

Martin Heidegger and Otto Friedrich Bollnow

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Martin Heidegger and Otto Friedrich Bollnow's essential contribution to the phenomenology of emotions is their discovery of the primordial role of *Stimmung* (attunement) for human intentionality and the intelligibility of the world. In his characterization of Dasein's being-in-the-world, Heidegger introduces *Befindlichkeit* (the ontological condition of being attuned) together with understanding and discourse as three equiprimordial *existentiale* of Dasein. Bollnow builds on Heidegger in developing his main contribution to philosophical anthropology: the introduction of attunement as the most primordial level of human life.¹

I will begin by introducing Heidegger's account of *Befindlichkeit* and attunement in *Being and Time*. Heidegger's conception of *Befindlichkeit* has served as the kernel of a productive philosophical perspective on affectivity (Ratcliffe 2008, 2013; Slaby and Stephan 2008; Withy 2014, 2015). In contrast, the work of Bollnow has not received much attention. I will use the second section to discuss his seminal work *Das Wesen der Stimmungen (The Nature of Attunements)*. In the third section, I will come back to Heidegger and discuss his idiosyncratic understanding of fundamental attunements, which shows the close link between *Befindlichkeit* and the core of his overall philosophical project.

1. Attuned World Disclosure in Heidegger's *Being and Time*

One of the ground-breaking insights of *Being and Time* is that our most primordial mode of being is constituted by the way in which we *find ourselves in the world*.² Heidegger introduces *Befindlichkeit* as a general condition of an entity existing in the mode of being-in-the-world. We experience *Befindlichkeit* by always being attuned one way or the other.

Attunements are ubiquitous and pervasive: We are never devoid of attunements; even if our attunements change, that does not mean that we can free ourselves of them: "The fact that attunements can be spoiled and change only means that Dasein is always already attuned in a way."³ (Heidegger 1953, 134) Even the lack of attunement is a particular way of being attuned: "The often persistent, smooth, and pallid lack of attunement, which must not be confused with a bad attunement, is far from being nothing." (Heidegger 1953, 134) Moreover, when we influence or control an attunement, this is not done by "being free of attunement, but always through a counter attunement" (Heidegger 1953, 136) Attunements are not simply

modes of coloring our experience, but rather serve a fundamental disclosive function. Attunements play into the most basic disclosure of the world: “The prior disclosedness of the world which belongs to being-in is co-constituted by *Befindlichkeit*.” (Heidegger 1953, 137) At the same time, attunements disclose one’s own situation, they are modes of finding oneself: “Attunement makes manifest ‘how one is and is coming along.’” (Heidegger 1953, 134) These two dimensions are inextricable elements of the way in which attunements constitute being-in-the-world. Being attuned is what constitutes world and self in their essential relatedness: “The attunedness of *Befindlichkeit* constitutes existentially the openness to world of *Dasein*.” (Heidegger 1953, 137)

What does it mean that attunements constitute *Dasein*’s being-in-the-world? Being attuned is first and foremost experienced in *Dasein* finding things and actions mattering to it. The most primordial encounter with things has the character of “being affected or moved” (*Betroffenwerden*) (Heidegger 1953, 137). In other words, I encounter all entities as mattering to me one way or the other; I always experience them with some kind of significance. Even if I experience something as meaningless, this is just another mode of significance; in such a case, I do not experience nothing, rather, I experience something as not speaking to me. Heidegger points out that significance is always connected to my possibilities, i.e., my potential activities: All my comportment presupposes a sense of things mattering to me, and the way in which things matter to me depends on what I consider within my realm of possible comportment. Moreover, Heidegger shows that the significance of a single entity cannot be seen in isolation. Instead, he suggests a holistic view on significance according to which the significance of an entity depends on a nexus of significant things. All particular meanings are established against the background of a world as the realm of significance: “*In Befindlichkeit lies existentially a disclosive submission to world out of which things that matter to us can be encountered.*” (Heidegger 1953, 137) It is our *Befindlichkeit* that constitutes the sense of a meaningful world and the sense of our belonging to this world.

To be sure, Heidegger does not claim that a meaningful world is constituted solely by *Befindlichkeit*. Rather, the constitution of the world happens in an interplay of *Befindlichkeit* with understanding (*Verstehen*) and discourse (*Rede*). Among these equiprimordial features of being-in, *understanding* emphasizes the agential dimension, i.e., the possible ways of interacting with entities against the background of our projects. Understanding is here not conceived of as a mental ability in the vicinity of knowledge, but rather, along pragmatist lines, as the way of encountering things as meaningful in everyday comportment. For instance, the most ordinary way of understanding a door is by opening it. According to this

pragmatist notion of understanding, the everyday mode of understanding an entity does not consist in making assertions about it, but in using it properly. *Discourse*, the third *existentiale* of being-in, is understood best with reference to the Latin origin of articulation, *articulare*, which means structuring. Discourse is the “articulation of intelligibility” (Heidegger 1953, 161). On the basic level, this structuring does not need to take conceptual form, but is *articulated* in differentiations of meaning that are not yet cast in concepts, let alone written or spoken words. Within this tripartite constitution of being-in, *Befindlichkeit* indicates the experience of always already being situated in meaningful structures. Without such situatedness, entities would not matter to me, and hence, they would not matter at all. Finding entities meaningful goes hand in hand with finding oneself within meaningful structures.

Heidegger’s central claim is that the primordial sense of significance is constituted by *Befindlichkeit*, i.e., affectivity, rather than cognition: “Indeed, we must *ontologically* in principle leave the primary discovery of the world to ‘mere attunement’. Pure beholding (*reines Anschauen*), even if it penetrated into the innermost core of the being of something objectively present, would never be able to discover anything [as mattering to me].” (Heidegger 1953, 138) The world-disclosure in and through attunements is prior to contemplation, deliberation, or any form of propositional attitude: “The possibilities of disclosure belonging to cognition fall far short of the primordial disclosure of attunements.” (Heidegger 1953, 134) To understand why this is the case we need to take a closer look at the status of attunements in comparison to familiar mental states.

Attunements cannot be classified as an additional type of intentional states directed towards something in the world. Rather, they set up a world in the first place. Attunements are constitutive of a world within which we can experience concrete, object-directed states, among them affective states like emotions. In Heidegger’s words: “*Attunement has already disclosed being-in-the-world as a whole and first makes it possible directing oneself toward something.*” (Heidegger 1953, 137) Attunements thus constitute the background that structures our world-relatedness as a whole. It becomes clear now that attunements are not a separate class of affective states besides emotions, moods, sentiments etc.; rather, all these affective states presuppose attunement. Matthew Ratcliffe has carved out this thought in terms of “existential feelings.” Existential feelings “are not directed at specific objects or situations but are background orientations through which experience as a whole is structured.” (Ratcliffe 2008, 2) They are ‘ways of finding oneself in the world’, which establish both a ‘sense of reality of the world’, and a ‘sense of one’s belonging to the world’ (cf. Ratcliffe 2008; see also his contribution in this volume).

It is central for Heidegger to emphasize that attunements cannot be properly conceived of as ‘subjective’ or ‘psychic’ phenomena: “Prior to all psychology of attunements (...) we must see this phenomenon as a fundamental existential and outline its structure.” (Heidegger 1953, 134) Heidegger repeatedly emphasized the claim that, “Befindlichkeit is far removed from anything like finding a psychical condition.” (Heidegger 1953, 136) “Being attuned is not initially related to the psychical, it is itself not an inner condition which then reaches out and leaves its mark on things and persons.” (Heidegger 1953, 137) Attunements are not elements to be found in the psychological life of an individual, they are constitutive features of being-in-the-world. In other words, attunements are constituents of our relatedness with the world and others, rather than experiences in concrete encounters.

By locating attunements in the complex structure of being-in-the-world rather than in the ‘inner’ life of an individual or in the ‘outer’ world, Heidegger overcomes the dualism between the experience of self and the experience of world. Attunements do not disclose the self or the world, they rather make manifest self and world in their essential relatedness. Jan Slaby and Achim Stephan have developed this account further in terms of their notion of *affective intentionality*. Affective intentionality is at once a disclosure of world and of self: Affective states are “an evaluative awareness of which goes hand in hand with a registration of one’s existential situation.” (Slaby and Stephan 2008, 506)

Heidegger’s account of attunement also implies an overcoming of the dualism between activity and passivity. The self is neither an active creator nor a passive recipient of attunement. Instead, “attunement assails. It comes neither from ‘without’ nor from ‘within’, but rises from being-in-the world itself as a mode of that being.” (Heidegger 1953, 136) In short, the disclosure of world and self in attunements is neither active nor passive. Katherine Withy (2014, 2015) has elaborated on this in terms of “disclosive postures.” Attunements encompass modes of comportment (posture) *and* ways of encountering (disclosure).

Finally, Heidegger’s account of attunement challenges the dualism of cognition and affect:

Existentially and ontologically there is not the slightest justification for minimizing the ‘evidence’ of Befindlichkeit by measuring it against the apodictic certainty of the theoretical cognition of something merely objectively present. But *the* falsification of the phenomena, which banishes them to the sanctuary of the irrational, is no better. (Heidegger 1953, 136)

That attunements constitute the fundamental way of being oriented in the world implies that we cannot push them aside with reference to their alleged irrationality. Since all significance is co-constituted by *Befindlichkeit*, we cannot establish a separated realm of reason unaffected by attunements. On the contrary, Heidegger urges us to see that the theoretical attitude also

presupposes a specific attunement, namely the attunement of letting things “come towards us in *tranquil staying*” (Heidegger 1953, 138). To sum up, attunements are a form of disclosure that outstrip any cognitive grasp or mental representation, forming the world- and self-disclosing background for all object-directed mental states, may they be cognitive, conative, or affective.

2. Bollnow’s *Das Wesen der Stimmungen*

In *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* Bollnow builds on Heidegger’s discussion of *Befindlichkeit* while adopting a critical stance towards Heidegger’s overall project.⁴ Bollnow mentions two Heideggerian claims as his major source of inspiration: (1) We are always already attuned in some way. (2) Our entire psychic life builds on attunements; attunements shape all our experiences, enabling some while disabling others (cf. Bollnow 1953, 54). Bollnow identifies as the main weakness of Heidegger’s approach that he does not account for different types of attunements.

To be fair, Heidegger does mention several specific attunements in *Being and Time*. He refers to “hope, joy, enthusiasm, and gaiety” as well as “sadness, melancholy, despair.” (Heidegger 1953, 345) Moreover, he introduces other affective conditions without established names, such as a “pallid lack of mood” (Heidegger 1953, 345), an “undisturbed equanimity”, or an “inhibited discontent” (Heidegger 1953, 134). However, he does not analyze them in any detail. Moreover, he does not pay any attention to their potential differences. According to Bollnow, this is not simply an omission, but based on the methodology of Heidegger’s existential analysis. Following Bollnow’s interpretation, the existential analysis presupposes that the essential structures of human existence can be obtained by analyzing one single example, since all examples lead to the same invariant structures of existence. This presupposition leads Heidegger to focus on a single attunement—*angst* in the case of *Being and Time*—for analyzing the structure of attunement in general. In contrast to Heidegger, Bollnow suggests that philosophical anthropology needs to account for human life in the plurality of its manifestations. Following this approach, we should expect each type of attunement to make manifest new dimensions of the human being and its relation to the world and others (Bollnow 1953, 27–28).

Despite these methodological differences, Bollnow for the most part follows the general thrust of Heidegger’s account of *Befindlichkeit*. To begin with, he identifies “vital feelings” or “attunements” as the most primordial level of psychic life (Bollnow 1953, 33). Bollnow

speaks of basic attunements (*Grundbefindlichkeiten* or *Grundstimmungen*) as forming the foundational level of human life. He provides a non-comprehensive list of basic attunements: Cheerfulness and sadness; examples of high spirits like gait and *jollity*, and examples of low spirits like lassitude and stifling stubbornness; a calm and relaxed manner, or tense anxiety and solicitude (Bollnow 1953, 34).

In line with Heidegger, Bollnow suggests an order of constitution according to which encompassing attunements are necessary to enable concrete emotions (and all other intentional states). In contrast to Heidegger, Bollnow draws a sharp distinction between attunements and emotions. Heidegger appears not to distinguish attunements and emotions. In §30 of *Being and Time*, for instance, Heidegger discusses fear as a “mode of attunement”, although what he describes is clearly an emotion. It seems that Heidegger wants to subsume all affective states under the term attunement. In my opinion, Heidegger’s radical anti-mentalism led him to throw the baby out with the bath water, aiming to eliminate all psychological talk about emotions. However, it seems more promising to follow Bollnow in drawing a sharp distinction between attunements and emotions while maintaining both concepts: “Emotions in a proper sense are always intentionally related to a specific object. (...) The attunements, on the other hand, do not have a specific object. They are states of being (*Zuständlichkeiten*), colorations of the entire human Dasein.” (Bollnow 1953, 34–35) Bollnow adds the qualification that in specific cases it might be difficult to determine whether something is an attunement or an emotion. Consider the example of grief, which sometimes is a distinct, episodic emotion, and sometimes becomes so encompassing that it shapes our entire orientation in the world.

Bollnow is again in line with Heidegger in attempting to overcome the dualisms of world-experience and self-experience, activity and passivity, cognition and affect. First, Bollnow suggests that basic attunements involve an evaluation of one’s situation. They are forms of becoming aware of oneself. One can argue—as Slaby and Stephan (2008) have done—that basic attunements are the most primordial form of self-awareness. Moreover, Bollnow places attunements as the foundational level of psychic life prior to a sharp distinction of self and world: “The attunements still entirely live in the undivided unity of self and world, both pervaded by a common coloration of attunement“ (Bollnow 1953, 39) He also speaks of a primordial “unity of human mind (*Gemüt*) and surrounding world.” (Bollnow 1953, 40) Second, Bollnow addresses the question whether a regulation of attunements is possible. On the one hand, we are overcome by attunements; this is most apparent in the way in which we cannot voluntarily educe an attunement, at least not directly. On the other hand, we are not

totally at the mercy of our attunements; we can comport ourselves vis-à-vis our attunement in different ways, and we can attempt to indirectly influence how we are attuned. A dualistic understanding of activity and passivity cannot account for the complex ways in which we are related to our attunements. Bollnow explores this further by discussing the relationship of attunement to character and posture (Bollnow 1953, 131–63). Third, the experience of concrete objects and events within the world is pre-shaped by basic attunements: “Only in an anxious attunement I encounter something threatening, and only in a cheerful state of mind (*Gemütsverfassung*) I come across felicitous experiences almost as a matter of course.” (Bollnow 1953, 53) Similarly, the fearless person does not encounter anything fearsome, and the deeply depressed person does not experience anything uplifting. As Bollnow writes, such individuals have become ‘blind’ for certain aspects of the world, which shows the “dependence of all grasping on the state of attunement (*Stimmungslage*).” (Bollnow 1953, 57) It would be wrong to assume that an originally neutral experience is subsequently colored by attunement. Rather, attunement frames all experiences. Attunement has always already ‘interpreted’ the world in a certain way that guides concrete experiences.

Going beyond Heidegger, Bollnow explores in more detail how shifting attunements transform our entire mode of being. First, attunements transform our awareness of community, i.e., our relatedness to others. Chastened attunements tend to close someone off and lead her into solitariness, as they direct her attention to her own self. Elevated attunements, on the other hand, tend to open up a person and make her more sociable (cf. Bollnow 1953, 97–112). Second, attunements transform our sense of reality, i.e. our relatedness to the world. Bollnow suggests that certainty about reality cannot be gained by means of a theoretical operation, but only rises from basic affective experiences. This anticipates the work of Ratcliffe, who draws on psychopathology to explore how the sense of reality can be disturbed (cf. Ratcliffe 2008, 2014). Bollnow suggests that chastened attunements lead us to experience the world as resisting and inhibiting, whereas it is experienced as sustaining and fostering in elevated attunements (Bollnow 1953, 112–31). Third, attunements transform our awareness of time. Our estimation of time is contingent upon our affective state. In chastened attunements, time can become unbearably long, whereas in elevated attunements time tends to ‘fly by’ and it happens to us that we ‘lose track of time’. German offers the terms *langweilig* and *kurzweilig* to express these experiences. When something is boring, time is experienced as long—*langweilig* literally means ‘a long while’. In contrast, when something is diverting, time is experienced as short—*kurzweilig* literally means ‘a short while’. Furthermore, Bollnow points to the intriguing fact that in

retrospection, the proportions turn around. In our recollection, an eventful time appears as long, while an uneventful time appears as short. Thus, when having a great time, we experience it as short and recollect it as long, whereas we experience a time of waiting as long and recollect it as short (Bollnow 1953, 165–82). These examples are meant to show how our entire relation to others, the world, and the flow of time is shaped and modulated by attunements, and how exploring these nexuses requires us to consider a plurality of attunements and their contrasting modes of disclosure.

3. Heidegger's Fundamental Attunements and the Path to Philosophizing

Whereas Bollnow contextualizes his investigation of attunements within philosophical anthropology, Heidegger denies any interest in anthropology, claiming that his existential analysis of Dasein is prior to all regional ontologies, including anthropology as the regional ontology of the human being. Heidegger drives at a very specific point with his account of *Befindlichkeit*. He focuses on certain attunements that serve a crucial methodological role for his ontological project. To understand this role, we need to consider the forth *existentiale* of being-in-the-world: falling (*Verfallen*). Falling implies that the existential features of Dasein are usually not experienced and enacted as what they actually (*eigentlich*) are, but rather in the mode of average everydayness; a modality in which Dasein avoids or misconstrues its own ontological makeup. As all other features of Dasein, *Befindlichkeit* is also prone to falling. Thus, the usual way in which we experience *Befindlichkeit* is an “evasive turning away” (Heidegger 1953, 136); i.e., being attuned in a way that keeps us from seeing and grasping the disclosive function of attunements: “For the most part Dasein evades the being that is disclosed in attunements in an *ontic* and *existentiell* way.” (Heidegger 1953, 135) If this is the case, however, a methodological problem for Heidegger's project arises: If it is true that falling is so pervasive as to constantly keep Dasein from genuinely (*eigentlich*) experiencing its true ontological structure, how could we ever experience that structure, or even assume that such a structure exists? Heidegger solves this problem by granting certain attunements a very specific status: These attunements have the power to draw us out of average everydayness and set us on the path to potential existential insights.⁵

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger focuses on ‘angst’⁶ as an attunement that is capable of disclosing the ontological structure of Dasein in particular clarity. Heidegger introduces angst in contrast to fear. Fear refers to the familiar emotion in which we experience an entity as dangerous. In contrast, “*that about which one has angst*” is totally indeterminate, it is

“nothing and nowhere.” (Heidegger 1953, 186) In angst, we are not afraid of any particular entity, but of “being-in-the-world itself.” (Heidegger 1953, 187) Angst is an attunement that radically unsettles Dasein’s absorption in everyday activities and confront it with the uncanniness at the bottom of its being: “Angst (...) fetches Dasein back out of its entangled absorption in the ‘world.’ Everyday familiarity collapses. (...) Being-in enters the existential ‘mode’ of *not-being-at-home*. The talk about ‘uncanniness’ means nothing other than this.” (Heidegger 1953, 189) What the experience of angst does is setting Dasein on the path of ontological inquiry: It takes Dasein from the realm of entities (*Seiendes*)—the realm of everyday comportment—to the realm of being (*Sein*)—the realm of ontological investigation. That Heideggerian angst primarily concerns the possibility of ontology becomes particularly obvious in the lecture *What is Metaphysics?* (1929). Heidegger claims here that certain attunements (he mentions profound boredom and joy) manifest “being as a whole.” (Heidegger 1998, 87) Angst goes beyond these attunements in that it also “makes manifest the nothing.” (Heidegger 1998, 88) If questioning the nothing is a genuinely metaphysical question, as Heidegger claims, then angst is the access to this kind of questioning: “With the fundamental attunement of anxiety we have arrived at that occurrence in Dasein in which the nothing is manifest and from which it must be interrogated.” (Heidegger 1998, 89)

Heidegger discusses the aforementioned attunement of profound boredom in his lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1929/30). He distinguishes three forms of boredom: In the first form—‘*becoming bored by something*’—a specific entity or event bores us. Heidegger’s example is waiting at a shabby train station in the middle of nowhere. In the second variety—‘*being bored with something*’—a certain episode is experienced as emptied of meaningful activity and thus as a lost portion of lifetime. Heidegger’s example is attending a dinner party where we might outwardly participate in an engaged fashion but afterwards have to admit that we were bored throughout. In the third form—profound boredom or ‘*it is boring for one*’—not one particular episode but our entire existence becomes utterly meaningless: “Entities have—as we say—become indifferent *as a whole*, and we ourselves as these people are not excepted.” (Heidegger 1995, 208) Whereas the first two varieties of boredom describe affective episodes that can be psychologically investigated, profound boredom appears to go beyond the realm of psychology. Heidegger claims as much when he instructs his students that “it is not necessarily an objection to our claim of a fundamental attunement being there in our Dasein if one of you, or even many, or all of you assure us that you are unable to ascertain such an attunement in yourselves when you observe yourselves. For in the end there is nothing at all to be found by observation.” (Heidegger 1995, 60) As the

introduction to this part of the lecture shows, Heidegger is not concerned with the psychology of boredom, but with the possibility of *philosophizing*. Boredom only becomes relevant insofar as profound boredom is identified as a fundamental attunement enabling philosophizing. In the case of boredom, as in the case of Angst, we can see that Heidegger grants fundamental attunements a central role within his approach to philosophy. According to him, genuine philosophical questioning has to arise “*from out of a fundamental attunement.*” (Heidegger 1995, 57) (For more on fear, anxiety and boredom in Heidegger see Elpidorou and Freeman 2015a, 2015b and their contribution in this volume).

To wrap things up, I can only briefly mention that Heidegger continues to see such a connection between philosophy and attunement in his later writings. In *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936-38) he writes about the “grounding-attunement” of thinking: In contrast to “wonder”, which he identifies as the grounding-attunement of the first beginning of philosophy in Greek Antiquity, Heidegger identifies “startled dismay” (*Erschrecken*), “reservedness” (*Verhaltenheit*), “deep awe” (*Scheu*)—and a few pages later “deep foreboding” (*Er-ahnen*) (Heidegger 1999, 15)—as the “*grounding-attunement of thinking in the other beginning.*” (Heidegger 1999, 11)

4. Conclusion

We have seen that in *Being and Time*, Heidegger introduces *Befindlichkeit* as an *existential* of Dasein that (in interplay with understanding, discourse and falling) co-constitutes being-in-the-world. Building on this framework, he continues to claim that certain attunements do not simply contribute to the regular course of events, but rip Dasein out of everyday familiarity and confront it with the depth of its being. These attunements thereby serve a crucial methodological function for Heidegger’s overall project by setting Dasein on the path of existential analysis. In later works, Heidegger generalizes the methodological role of attunements by claiming that all philosophizing has to arise from out of a fundamental attunement.

Bollnow’s book *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* is an attempt to systematically apply the gist of Heidegger’s *Befindlichkeit* for the purpose of philosophical anthropology. Bollnow investigates attunement as the most basic level of human life, claiming that the primordial disclosure of self and world happens in being attuned. Attunements are fundamental ways of world-relatedness prior to a sharp distinction of self and world, activity and passivity, cognition and affect. Although Bollnow’s work has not received much attention, he

anticipated many aspects of current approaches to affectivity in a broadly Heideggerian framework (e.g., those of Matthew Ratcliffe, Jan Slaby, and Katherine Withy). Thus, it would be worth discussing Bollnow's work within these contexts.

Whereas the discovery of attunements is a crucial deepening of our understanding of affectivity, neither Heidegger nor Bollnow present fully satisfying accounts. One particularly obvious shortcoming is that they say very little about the role of the body with regard to affectivity. Bollnow briefly mentions the body (Bollnow 1953, 42–43) and Heidegger offers a few remarks in his Zollikon Seminars (Heidegger 2001), but both fail to systematically bring together embodiment and affectivity. In particular, it remains unclear if and how attunements are bodily felt. Moreover, the combination of neglecting embodiment and supporting strong anti-mentalism led Heidegger—and to a lesser extent Bollnow—to leaving the relationship between attunements and other affective states underdeveloped. Finally, going beyond locating attunements in the relatedness of self, others, and world, one can raise the question whether attunements are individual phenomena or whether they are intertwined with the intersubjective or collective realm.

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¹ The term *Befindlichkeit* is notoriously difficult to translate into English. It is a nominalization of the verb ‘*sich befinden*’, which literally means ‘being somewhere’, ‘being situated’. The question: ‘Wo befindest du dich?’ means ‘Where are you?’—it asks for a location. The question ‘Wie befindest du dich?’ corresponds to ‘How are you doing?’—it asks for an evaluation of one’s situation. These everyday meanings play into Heidegger’s philosophical use of *Befindlichkeit*; it implies how one finds oneself in the world in this double sense of location and evaluation. In the first English edition of *Being and Time* (cf. Heidegger 1962), Macquarrie and Robinson rendered *Befindlichkeit* as “state-of-mind.” This is clearly misleading, as it stands in discord with Heidegger’s anti-mentalism, which is particularly present in his discussion of *Befindlichkeit*. In the 1996 edition of *Being and Time*, Stambaugh translates *Befindlichkeit* as “attunement.”(cf. Heidegger 1996) This is a suitable solution accepted by most scholars. However, I suggest that it is more appropriate to use “attunement” as translation of *Stimmung*. The term *Stimmung* is related to *Stimme*, which not only refers to voices, but also to the score of an instrument. Instruments need to be *gestimmt*, i.e., tuned. If they are tuned, they are also attuned to one another. “Attunement”, although taken from a mechanical register, does well to capture the literal meaning of *Stimmung*. Meanwhile, several other translations of *Befindlichkeit* have been suggested. Hubert Dreyfus, for instance, initially suggested “disposition” and “situatedness”, then suggested the unwieldy phrase “where we’re at-ness”, and finally settled for “affectedness” (Dreyfus 1991, 168). Other suitable translations are “so-findingness”, suggested by John Haugeland (2013) and “disposedness”, suggested by William Blattner (2006). As no English translation will fully capture the meaning of *Befindlichkeit*, I decided to leave it untranslated for the purpose of this text.

² I borrow this phrase from Matthew Ratcliffe (2008, 2013).

³ As is common practice in Heidegger scholarship, all citations of *Being and Time* refer to the page numbers of the German edition of *Sein und Zeit* published by Niemeyer. These page numbers can be found in all English translations of *Being and Time* as well as in volume 2 of the *Gesamtausgabe*.

⁴ There is no English edition of Bollnow’s book; all translations are my own.

⁵ Ratcliffe draws on this thought without making the claim that only certain attunements play this role. On his view, “changes in existential feelings serve to reveal structures of experience that are ordinarily taken for granted.” (Ratcliffe 2008, 10)

⁶ I leave the term “angst” untranslated as it is doubtful whether what Heidegger drives at with it comes close enough to what is meant by anxiety in colloquial English. In particular, it is important to avoid reminiscences to psychological understandings of anxiety.