tillich's and Martin Heidegger's Concept of Existential Anxiety

Author: Áron Macsicza

Thesis title: The Burden of Being: The Comparative Analysis of Paul Tillich's and Martin Heidegger's Concept of Existential Anxiety

University: Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts

Thesis Advisor: Mgr. Mgr. Peter Šajda, PhD.

Head of the Defense Committee: Samuel Abrahám, PhD.

Defense Committee: Samuel Abrahám, PhD., prof. František Novosád, Mgr. Dagmar Kusá, PhD., Matthew Post, MA, prof. Silvia Miháliková

Place, year, length of the thesis: Bratislava, 2013, 44 pages, 14 280 words

Qualification Degree: Bachelor of Science (Bc.)

Abstract

Key Words: existential anxiety, Angst, being, nonbeing, Da-sein, absolute faith

The purpose of this bachelor thesis is to scrutinize the concept of existential anxiety and to give a sufficient and well argued examination of it. The work is based on the analysis of the works of two prominent existentialist philosophers of the 20th century, namely of Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich. The thesis uses the method of close reading and systematic analysis of the books *Being and Time* by Heidegger and *The Courage to Be* by Tillich, seeking the major similarities and dissimilarities in both works. This shall show us later whether their understanding of anxiety is more or less the same or if there is a fundamental difference in it. The results will tell us what does anxiety reveal about human existence.

The existentialist conception of anxiety states that it roots in human existence itself and actually it is something we cannot get rid of, we have to find our own way how to deal with it. Among others the main purpose of this thesis is to find precisely this aspect of anxiety at both above mentioned authors and to find out how could we obtain a far-reaching and proper understanding of this phenomenon. From the results of the analysis further conclusions and possible interpretations will be drawn.

Bremeno bytia

Komparatívna analýza koncepcie existenciálnej úzkosti u Paula Tillicha a Martina Heideggera

Autor: Áron Maczica

Názov bakalárskej práce: Bremeno bytia: Komparatívna analýza koncepcie existenciálnej úzkosti u Paula Tillicha a Martina Heideggera

Univerzita: Bratislavská medzinárodná škola liberálnych štúdií

Školiteľ: Mgr. Mgr. Peter Šajda, Phd.

Predseda komisie: Samuel Abrahám, PhD.

Komisia: : Samuel Abrahám, PhD., prof. František Novosád, Mgr. Dagmar Kusá, PhD., Matthew Post, MA, prof. Silvia Miháliková

Miesto, rok, dĺžka práce: Bratislava, 2013, 44 strán, 14 280 slov

Vysokoškolský stupeň: Bakalár (Bc.)

Abstrakt

Kľúčové slová: existenciálna úzkosť, Angst, bytie, nebytie, Da-sein, absolútna viera

Cieľom tejto bakalárskej práce je preskúmať poňatie existenciálnej úzkosti a podať výklad k jej pochopeniu. Práca je založená na analýze diel dvoch významných filozofov existencialistickej školy 20. storočia, menovite Martina Heideggera a Paula Tillicha. Práca využíva metódu pozorného čítania a systematickej analýzy Heideggerovej knihy *Bytie a Čas* a Tillichovej knihy *Odvaha Byť*. Práca hľadá hlavné podobnosti ale zároveň aj odlišnosti v oboch dielach. Analýza by nám mala ukázať či sa ich pochopenie úzkosti zhoduje alebo či sa ich interpretácie zásadne rozchádzajú. Ústrednou témou bakalárskej práce je poukázať na to, čo pojem úzkosti dokazuje o našom osobnom bytí ako takom.

Existencialistické poňatie úzkosti uvádza, že úzkosť ako taká korení v samotnom bytí, a preto sa jej človek nemôžeme vyhnúť. Musíme nájsť vlastný spôsob, ako sa s ňou vyrovnáť. Cieľom tejto práce je preto nájsť tie aspekty úzkosti, v ktorých sa zhoduje interpretácia oboch autorov, a zároveň zistiť, ako je možné získať správnu a ďalekosiahlu znalosť o pojme existencialistickej úzkosti. Z výsledkov analýzy budú následne vyvodené ďalšie možné interpretácie. Pojem úzkosti je a vždy bude súčasťou ľudstva a je len na ľuďoch samotných ako svoje bytie pochopia a s úzkosťou sa vyrovnajú.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank to my supervisor Mgr., Mgr. Peter Šajda Phd. for his help, support and numerous helpful advices. Without his help I would not be able to finish this thesis.

My thanks belong also to Mgr. Dagmar Kusá Phd. for her helpful advices, her willingness to help me and my classmates with our theses, but most importantly for her patience.

Contents

Declaration of Originality	iii
Abstract	iv
Abstrakt	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter 1 - Introduction	8
Chapter 2 – Paul Tillich	11
Fear and Anxiety	12
The three types of anxiety	13
The anxiety of fate and death	14
The anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness	15
The anxiety of guilt and condemnation	18
Existential and pathological anxiety	19
Absolute faith and the God above God	22
Chapter III - Heidegger	26
Da-sein	26
Fear and Angst	27
Fear	27
Angst	28
Chapter IV –Conclusion	35
Resumé	41
Bibliography	43

Chapter 1 - Introduction

"I do not speak your language.
My voice is more homeless than the word!
I have no words.
Its horrible burden
tumbles down through the air -
a tower's body emits sounds.
You are nowhere. How empty the world is.
A garden chair, and a deckchair left outside.
Among sharp stones my clangorous shadow.
I am tired. I jut out from the earth."
(Pilinszky J., Apocrypha, trans. Ted Hughes, 1978)

The bachelor thesis compares Paul Tillich's and Martin Heidegger's account of existential anxiety. I chose the method of close reading and comparative analysis in order to be able to draw sufficiently relevant conclusions from the examined works.

Existential anxiety is a surprisingly common phenomenon which is closely connected to the contingency of our earthly existence. Usually arises when one is aware of his possible nonbeing, his having to die. However, as we will see in Heidegger's arguments, existential anxiety does not have to deal necessarily with the possibility our death. It is undoubtedly a huge challenge for people to face this fact and they are mostly shocked when they experience it for the first time. Choosing the topic of existential anxiety had primarily a personal reason. The general preconceived picture of anxiety strongly differs from its proper definition. People mostly associate it incorrectly with fear or mental disorders. Giving a detailed analysis of existential anxiety at both authors will help to avoid such misunderstandings. I myself happened to experience an unpleasant period of existential anxiety for several months. The experience was immense, stifling and exhausting. The burden of the surrounding world, including the awareness of my own existence, was almost unbearable. After I started gathering information about my "unusual" condition, I came across with the book *The Courage to Be* written by Paul Tillich. Later on I became familiar with Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Surprisingly I could identify my "problem" with many revelations described in both books. Without the satisfactory knowledge acquired through these readings I would have very likely attributed it to a mental

disorder. This was one of the greatest impulses which motivated me to write my bachelor thesis about the topic in question.

The reason for choosing Paul Tillich as the first philosopher, besides the above mentioned reason, was the extent of his analysis of anxiety. He examines the phenomenon of anxiety throughout two chapters and gives a clear and detailed explanation about it. The uniqueness of Tillich's philosophy is his ability to connect philosophy with Christian theology without losing the credibility of his arguments (Bernard, 1963, p. 79). His arguments are relevant both in philosophy and theology.

The choice could have easily fallen on the Danish thinker Soren Kierkegaard as the second philosopher in the comparison. He was the first person in the history of philosophy who used the concept of anxiety (*Angst*) in his works, from a certain point of view we can consider him the "father of existential anxiety". Moreover, he devoted a whole book to it called *The Concept of Anxiety* (Kierkegaard, 1980). However, his approach towards the concept of anxiety has a religious character. Thus there would have been more similarities than dissimilarities between Tillich and Kierkegaard.

Heidegger seemed to be suitable for this purpose since, unlike Kierkegaard's, his perception of *Angst* is rather secular. It is important to mention as a curiosity that Tillich and Heidegger were fellow colleagues at the University of Marburg in the early to mid 1920s. Hence we can anticipate that they mutually influenced each other.

The thesis takes into consideration the logic through which Tillich and Heidegger are approaching existential anxiety. Both authors are examining the concept of anxiety through being as such. They put into the center of their focus the individual human being who is capable of reflecting upon his own existence, and ask how does anxiety affect the individual's being. In the state of anxiety we receive important ontological "information" about ourselves. The question of nonbeing is equally present in both works, this implies to the relevancy of the topic. Simply the fact that existential anxiety belongs to human existence is an important detail that shall not be omitted.

The moment when anxiety arises is a crucial part in both texts and hence there is a great emphasis on it in this paper also.

The thesis takes into consideration the difference made between pathological and existential anxiety. This is thoroughly examined in *The Courage to Be*. Tillich is aware of the difference between the two concepts and finds it important to allocate the boundaries between them. Heidegger, on the other hand, does not differentiate between existential and pathological anxiety. Tillich's contribution to psychotherapy

is unquestionable. However, if we stick strictly to Heidegger's arguments, it is questionable whether we can draw a parallel to pathological anxiety. The differentiation of the two kinds of anxieties provides a better understanding of the concept in question. Moreover, in certain cases it could even prevent medical maltreatment.

After discussing all the questions that have been raised above, the reader will very likely receive a comprehensible comparison of Paul Tillich's and Martin Heidegger's philosophy about existential anxiety – its sources, nature, forms, and relevancy – by answering the fundamental questions that revolve around it.

Chapter 2 – Paul Tillich

Even though Paul Tillich's well-known book *The Courage To Be* scrutinizes courage as an essential quality necessary for being able to overcome the menaces of everyday life and to comprehend and live it to its fullest, undoubtedly anxiety occupies a significant role in the book and the author devotes to it two whole chapters. As it will be discussed in great detail later, anxiety is a state of mind that elucidates being's true nature which under normal circumstances remains veiled. The hasty pace of our lives and the widely dispersed attention of the everyday man restrains him from focusing onto the sublime and deep understanding of human existence's intricate nature. However, on some exceptional occasions the privilege of such an experience is given to us when anxiety threatens us by revealing being's aspects which are otherwise hidden.

One may have an objection against the claim that this experience is exceptional and rare by emphasizing that anxiety is a state of mind when we reflect upon our own existence and reveal in it the presence of non-existence, or more precisely the omnipresence of finitude, at the same time. And since existence is the primary and necessary condition of life, the possibility of experiencing anxiety is constantly present to us. There is an obvious interdependence between the concept of being and nonbeing and in fact the one is impossible without the other. Both concepts are equally important since we can examine nonbeing only through being which is negated by it. Nonbeing becomes nothingness only when it is confronted with being (Tillich, 2000, p. 40). For Tillich this is a crucial premise which clarifies nonbeing's character. Both concepts are in strong opposition and are mutually negating each other, but at the same time they are inseparable. By this dependence Tillich means the following: nonbeing in itself does not have any characteristics and it acquires its threatening quality only when is contrasted with being. „*There could be no negation if there were no preceding affirmation to be negated...The ontological status of non-being as nonbeing is dependent on being, since it becomes nothing only in contrast to something*“ (Tillich, 2000, p. 40). Nonbeing according to Tillich has no qualities and its ontological understanding happens always through the analysis of the two extremes and their differences. But how should one understand this rather vague concept? For

Tillich nonbeing is an exceptional concept since it represents absolute nothingness and the negation of everything that exists. „*It is the negation of every concept, but as such it is an inseparable content of thought, the most important one after being-itself (God)*” (Tillich, 2000 p. 34). Thus nonbeing obtains a power, it is not only the opposite of human existence but the negation of everything. The peculiarity of being lays in the finding that it „*embraces itself and nonbeing.*“ As long as the symbiosis of the two concepts is present, being creatively overcomes nonbeing and continuously conquers it by affirming itself in spite of nonbeing’s threatening presence (Tillich, 2000, p. 34). The ability of being able to continuously preserve oneself despite the apparent possibility of nonbeing serves as the basis of the courage to be and the source of self-affirmation (Tillich, 2000, p. 34). As long as one is able to use his creativity to affirm himself in spite of the given condition, being will always conquer nonbeing, nevertheless they will remain inseparable elements. This condition is not easy to deal with and many may find cumbersome the reconciliation with this fact. In the moment of reflecting upon the above mentioned situation people usually find themselves in the state of anxiety. The first and most basic statement about anxiety as such is that „*anxiety is the state in which a being is aware of its possible nonbeing*“ (Tillich, pg.35). Tillich describes it as the existential knowledge of nonbeing. This, however, is a very straightforward knowledge by its character, since the person who is aware of this fact does not contemplate about an abstract indefinite concept or the possible interpretations of what nonbeing might look like, but about the fact that his own being participates in nonbeing. This anxiety, according to Tillich, is „*finitude, experienced as one’s own finitude*“ (Tillich, 2000, p. 35). Of course anxiety appears in the very moment of this reflection, and does not belong to existence itself, otherwise we would be in the state of an eternally ongoing state of anxiety caused by the constant confrontation with our finitude. Since the above mentioned anxiety is triggered by the knowledge that nonbeing is a part of *being*, it is existential anxiety (Tillich, 2000, p. 35).

Fear and Anxiety

After making the general observation and the basic revelations about the interdependence of being and nonbeing, and anxiety’s relationship with them, Tillich elaborates a clear distinction between fear and anxiety as almost every modern

psychologist and philosopher does. Tillich argues that even though fear and anxiety have the same ontological root, in reality they are not the same concepts. While fear is always afraid of a concrete, defined object and one can participate in a certain way, anxiety leaves this possibility unfulfilled and keeps the agent in desperation, because it lacks the object which fear has. *„Fear, as opposed to anxiety has a definite object (as most authors agree), which can be faced, analyzed, attacked, endured. One can act upon it, and in acting upon it, participate in it“* (Tillich, 2000, p.36). Courage is the solution for Tillich, because by its character it can meet every object of fear, but he emphasizes that only definite objects permit participation.

On the contrary, anxiety cannot be met by courage for the simple reason that it does not have any object, or more precisely, its object is the utter negation of every object (Tillich, p. 36). Since we cannot participate in nonbeing, because it expresses the negation of every object, anxiety overcomes the helpless person. *„Anxiety has no object, or rather, in a paradoxical phrase, its object is the negation of every object. Therefore participation, struggle, and love with respect to it are impossible“* (Tillich, 2000, p. 38). Anxiety remains present because we are unable to define the source of the threat, and the only object present to us is the threat itself. Genuine knowledge about anxiety's object is impossible to acquire simply because *„it is the unknown, which by its very nature cannot be known, because it is nonbeing.“* (Tillich, p. 37) However big might seem the difference between fear and anxiety, in fact they are immanent within each other. Naked anxiety, as Tillich says, if not modified by the fear of a definite object, remains always the anxiety of ultimate nonbeing. (Tillich, p.38) *„It is the anxiety of not being able to preserve one's own being which underlies every fear and is the frightening element in it.“* (Tillich, p.38) As soon as this kind of anxiety lays hold of the mind, those fears with a definite object are transformed and absorbed by anxiety. In such situations the immediate response of the subject is the attempt to transform this anxiety into fear, so that he will be able to confront it with courage. Experiencing naked anxiety is described by the author as a tremendous suffering causing *„unimaginable horror“*. *„This horror is ordinarily avoided by the transformation of anxiety into fear of something, no matter what.“* (Tillich, pg.39)

The three types of anxiety

Though anxiety in its nakedness represents nonbeing, it threatens being in three different ways. On the basis of this Tillich classifies anxiety into three categories. Firstly into the anxiety of fate and death, secondly the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, and thirdly the anxiety of guilt and condemnation. In each category anxiety possesses different qualities, however, all the three types are somehow interconnected.

The anxiety of fate and death

To commence with the first and most basic anxiety, one shall examine the anxiety of fate and death. It threatens our very existence, both fate and death are heading towards nonbeing, hence it threatens man's ontic self-affirmation. (Tillich, p.42) "*The anxiety of fate and death is most basic, most universal, and inescapable. All attempts to argue it away are futile.*" (Tillich, p.42) We are aware of the dependence of the self on the physical body and that after biological extinction this kind of self ceases to exist in its ordinary form. Tillich describes this as the "*self-world correlation*" and emphasizes the wordliness and material dependence of existence on the environment in which it dwells. The degree of individualization determines the intensity of the anxiety of death and according to certain standpoints, the more individualized one is, the more intense will be his anxiety. The belief that collectivist cultures can successfully oppress and conceal this threat is wrong and only partly true according to Tillich. Anxiety of fate and death is present in both cases, however. collectivistic cultures can allay it by the help of several psychological and ritual means and worshipping strong symbols (Tillich, p. 43)

Among others this is one of the foundations of civilizations and the law system preventing people from arbitrary murders. The anxiety of death is by no means the most obvious and basic threat to us which overshadows all the remaining anxieties of man, however, some of them are by their character often more immediate and thus more intense than the threat of the eventual unavoidable. Tillich considers fate as something characterized by unpredictability and what does not bear in itself any meaning or purpose. (Tillich, p. 43) The contingency of human existence incessantly reminds us of the randomness in our being, that we may live only by pure chance without any rational explanation and that everything we have is contingent, depending on time (Tillich, p.44) When Tillich is talking about contingency in connection with

the spatiality of our being, he mentions the *“strangeness of this place in spite of its familiarity”* that is very similar to the psychological symptoms characteristic for anxiety. (Tillich, p.44)

The fact that we live in space and time, that we are constantly hurling towards death but all the circumstances are given randomly, causes the anxiety about our contingent spatial existence. (Tillich, p. 44) Tillich under contingency does not mean indetermination but the irrationality and inexplicability of our existence which is exposed to an utterly random chain of relations that have no eventual necessity. *“Contingently we are put into the whole web of casual relations. Contingently we are determined by them in every moment and thrown out by them in the last moment.”* (Tillich, p. 44) Tillich calls fate *“the rule of contingency”* and says that *“anxiety about fate is based on the finite being’s awareness of being contingent in every respect, of having no ultimate necessity”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 44). Tillich emphasizes the omnipresence of the absolute threat of nonbeing in which the unavoidable anxiety of death is rooted. This also gives the seriousness to all the other anxieties which are getting their final seriousness from the formidable shadow of nonbeing. The anxiety of death is absolute and all the other anxieties are relative in the terms of their immediacy, however, the anxiety of death attributes to them their final seriousness. *“Death is not present only in the moment of dying but in every moment of existence”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 45). The experience of time constantly reminds us of our contingency, by understanding that each moment disappears immediately after it emerges and we are participating in this slow process of decay. Tillich raises the question at the end of the discussion whether there is a certain kind of courage which can face this threat against man’s ontic self-affirmation (Tillich, 2000).

The anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness

While the anxiety of death threatens man’s ontic self-affirmation, the anxiety of meaninglessness and emptiness threatens man’s spiritual self-affirmation. For spiritual self-affirmation, according to Tillich, is present in every moment in which one creatively lives his or her life. Under creativity Tillich does not mean the common ability of the artist to make something new and innovative, for example, but living spontaneously and actively participating in the milieu one finds himself in. Spiritual

creativity for people is hence the ability of being able to *“participate meaningfully in their original creations”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 46). Even if the influence is scarce, we still talk about creativity. Participation is the key to understand creativity, because by participating in meanings one has either a direct or indirect influence on the surrounding environment (Tillich, 2000). Tillich uses the example of the poet who, by creatively transforming the language writes something new, has an influence on his audience. Our creativity depends on our attitude towards the outer world, since the one who lives creatively, *“affirms himself as receiving and transforming reality creatively. He loves himself as participating in the spiritual life and as loving its contents. He loves them because they are his own fulfillment and because they are actualized through him”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 46). By participating in the spiritual life, we love both the independent part of reality, and ourselves by contributing to it, thus participating in it. *“The anxiety of meaninglessness is anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern, of a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings. This anxiety is aroused by the loss of a spiritual center, of an answer to the question of the meaning of existence”* (Tillich, 2000, p.47). Existence as such seems pointless and meaningless in this state of mind and the very center of the subject is shaken by it. The anxiety of emptiness is a preliminary phase which is heading towards the anxiety of meaninglessness. After the *“creative eros is transformed into indifference or aversion”* due to the lack of satisfaction or the loss of motivation the subject falls into the anxiety of emptiness. This could be caused either by internal or external factors. The subject looks for an ultimate meaning, and by doing so, he tries to recreate or save the weakening and vanishing spiritual center. This, however, is futile because *“a spiritual center cannot be produced intentionally, and the attempt to produce it only produces deeper anxiety”* (Tillich, 2000, p.48). This, according to Tillich, directs the anxiety of emptiness into the direction of meaninglessness.

Tillich describes doubt as a two-faced concept, because it has a creative potential, however, a destructive power is implied in it as well. One’s spiritual life is liable to these factors and while questioning something, the moment of not having, the negative side of doubt, is always present (Tillich, 2000). Tillich says that in systematic questioning systematic doubt is inherent and that doubt is actually an unavoidable condition of spiritual life (Tillich, 2000) Doubt as such in itself is not threatening to spiritual life unless it is not total doubt. In such cases it ceases to be a “filtering” or constructive element and transforms itself into existential despair. The

spiritual life desperately looks for a meaning by the help of which it could avoid doubt and affirm itself. If doubt cannot be removed, one courageously accepts it and places its focus on new sources of self-affirmation which seems to be untouched and potentially able to offer a loophole. This is, according to Tillich, one possible solution which includes the danger of failing and frustration, and if the affirmations happen to lose their validity, complete despair will take over the hope of certainty and spiritual fulfillment (Tillich, 2000).

The nature of questioning and doubt is separating us from the whole of reality by isolating the individual from the universal and whole reality. When we question something, we point out what we are separated from, but at the same time that we are participating in it. This disables universal participation. In certain cases the subject tries to escape this by trying to participate in something that transcends the isolated subject and what is transindividual. Even though the privilege of questioning isolates us from the whole of reality, at the same time it liberates us and makes us free. In the attempt to avoid isolation one is under the necessity of surrendering his freedom and hence giving up the right to ask and answer for himself. The goal of this is to avoid the state of anxiety of meaninglessness. By being deprived of the right to ask and doubt, one sacrifices the self at the same time. Tillich describes this as follows: *“In order to avoid the risk of asking and doubting he surrenders the right to ask and to doubt. He surrenders himself in order to save his spiritual life. He ”escapes from his freedom” (Fromm) in order to escape the anxiety of meaninglessness. He “participates” and affirms by participation the contents of his spiritual life. Meaning is saved, but the self is sacrificed”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 49). According to Tillich this is a source of fanaticism, because the subject is ready to sacrifice his self for the sake of overcoming doubt, which eventually leads to *“fanatical self-assertiveness.”* The element of fanaticism is rooted in the constant strive to suppress everything that is in contradiction with the reduced self, both in others and in the subject himself. The attacks on the threatening elements, however, reveal precisely the anxieties of which the subject is afraid (Tillich, 2000). According to Tillich ontic and spiritual self-affirmation are distinct but cannot be separated. This means that the meanings given to our existence are in a very close relationship with our being. For this reason if nonbeing threatens us, it has a direct influence on both above mentioned aspects of life. Tillich claims at the end of the discussion the death instinct is not ontic but a spiritual phenomenon. The reason for this is as follows: *“The most revealing*

expression of this fact is the desire to throw away one's ontic existence rather than stand the despair of emptiness and meaninglessness" (Tillich, 2000, p.51). This demonstrates the superiority of spiritual self-affirmation over ontic self-affirmation, in other words our willingness to rather give up our ontic existence than to bear the burden of spiritual anxiety and the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness. However, if ontic existence is threatened by nonbeing, it may have a direct weakening influence on the spiritual self-affirmation resulting in the state of emptiness or meaninglessness (Tillich, 2000).

The anxiety of guilt and condemnation

Nonbeing threatens us from a third direction and it aims at our moral self-affirmation. Tillich's account of moral anxiety is as follows: Human beings are not only bestowed with existence but at the same time it is demanded of them. Thus every human being is responsible for what they have made of themselves. *"He is required to answer, if he is asked, what he has made of himself. He who asks him is his judge, namely he himself, who, at the same time, stands against him. This situation produces the anxiety which, in relative terms, is the anxiety of guilt; in absolute terms, the anxiety of self-rejection or condemnation"* (Tillich, 2000, p. 52). As it was mentioned earlier, human existence is characterized by contingency, but within this contingency we are free to create our own selves. Tillich comprehends freedom as the subject's ability of *"being able to determine himself through decisions in the center of his being. Man, as finite freedom, is free within the contingencies of his finitude"* (Tillich, 2000, p. 52). He is responsible for the creation of his own destiny and for every moral action which contributes to it. Hence his freedom is an obligation at the same time and by freely choosing what he makes of himself, he fulfills his destiny for which he is responsible. Through this fulfillment he is always capable *"of contradicting his essential being, of losing his destiny"*(Tillich, 2000, p.52). Tillich speaks of nonbeing as something negative and evil which always penetrates one's being and makes him aware of his possible nonbeing. This makes imperfect even his best deeds because nonbeing is present in them as well. *"A profound ambiguity between good and evil permeates everything he does, because it permeates his personal being as such. Nonbeing mixed with being in his moral self-affirmation as it is in his spiritual and ontic self-*

affirmation. The awareness of this ambiguity is the feeling of guilt” (Tillich, 2000, p. 52). Guilt emerges in the moment when the self is judging himself, and perceives the presence of nonbeing as a negative thing. This evokes the experience of guilt. This guilt is similar to the anxiety caused by ontic and spiritual nonbeing, and can be recognized in every moment of moral self-awareness. *“It is present in every moment of moral self-awareness and can drive us toward complete self-rejection, to the feeling of being condemned – not to an external punishment but to the despair of having lost our destiny”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 52-53). The loss of destiny would mean either the loss of the self or of the freedom we have over it. In every moment of the anxiety of guilt one strives to avoid the extreme situation and to find reconciliation somehow. The anxiety of guilt is meant to be transformed into moral action, according to Tillich, regardless of its character. This action demands courage, because only by the help of courage is one able to take *“nonbeing into his moral self-affirmation”*(Tillich, 2000, p. 53). This could happen in two ways.

Existential and pathological anxiety

In the introduction the difference between existential and pathological anxiety has been mentioned, Paul Tillich elaborates a clear distinction between them. So far we have been talking about existential anxiety, that is, anxiety which is immanent in human existence. Anxiety is generally evoked by an inner conflict, not necessarily caused by nonbeing. Psychologists and philosophers have been trying to find a common denominator, the anxiety which is most basic and always present, however, the attempt seems to be vain. The awareness of imbalance, the disproportionate excess of something within ourselves is experienced mostly in the attunement of anxiety, either consciously or unconsciously. Tillich calls these drives, which are striving to dominate the center of the personality, and his definition is somewhat similar to Nietzsche’s conception of the numerous drives competing with each other and simultaneously occupying the leading role in the individual (Tillich, 2000).

Tillich is concerned with the question of the difference between existential and pathological anxiety and considers the psychoanalysts’ inability to distinguish them to be their major fault. They are approaching anxiety by scrutinizing it with the eyes of the psychoanalysts, however, a crucial aspect is always lacking. This is, according to

Tillich, the ontological origin of anxiety which is missed by the attention of most people. First an ontological understanding must be acquired and only after that can we differentiate between the two types of anxiety (Tillich, 2000). Both anxieties are existential, however, pathological anxiety is a special form of existential anxiety. *“The general character of these conditions depends on the relation of anxiety to self-affirmation and courage”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 65).

In the previous chapter, where courage’s ability to overcome anxiety has been discussed, we saw that even though it does not remove anxiety, since it is inherent in existence itself, it can take its formidable character into itself allowing self-affirmation in-spite-of nonbeing (Tillich, 2000). If this attempt is unsuccessful or the person does not have the courage to take upon himself his anxiety, he will get into the state of neurosis or despair. Despair is an extreme state which is ought to be avoided in every situation. One of the alternatives, if we can speak of it as that, is escaping into neurosis. *“Neurosis is the way of avoiding nonbeing by avoiding being”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 66). Neurosis does not exclude self-affirmation, on the contrary, it can be actually very strong, however, only on a limited scale. The neurotic person cannot bear the presence of nonbeing and because he wants to avoid the state of despair, he creates a reduced self which disregards nonbeing. An essential part of existence is thus willingly rejected by him, hoping that the self-affirmation will be successful. Tillich argues that such self-affirmation means surrendering one’s full potentialities. *“Some or many potentialities are not admitted to actualization, because actualization of being implies the acceptance of nonbeing and its anxiety”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 66). The distinction between the healthy and the neurotic person is hard to make because every person has the potential to experience neurotic periods in their lives. What is then the difference and where can we draw a clear line between the two modes of anxiety?

The neurotic person is paradoxically much more sensitive to nonbeing, even though he avoids it by excluding it from his self-affirmation. Precisely this is the reason why he is more prone to react sensitively to it in the moment of encounter. Tillich says that *“neurotic anxiety breaks through the walls of ordinary self-affirmation and opens up levels of reality which are normally hidden”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 67). Neurotic people are thus in general more sensitive than the average people. Some people who have been formerly experiencing anxieties report feelings of great unease and uncanniness which are sometimes almost unbearable. They tend to excessively focus on a certain

part of reality, sometimes even understanding certain complicated structures of it, but they are more concerned with their suffering than with their findings. The lack of acceptance for nonbeing's presence has the opposite effect and makes them more aware of it. Even though neurotic people are not willing to accept it, nonbeing is omnipresent in them as well. There is a conflict between the neurotic person's reduced self which denies nonbeing and reality where nonbeing is being's companion. He is conscious and he is aware of the potential threat of failing to defend his limited self. He can either fall into a deeper, better defended but still unrealistic self-affirmation, or he will be dominated by despair (Tillich, 2000). The neurotic person is in a constant conflict with reality which penetrates his reduced, limited self-affirmation. He refuses to accept nonbeing as an inherent part of himself, however, it lurks on him at every corner. This imaginary world is according to Tillich dangerous and unhealthy and must be necessarily healed by "*being taken into a courage to be which is extensive as well as intensive*" (Tillich, 2000, p. 69).

Normal self-affirmation is rather clear and straightforward if the above mentioned neurotic anxiety is taken into consideration. The "healthy" person is willing to face nonbeing by courageously accepting it and taking it into his self-affirmation. Thus there is no conflict between him and reality because he actively participates in it. The non-neurotic, healthy person does not reduce his potentialities. Tillich notes that the normal person is usually not aware of nonbeing's presence because he responds to every object of fear courageously and thus he does not arrive at the extreme situation. On the one hand the average person lacks the creativity that the neurotic person has, and which allows him to perceive the hidden fragments of reality, but on the other hand, the "non-neurotic" person's perception of reality corresponds with what he encounters and thus possesses a more or less objective conception of reality as such. "*He affirms himself in unity with those parts of reality which he encounters*" (Tillich, 2000, p. 69). Also, since his self-affirmation is not fixed as the neurotic person's, he will easily adapt to new and unexpected circumstances. Tillich argues that the average man does not become neurotic only as long as his courage is unshaken and can react to the outside world in an appropriate manner in terms of self-affirmation through courage. If he is unprepared and too much anchored into the environment in which he affirms himself, a sudden change, to which he is unable to react properly, may turn him into a neurotic person. If he is unable to accept the forthcoming unknown and potentially threatening, he will defend his subjective reality in the same way as the

neurotic person defends his reduced reality, which lacks nonbeing when confronted with objective reality (Tillich, 2000).

Absolute faith and the God above God

Closely towards the end of *The Courage to Be* Tillich examines the concept of faith and being-itself, which is practically speaking God himself described in a philosophical way. These concepts are perhaps the most important and without them anxiety and courage can be understood only partially, and the context will always lack crucial details. Faith according to Tillich is the state of “*being grasped by the power of being-itself.*” Faith is the experience of courage’s power, its ability to affirm being in spite of nonbeing (Tillich, 2000). The argument has a religious connotation from a certain point of view, however, if being-itself is comprehended as the manifestation of pure being and its creative power that supersedes everything, it can be a plausible explanation even for the most radical opponents of the idea of a transcendental God, as he is mostly understood. Any objection against being would be as ridiculous as it may sound, it would be an utterly self-contradictory statement, the denial of one’s existence. It would resemble the neurotic person’s strive to exclude nonbeing from his reality, but in this case being would be excluded. Faith is not a subjective conviction in the existence of an incomprehensible and almighty supernatural existence. It is the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself. Tillich defines this as accepting acceptance which has a paradox in itself. Being-itself infinitely transcends ordinary finite human beings, it is, so to speak, being’s infinite triumph over nonbeing. There is a gap between this power and ordinary finite being. The finite human being realizes that in spite of his separation from the power of being-itself he is accepted by the divine power of it and the only decision left to him is to accept its acceptance. Through this acceptance participation in this creative power becomes possible. In this process faith’s capability to accept “in spite of” is being transformed into courage to accept in spite of (nonbeing). Very simply said, faith is the act of realizing and accepting that there is a higher transcendental form of being in which we actively participate by being alive. “*He who is grasped by this power is able to affirm himself because he knows that he is affirmed by the power of being-itself*” (Tillich, 2000). Being-itself could be interpreted as the metaphor of the infinite and omnipresent

creative power of being that constantly transcends ordinary finite being, but at the same time partakes in it. Faith is the experience of participating in this power.

The predominant anxiety of our times is the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness which is the most threatening of the three types, because it leads to the loss of the self or the ultimate meaning of existence. In the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness we are confronted with the *“abyss in which the meaning of life and the truth of ultimate responsibility disappear”*(Tillich, 2000, p. 174). Tillich seeks the form of self-affirmation which is apt to overcome the most radical form of the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness. The question being posed is that if everything loses its meaning and every previous certainty vanishes, through which act can we re-affirm our being? If the bases of all the previous sources of certitude turn out to be insufficient, what can save us from the loss of an ultimate meaning? The answer must be able to accept nonbeing since it is an inseparable part of being. *“It is not an answer if it demands the removal of this state; for that is just what cannot be done”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 175). As we already know, nonbeing is dependent on being and their coexistence is a given and unchangeable premise. Paradoxically nonbeing must affirm itself in the same way as being. *“The negative lives from the positive it negates”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 176). This relationship discloses being as such and its superiority above nonbeing. Faith is the act of accepting both being and nonbeing, despite the threat of meaninglessness. We partake in being-itself which is the source of the constant “yes saying to being over the no”. Faith is simply the experience of being grasped by the power of being-itself, the source of every existence. According to Tillich genuinely experienced faith is *“undirected, absolute. It is undefinable, since everything defined is dissolved by doubt and meaninglessness”* (Tillich, 2000, p. 176). Understanding that the thence received meaning is dependent on meaninglessness, and that it is nourished by it, is a relieving experience indeed. Tillich’s explanation has a dualistic character where all the opposite concepts are dependent on each other and they affirm themselves in the face of their negations. Being is dependent on nonbeing, meaning on meaninglessness, faith on doubt, and surprisingly even being-itself on nonbeing. Absolute faith is demonstrated in the act of choosing being over nonbeing, meaning over meaninglessness and faith over doubt. It does not have any content, its focus is on the act of an unconditional and courageous acceptance. Even though our existence is taken for granted and some people would find the idea of faith irrational, we must

accept being because it is not rooted in a conscious deliberate choice made by us, but it comes from being-itself and it actively participates in it. The courage to be, the key concept of Tillich's whole book, revolves around the above mentioned unconditioned acceptance (Tillich, 2000). Being's "superiority" over nonbeing has to be properly understood. Both concepts are so to speak objectively present, being is no more real than nonbeing. Being has to affirm itself in contrast to nonbeing in the same way as nonbeing does. Tillich speaks of it as a *double negation*, because it is the negation of being's negation (Tillich, 2000). In this dynamic nonbeing forces being to continuously affirm itself, so that it will not be absorbed by its negativity. The sharp distinction between the two concepts manifests itself only if they are set against each other. "*The self-affirmation of being without nonbeing would not even be self-affirmation but an immovable self-identity. Nothing would be manifest, nothing expressed, nothing revealed*" (Tillich, 2000, p. 179). This allows us to participate in the power of being-itself and it discloses itself in the courage to be. There is no valid proof for the existence of a God, however, our participation in the power of being-itself is always present to us, either we recognize it consciously or not. If we say courageously yes to being despite of nonbeing's presence, we say yes to being-itself and thus actively participate in it. According to Tillich the courage to be reveals being-itself because it negates nonbeing in the same way as being-itself has to negate nonbeing in its self-affirmation (Tillich, 2000).

People tend to establish religions, to gather and worship gods in order to give meaning to their lives. All these attempts serve the purpose of escaping the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness, and the radical form of the remaining anxieties, and to affirm one's existence in spite of nonbeing. These attempts, however, seem to be only relatively successful and the preconceived concept of God must be exalted to a higher meaning, because as we will see hereinafter, it is insufficient and does not fulfill its supposed purpose (if we approach the problem from such a "pragmatic" point of view). Tillich talks about the necessity of this shift in the chapter dealing with *theism transcending theism*. Theism simply does not allow a direct, immediate relationship with being-itself, it always poses certain barriers between God and the individual. Theism treats God either as a subject or an object which is always separated from man, so an unmediated relationship is unimaginable. Hence theism must be transcended as Tillich says, to prevent it either from its attempt to personalize, to

conceptualize God, or from imposing unspecified characteristics on him. All the three examples ought to be evaded, because they are one-sided, wrong or irrelevant to what we are looking for (Tillich, 2000). The God which is defined according to the above-mentioned ways seems to be easily exposable to doubt and consequently cannot offer a relevant way of escaping the radical forms of anxiety. Tillich argues that the God of theism is only a part of reality and therefore is “*subjected to the structure of the whole*” (Tillich, 2000, p. 184). This leads to his personalization, and hereby we can speak of God only as a being and not being-itself. From this a subject-object relationship emerges which eventually deprives us from our subjectivity.

Theism is transcended through absolute faith which accepts the acceptance of being-itself, which is a God above the traditional conception of God (Tillich, 2000). It transcends both subject and object, being-itself is the manifestation of the power of being in which every living entity participates without having to accept it. This is the God above God described by Tillich. (Tillich’s description of being-itself resembles the Hegelian account of the world spirit in which everything participates and manifests its potentiality.) In the extreme situation, when the God of theism is absorbed in the anxiety of doubt, the God above theism emerges. When every meaning and hope is lost, our existence remains present nevertheless. This might be the experience of which Tillich speaks, the unconditional participation in being-itself. “*The courage to be is rooted in the God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt*” (Tillich, 2000, p. 190).

Chapter III - Heidegger

Martin Heidegger elaborates in *Being and Time* a complicated structure of reality, or more precisely, as the title implies, a thorough explanation of being as such and the concept of time. He sets up an intricate system of concepts with an inner coherent logic by the help of his own peculiar terminology, corresponding with the phenomena that he encounters throughout his analysis. Anxiety as an important existential phenomenon does not elude Heidegger's attention, on the contrary, he examines it as one of the attunements of human existence. His arguments are very precise and the concepts are defined and scrutinized in a very detailed manner, often pointing out almost self-evident and ubiquitous experiences from our everyday lives which, however, mostly lack precise definition and are experienced unrecognized. The Heideggerian language is very precise striving to capture everything in its substance. For example, when he defines Da-sein, he says that it is existence always experienced as one's own existence. The purpose of stating these seemingly obvious details is simply to call things by their right names, but also the avoidance of becoming a victim of immoderate pedantry or misinterpretation.

Da-sein

In the center of his focus is Da-sein, the subjective individual human being. It is the individual who is capable of self-reflection, and awareness of his own existence. Da-sein is the I who is always present, always given, and can be experienced only by the subject having it. "...*Da-sein is a being which I myself am, its being is in each case mine*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 108). It involves also a separation from other people, because it is experienced always as our own being and by stating this difference simultaneously we isolate ourselves from other human beings by being "different" from them. The I is the only subject capable of experiencing the peculiarity of his own being which is always present to him. „*The individual is "there" (da), but also he or she constitutes what is there. The ego is two-in-one: it is an empirical ego (an*

objective ego, something that is "there," an object in the world) and a transcendental (constituting) ego which constitutes (that is, is "responsible" for) itself and the world" (Yalom, 1980, p. 220).

Fear and Angst

Fear

As Tillich distinguished fear and anxiety in *The Courage to Be*, Heidegger does so in *Being and Time*. But how should we understand fear and what are its objects through which it manifests itself? According to Heidegger the object of our fear is always the product of rational conduct, it is relevant to us in the context of our lives. We can point out its source precisely, where it comes from, and its goal, where or what it aims at. Fear cannot be indefinite, it is always determinate and something encountered in our environment. Fear comes from a fearful source which is threatening, a thing or place which evokes unease, uncertainty and uncanniness in us. If we are exposed to a fear, uncertainty and the anticipation of an unpleasant occasion overcomes us. Even if the object of our fear is very close to us, we do not know whether it will hit or miss us. Hence a certain degree of tension is always accompanying fear. The object of fear must approach the subject closely enough so its threatening character can be felt by Da-sein. Even though there are many threatening objects in the world, we encounter only those which are close enough to make us aware of their presence. This is the condition of *nearness*. Fear is rooted in uncertainty despite the nearness of the feared object. If we knew that this or that is going to happen, we could prepare for the event properly so that it would not reach us unexpectedly. We fear something because it is sufficiently near us and has the potential to afflict us directly, however, we do not have any decisive power over its fulfillment (Heidegger, 1996). The conflict between the hope that our fear's object will miss us and the potential eventuation of it makes our fear even stronger. This is the source of that which we are *afraid of*. The uncertainty about its coming off only intensifies our fear (Inwood, 1999).

Heidegger enumerates two more characteristics of fear, these are what we *are fearing* and *why we are afraid*. Fear is one possible way how Da-sein relates to the world in which it dwells. It is possible only through the way how we participate in the world.

We, as worldly beings, are disposed to everything that exists simultaneously in the world with us. Fearing does not create or impose upon the subject artificial or unrealistic objects of fear. Fearing unveils to Da-sein that, which has been already present to it in its existential environment (Gelven, 1989).

The objects that are to be feared must be necessarily rooted in the world in which Da-sein exists, otherwise the connection between them would be impossible. Fearing thus does not have the role of creating but rather of discovering. *“Only a being which is concerned in its being about that being can be afraid”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 132). Da-sein in the state of fear is disclosed to one of its possible attunements. Fear according to Heidegger is experienced always subjectively. It is always fear in relation to the subject that fears, there is always some personal relationship hidden in fear.

The so far mentioned mode of fear aimed directly at the object to be feared, because it was an immediate concern of Da-sein. There are also indirect fears, a fear that something dreadful will happen to a family member, for example. This seemingly is not within the scope of Da-sein’s direct involvement. However, it affects him since he cares for the person in question, and thus participates in the potential threat (Heidegger, 1996). Fear in extreme situations can become either *horror* or *terror*, depending on the character of the threat.

The aspect of being thrown into the world is our immediate and crucial existential knowledge. In the state of fear we comprehend that it is one of the possible ways of existence in the world. Fear familiarizes Da-sein with one of his essential attunements, namely with *being-in-the-world* (Heidegger, 1996).

Angst

We shall continue with the analysis of the concept of Angst. Heidegger first and foremost seeks the answer to the question of what is Da-sein, what does it mean to be Da-sein. Being thrown into the world, which is our basic constitution, implies the contingency and randomness of Da-sein which goes beyond one’s range in terms of deciding to become. We possess our existence without being able to choose it, its ontological coming into being and ceasing to be are subjected to external factors. Heidegger argues that there are several different ways how Da-sein can receive “information” about itself (Heidegger, 1996). This happens always in the state of a

certain attunement and Angst belongs to them. He finds Angst to be the attunement which discloses Da-sein to itself and allows a genuine understanding of its essential ontological basis.

In our everyday experiences we mostly do not reflect upon our own existence. It is a given fact, either recognized or unrecognized, and remains present nevertheless. The fact that we live is a given condition of our lives and under normal circumstances we do not contemplate the “weirdness” of being. We are absorbed into the world by becoming a part of the whole and pursuing a co-existence with other human beings. Our self-awareness is lost in the crowd in which we live. We think of ourselves as individuals, however, an individual is always a part of a bigger whole. Heidegger calls this “bigger whole” the *they*. Under normal circumstances we experience the world as being absorbed in it. We dwell in the world without being aware of this fact. An important question is how we relate to the world and the people we encounter in it, but most importantly, how we understand and interpret ourselves in terms of purpose and meaning. Normally we do not step out of the comfort and make the wondering statement about our condition and simultaneously grasp the meaning of our existence at its core. Heidegger argues that in our everyday experiences we are turned away from ourselves, Da-sein is fleeing from its disclosedness by letting itself be absorbed. This absorption means becoming part of a bigger collective whole. The very essence of Da-sein is dispersed in it and this disables the authentic understanding of what it means to be an individual in the world. *“In this flight, Da-sein precisely does not bring itself before itself”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 173). Da-sein is running away from itself so to speak, it strives to avoid the moment of confrontation with itself. However, in order to be able to flee from something, as we learned it in fear’s description, the thing to be avoided must be already present. If there was no state of disclosedness and an authentic self-understanding of Da-sein, it could not flee from itself. The analysis of Da-sein’s intention to avoid the experience has nevertheless a revealing character, because it points out precisely what is supposed to be eluded. Apparently we cannot intend to turn away from something indefinite or even non-existing. *“Only because Da-sein is ontologically and essentially brought before itself by the disclosedness belonging to it, can it flee from that which it flees”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 173).

Angst is the attunement in which we are confronted face to face with who we truly are with all our potentialities. The turning away has always a revelatory character and it defines precisely what we are turning away from. Da-sein in the state of Angst by

trying to turn away from itself discloses itself unintentionally, or more precisely, unveils its already present disclosedness. Heidegger says that the phenomenon of fear is indeed very often confused with the phenomenon of Angst. Due to Angst's revealing potential we are able to give a satisfactory explanation about its nature and its difference from fear. As we have learned already, fear is always concerned with an innerworldly object and we can always tell exactly what are we afraid of. Fear's object is always palpable and perceptible. Heidegger claims that only innerworldly things can be *fearsome* or threatening.

The basic constitution of Da-sein is being-in-the-world and in the moment of experiencing dread, he is dreading this very way of existence in the world. "*That about which one has Angst is being-in-the-world as such*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 174). However, the basic constitution of Da-sein is precisely "*being-in-the-world*".

The decisive characteristic of Angst is that it is always present and always at hand. It is not an exclusively occurring phenomenon under special circumstances. If everything sinks into indifference then the only remaining thing which can be of Da-sein's interest is Da-sein itself. In the state of losing interest in the outer world we pay attention to ourselves instead. *Being-in-the-world* and our absorption in it has a reveling character and it points out what Da-sein is striving to flee. It flees from its individualization, from its authentic realization which happens in the attunement of Angst. "*The absorption of Da-sein in the they and in the "world" taken care of reveals something like a flight of Da-sein from itself as an authentic potentiality for being itself*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 172).

The possibility of Da-sein to isolate itself and realize itself with all its potentialities is lost in its entanglement in the world. It turns away from itself. However, this is possible only because it is "ontologically and essentially brought before itself." Da-sein's ability to disclose itself as an individual is at hand and could be realized at any time (Heidegger, 1996).

In *falling prey* Da-sein turns away from itself due to the absorption in the world. It turns away from authentic Da-sein experienced as Da-sein. This, however, cannot be experienced as an innerworldly being because such a perception is possible only if one turns away from its being-in-the-world. In fear what we turn away from absorbs us at the same time. This fear is always something encountered in the world. "*Turning away precisely turns toward innerworldly beings while absorbing itself in*

them” (Heidegger, 1996, p. 174). By falling prey one turns away from Da-sein’s authentic realization and comprehension which happens only in its emancipation from the world.

Angst is about being itself, not something definite in the world. It is indefinite because it encompasses all of Da-sein’s potentialities, also those not yet fulfilled. It is completely indefinite as Heidegger says, and simultaneously makes innerworldly things irrelevant. Things that we previously considered important suddenly become meaningless for us. *“The totality of relevance discovered within the world of things at hand and objectively present is completely without importance”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 174). What Angst is anxious about is nowhere to be found, however, this does not mean that it is nothing. Angst does not dread a spatial object from the world as we know it from our everyday experience. *“It is so near that it is oppressive and stifles one’s breath – and yet it is nowhere”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 174).

It must be emphasized that Heidegger’s linguistic exercises are to be treated with great cautiousness because the subtlety of his writings in many cases resides in his ability to point out certain concepts exactly as they are. The intricate way of structuring his arguments is necessary for him to be able to call things by their real names. Seemingly banal statements are often the most important.

The world despite of its insignificance does not vanish, it does not cease to exist in the state of Angst. We encounter everything in the same manner, but things occur in a different way. Angst changes the prism through which we perceive the world, so to speak. The situation appears to be the opposite of what it is under “normal” circumstances. *“...what Angst is about is the world as such”* (Heidegger, 1996, p.175). The world in the state of Angst is an utterly irrelevant and insignificant environment and adopts an obtrusive, formidable character.

What oppresses us is *“the possibility of things at hand in general, that is, the world itself”* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 175). *Possibility* is one of the key words necessary for being able to understand both Angst and our turning away from it.

“...that about which Angst is anxious is being-in-the-world itself” (Heidegger, 1996, p. 175).

We have to bear in mind that what Angst is about is not the same what Angst is for. Heidegger strongly emphasizes this difference. However, it turns out that in both cases Angst revolves around *being-in-the-world*. *“That about which Angst is anxious*

reveals itself as that for which it is anxious: being-in-the-world" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 176).

In the state of Angst everything in the world sinks away, including innerworldly beings. Everything loses its familiarity and becomes alien to us. This is the reason why Da-sein is unable to understand itself as the part of the world in which it exists. Angst "*throws Da-sein back upon that for which it is anxious, its authentic potentiality-for-being-in-the-world*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 175-176).

As it was mentioned earlier, Angst individualizes and makes us aware of our possibilities. In the state of Angst Da-sein is disclosed as *being-possible*. At the same time, however, we have to bear the burden of responsibility for our decisions. We are free to make of ourselves what we want and all our possibilities are present in Angst. The presence of this knowledge is what makes Angst so stifling and obtrusive. "*Angst brings Da-sein before its being free for... (propensio in), the authenticity of its being as possibility which it always already is*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 176). The authentic self-realization of being is hence also just a mere possibility of Da-sein. Da-sein has the potential to fulfill its possibilities which are already present. Angst is only an attunement of Da-sein which discloses the world in the same way as other attunements, but at the same time it alone has the individualizing effect, which other attunements are lacking. Hence in the attunement of Angst we are conscious of our opportunity to be in the world as an individual which is free to do anything and which does not have to surrender his individuality to its immersion in the they. The unnecessary of being as such is also revealed in Angst. We realize that even though we are capable of everything, our existence is also just a potentiality which means that it does not have to endure for eternity (according to Heidegger it will not). In the state of Angst Da-sein perceive itself as *being-at-home* in the world. The subject who went through the individualizing process of Angst does not find the world familiar to himself and everything he encounters generates the feeling of uncanniness in him. He is uncanny because "*Da-sein is individualized, but as being-in-the-world*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 176). This experience is extremely similar, if not identical, to the feelings reported by people who have been through periods of intense anxiety. The world seems to lose its meaning because the individual's attention is turned exclusively to his own existence and the possibilities inherent in it. Anxiety is often accompanied with an excessive self-awareness which constantly reminds the individual of the difference between him and the outer world. Da-sein is *not-being-at-*

home in his basic constitution which is *being-in-the-world* as we will see later. Hence he is in a somewhat panicky state desperately looking for relief.

Falling prey, according to Heidegger, is fleeing precisely from Angst's revelatory feature. It is fleeing from the individualization and the *not-being-at-home* back into the *tranquilized familiarity* of the *they*, in which it can mingle again. "*This uncanniness constantly pursues Da-sein and threatens its everyday lostness in the they, although not explicitly*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177). Angst has the reverse outcome of *falling prey*. While the first one individualizes, the latter hinders individualization.

Da-sein under normal circumstances already flees from the above mentioned *not-being-at-home*. This means that what Angst reveals is present even when Da-sein is absorbed and not "aware of itself". Otherwise it would not have to flee from it. This fact penetrates to the core of Angst as to one of the most basic attunements which belongs to the individual *being-in-the-world* itself. However, if under "normal" circumstances we are already fleeing from something, we can question which attunement is most essential. Hence according to Heidegger's argument Angst, or more precisely *not-being-at-home*, is ontologically a "*more primordial phenomenon*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177). Logically Angst must primarily have a determinative influence on Da-sein's existence so that later it can be afraid of it.

For this reason uncanniness is what Da-sein feels in the state of *being-in-the-world*, not the other way around.

"*Fear is Angst which has fallen prey to the "world"*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177). Heidegger's argument means the following: The one who cannot or is not willing to endure and accept Angst says *no* to individualization and the right to determine his or her being that he is responsible for. Da-sein turns away from itself and falls back into the turmoil of the world where he can find and immerse in a fearsome innerworldly „object". This, however, inhibits genuine authenticity which Da-sein can pursue only in the state of Angst. Hence falling prey ought to be avoided by accepting Angst as a basic attunement of Da-sein. Only through the acceptance of Angst can one actualize his or her authentic being, because only this attunement discloses the individualized Da-sein. "*This individualization fetches Da-sein back from its falling prey and reveals to it authenticity and inauthenticity as possibilities of its being*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 178). In Angst one has the privilege to make a choice. He either accepts Angst and its burden to preserve himself as an individual or he flees back into indifference and

losing himself at the same time. Our possibilities are present as our own even in our thrownness and Angst reveals them to us as they are, “*undistorted by innerworldly beings to which Da-sein, initially and for the most part, clings*” (Heidegger, 1996, p. 178). Angst, if Da-sein accepts it, is the “antidote” against falling prey which deprives us of our authentic selves.

Chapter IV –Conclusion

We became acquainted undoubtedly with numerous interesting details which deserve further thorough analysis in both works. Now we shall look at some of the interesting details found in both texts and draw possible interpretations from them. These could possibly show them from a different angle than the usual explications are doing. One of the main reasons why the choice have fallen on Martin Heidegger instead of Soren Kierkegaard is that his approach towards Angst is interpreted predominantly as a secular one as opposed to Kierkegaard's comprehension of anxiety which has apparent religious inclinations.

The reason for choosing *The Courage to Be* over *Being and Time* as the first examined work in this thesis is its extent and its more encompassing nature. While Heidegger's coherent section about Angst is barely ten pages long, Tillich examines anxiety almost through forty pages. Hence he gives from a certain point of view a more satisfactory analysis consisting of a wider scale of observed phenomena. It is important to note that due to the extent of *Being and Time's* complicated structure a very deep and lengthy analysis would be necessary to familiarize the reader with every important aspect of his philosophy including Angst's total elucidation and its wider context, however, in § 40 Heidegger gives a sufficiently detailed account of Angst offering enough knowledge to understand it properly.

At certain points Tillich's work corresponds with Heidegger's and we can find many similarities in their arguments. The authors undoubtedly influenced each other, or at least they were inspired by the same philosophical works, but also certain important dissimilarities are present in their works.

While Tillich continuously uses religious symbols and often refers to God, Heidegger seemingly does not "bother" with such ideas and focuses only on worldly phenomena. What is interesting in Tillich's explanation is that even though he speaks of the "*God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt*", the usual theistic conception of an almighty creator can be omitted in it (Tillich, 2000). Moreover, he himself says that theism must be transcended precisely because of its approach

towards God, because it tries to grasp and define the inexplicable. It always puts a barrier between the subject and the phenomenon in question. Tillich's solution seems to be accessible for everyone regardless of their religion, because he does not "put people into boxes" by claiming that only the followers of a certain religion will be able to face the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness. From this point of view Tillich's argument is almost as neutral as Heidegger's, however, according to him one must make the movement of acceptance in absolute faith in order to be able to participate in *being-itself* and its creative power. This includes the condition of *in-spite-of*. One may have the impression that God does not refer to God in the usual preconceived way. While reading *The Courage to Be* the reader has the impression that Tillich rather tries to grasp somehow the power of being as such and the primordial source of being in which every living creature participates. However, a seemingly contradictory detail may disapprove of this claim, namely Tillich's allusion to this phenomenon in a personalizing manner. From this point of view he seemingly contradicts his previous arguments made in *Theism transcending theism*. In the last sentence of the work he speaks of God as a person when says: "*God who appears when God has disappeared...*" instead of the impersonal "the God which appears when God has disappeared", for example. This could be perhaps one convincing argument about Tillich's religious approach towards the problem. The individual has to accept something what transcends ordinary worldly existence. "What" is ought to be accepted is an external "factor", but the subject is able to participate in it nevertheless. Such a divine power which transcends ordinary worldly existence cannot be conceived. Perhaps this is the reason why Tillich sticks to the symbolic concept of God (Bernard, 1963). The fact that absolute faith is one of the pillars of Tillich's work tells us that he uses both the philosophical and religious approach towards the concept of anxiety.

Heidegger does not speak of any God in § 40, but instead he focuses on Da-sein's possibilities. This includes Da-sein's freedom of choosing its authenticity or inauthenticity in the state of Angst. Da-sein does not rely on any external factor, it has to face Angst on its own. Even though death or nonbeing is not mentioned in § 40 explicitly, we can conclude that in Da-sein it is present as one of its possibilities. The individual realizes his contingency and the possible "randomness" of his being. In Da-sein's disclosedness it becomes aware of its possible nonbeing. It is true that Da-sein cannot choose its "becoming", and hence it is helpless from a certain point of view,

but it has nevertheless the potential of being utterly free in its existence. Absolute faith in Heidegger's account is not mentioned, Da-sein can flee Angst by choosing to live authentically. Thus we can conclude that in *The Courage to Be* anxiety is directly connected to religion, however, Heidegger's approach towards Angst is purely philosophical and it lacks the religious connotation.

Nonbeing, however, is unveiled in both cases. According to Tillich the most fundamental form of anxiety is the being's awareness of its possible nonbeing. In Angst nonbeing manifests itself when Da-sein is familiarized with its potentialities.

Even though existential anxiety is approached differently, nonbeing has a crucial role in both works. „*We recall that Heidegger also teaches that the nothing is not a mere intellectual negation but the very possibility of negation as an act of reason. Furthermore, Heidegger teaches that the awareness of nothing is the revelation to man of existing reality. And this is because Dasein (Tillich's being) "encounters" and is "projected into" nothing*“ (Cochrane, 1956, p.79).

Both Tillich and Heidegger speak of nonbeing as one of being's possibilities. When Tillich describes anxiety, he says that it is a state in which a being is aware of its *possible* nonbeing. Da-sein similarly reveals the possibility of nonbeing in the attunement of Angst. For Heidegger nonbeing is important because it is an unavoidable and in fact necessary part of reality. Eventually nonbeing is perceived by him as an illuminating power (Cochrane, 1956).

The differentiation of fear and anxiety seems to be the most similar in both works. Tillich, as well as Heidegger, clearly states that fear always has a definite object in the world which is familiar to the subject. He can fight it, participate in it, or can decide to flee from it. We know its source and we can always tell where does it coming from, what is the fear about exactly. Heidegger defines fear similarly and says that it approaches the subject from the world in which it dwells. It is always an innerworldly object. With no doubt the difference is crucial, otherwise they would not have mentioned it. Anxiety, on the other hand, cannot be endured as fear because it always appears as indefinite. According to Tillich anxiety does not allow participation when it appears in its nakedness, because it is rooted in nonbeing. And since nonbeing is the negation of everything, we cannot participate in it. There is no threatening object which can be encountered in the state of anxiety. The Heideggerian conception of Angst describes it as the attunement in which we are aware of our potentialities. One

of them is our capability to live an authentic life. Heidegger's perception of Da-sein's potentialities encounters nonbeing as well. However, he perceives it in an "all-encompassing" state which does not focus exclusively on nonbeing, thus the emphasis loses on its weight. While Tillich considers the most disturbing thing the awareness of nonbeing, Heidegger's attention is on every potentiality and what is really disturbing for him is Da-sein's freedom of grasping and choosing itself, and the simultaneous responsibility for its decision.

Seemingly there is an affinity between the neurotic person and Da-sein which has *fallen prey*. When Da-sein chooses to flee from its authenticity in Angst, it is almost in the same state of mind as the neurotic person in Tillich's description. At first glance the constant confrontation with a self-"negating" element is present in both cases. While Da-sein tries to avoid disclosedness in Angst by running away from its potentialities and the responsibility inherent in it, the neurotic person is fleeing from that part of reality which it consciously or unconsciously neglects, namely the presence of nonbeing which penetrates its reduced self. The neurotic person is disposed to nonbeing even if he does not want to admit it. The denial of having to die does not annul the fact of death. This connection has the same character in both cases, however, the individual reacts to them differently.

Both Tillich's and Heidegger's name is mentioned several times in Irvin D. Yalom's book *Existential Psychotherapy*. He argues that the works of the two philosophers in question are not only relevant to psychotherapy but he utilizes their philosophy by borrowing certain concepts from them. For example, he mentions the same alienation and uncanniness that Heidegger had described in *Being and Time* and connects it to the experience of death awareness (Yalom, 1980, p. 45). Even though some descriptions of uncanniness and the feeling of unease from *Being and Time* correspond with the symptoms of pathological anxiety, Heidegger would strongly disapprove of the claim that Da-sein is in a neurotic or pathological state either when it is *not-at-home* or when it is *fallen prey*. Unlike Tillich's neurotic person, Da-sein is not the "victim" of a pathological state of mind which demands medical treatment. As Heidegger argues, Da-sein under normal circumstances is turned away from itself. It is absorbed in the *they*. "*Not-being-at-home must be conceived existentially as the more primordial phenomenon*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177). What Heidegger has in mind is only a shift from one mode of being to a different one, but we cannot talk

about pathology by no means in neither of the above mentioned cases (Dreyfus, 1990).

This means, however, that Yalom is not right by claiming that Heidegger described in his work the emotions of a neurotic person.

Yalom claims that Tillich and Heidegger equally contributed to existential psychotherapy, however, Tillich's influence seems to be much greater.

The two authors put similarly into the center of their focus the individual being as such. They approach the question of anxiety by asking how does it influence our being and how can we relate to it, what does it reveal about our own being. This is the reason why we speak of existential and not psychological anxiety. In their focus is existence as such. This is the being which is experienced always as one's own being. Anxiety is felt by the individual being in both cases. While Tillich argues that anxiety is caused by being's awareness of its possible nonbeing, Heidegger attributes Angst to Da-sein's awareness of its potentialities, including the choice between living an authentic or inauthentic life.

The motive of responsibility is also present in both texts. Da-sein's anxiety is caused partly by the recognition of its responsibility for its decisions. In the state of Angst Da-sein is disclosed as *being-possible*. At the same time, however, it has to bear the burden of responsibility for its decisions. We are free to make of ourselves what we want and all our possibilities are present in Angst.

In Tillich's section about the anxiety of guilt and condemnation the description of responsibility almost perfectly corresponds with Heidegger's explanation. Man is responsible for his own being. "*He is responsible for it; literally, he is required to answer, if he is asked, what he has made of himself*" (Tillich, 2000, p. 51).

The usage of a dualistic system in both texts is an interesting detail. Every major "concept" has the matching counterpole in both works. Just to mention a few, the opposite of Heidegger's authenticity is inauthenticity, *being-in-the-world* seems to be the opposite of *not-being-at-home*, and *Angst of falling prey*. Tillich himself alludes to this binary system, the contrast between the *yes* and *no*, positive and negative, being and nonbeing. It is questionable, however, whether *being-itself* would have such a counterpart. It transcends ordinary being and thus surpasses this equality, but it

encompasses nonbeing nevertheless. It is important to mention, however, that nonbeing participates in *being-itself* as well. Without nonbeing we could not speak of *being-itself* as of a “living God”.

Resumé

As we already know from the Introduction, the thesis is comparing the concept of existential anxiety given by two prominent existentialist philosophers of the 20th century, namely by Paul Tillich and Martin Heidegger. Both authors treat the phenomenon of anxiety carefully and offer a detailed analysis, however, Tillich's contribution to the topic is more important from the point of categorization. While Heidegger mentions only *Angst* as an attunement, Tillich enumerates three types of anxiety according to the way how self-affirmation is threatened. These are namely the anxiety of *fate and death*, the anxiety of *emptiness and meaninglessness*, and the anxiety of *guilt and condemnation*. In each case self-affirmation is threatened, but Tillich considers the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness to be the most ponderous. In *Being and Time* certain aspects remind us of these types of anxiety, but Heidegger did not categorized *Angst* in such way as Tillich did.

Both authors offer a detailed description of the difference between fear and anxiety. At this point their differentiation almost perfectly corresponds. In both cases fear has a definite object encountered in the world, the individual's environment, while anxiety, or *Angst*, does not have any object which can be defined, endured or fled. Tillich says that anxiety reveals to being its possible nonbeing. It is not the anticipated moment of dying, but the total negation of existence as such. Anxiety in its most basic form appears as something what unveils our possible nonbeing. Even though Heidegger's *Angst* does reveal nonbeing in its possibilities, his focus is rather on *Da-sein's* choice between pursuing an authentic or inauthentic life. In *Angst* we are isolated from our "everyday environment" (or more precisely basic attunement, which is *being-in-the-world, fallen prey* with the *they*, and being absorbed in it) and all our potentialities are present to us. We are aware both of the freedom of choosing for ourselves and the responsibility that comes with this choice. Our responsibility which is rooted in our decisions is present at both authors.

While in Heidegger's case realizing the possibility of choosing authenticity over inauthenticity is the crucial point in his argument, for Tillich absolute faith is the

condition of “relief” from anxiety. Being must accept acceptance, the fact that by being accepted by *being-itself* it participates in it.

The motive of God is present only in Tillich’s book, Heidegger omits any inclinations towards religion.

Tillich differentiates pathological and existential anxiety. He argues that pathological anxiety is a special condition in which being is separated from the whole of reality due to its reduced self. It creates a self-deceptive reduced picture of reality which does not include the presence of nonbeing. But nonbeing is present nevertheless and constantly penetrates his reduced self-affirmation. This conflict characterizes the neurotic person’s self-affirmation.

Heidegger does not speak of a pathological state of mind. He says that *Angst* is an attunement in which *Da-sein* receives information about itself. This, however, is a quite rare situation. Even though ontologically *Angst* is a more primordial phenomenon, according to Heidegger we are usually not in the attunement of *Angst*, because we are dwelling in the world as *fallen prey*. The emancipative power of *Angst* is not yet threatening *Da-sein* because it is absorbed into the world as a part of a bigger whole in which it loses its self-awareness. Both *being-in-the-world* and *not-being-in-the-world* belong to our basic attunements. *Angst* only reveals that which is already present to us, but we become familiar with it only in our isolation. If we are *fallen prey*, we cling to the innerworldly things. Thus we can conclude that Paul Tillich contributed more to existential psychotherapy than Heidegger.

Anxiety reveals important and relevant information about our own being in the same way in both books. It is true that between Tillich’s and Heidegger’s arguments we can find several similarities, however, their eventual conclusions are different. We could say that Heidegger relies on *Da-sein*’s capability of freely choosing authenticity, which from this point of view depends on “internal factors”. *Da-sein* chooses either its authentic or inauthentic self.

Tillich, on the other hand, suggests that being must accept acceptance. Being must courageously accept *being-itself in spite of* the presence of nonbeing. Being has to accept an “external factor”, namely being-itself, however, it participates in it at the sametime.

Bibliography

Bernard, M. (1963). *The Existentialist Theology of Paul Tillich*. New York: Bookman Associates.

Cochrane, A. C. (1956). *The Existentialists and God*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1990). *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Gelven, M. (1989). *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1996). *Being and Time, translated by Joan Stambaugh*. Albany, New York: State University of New York.

Inwood, M. (1999). *A Heidegger Dictionary*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers.

Kierkegaard, S. (1980). *The Concept of Anxiety, trans. and ed. by Reidar Thomte in collaboration with Albert B. Anderson*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Pilinszky, J. (1978). *Pilinszky János Válogatott művei*. Debrecen: Magvető.

Tillich, P. (2000). *The Courage to Be*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Yalom, I. D. (1980). *Existential Psychotherapy*. United States of America: Basic Books.