Security, Peace, and Freedom:

Beauvoir and Heidegger on Aging and Death

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Introduction

Security is widely seen as a necessary human demand, without which we are unable to live in peace and freedom. Although being secure is admittedly associated with peace and freedom, the concept of security generally results in threatening people's freedom and peaceful lives. The concept is, for example, used in regard to the surveillance of public spaces or the monitoring of one's computer, which could lead to excessive limitations of an individual's rights and freedom. Security is also a useful concept for policymakers to justify the conduct of war, which places citizens in a contrasting situation to that of a peaceful state.

Regarding the ambiguity of the concept of security, the following questions emerge: Is the fundamental quest for security in our lives compatible with the protection of freedom? Is it unavoidable that the demand for security leads to (at least) a partial abandonment of peace and freedom? Could the concept of safety prove to be a contradictory idea, especially if the pursuit for a safe life inevitably implies the destruction of itself?

Thus, the overall purpose of this paper is to calm our concerns about the paradoxical nature of security. For this purpose, this paper illustrates that *a certain form* of peaceful life, which is typically observed in older people, can realize freedom in those who are resistant to the security rhetoric. By doing so, this paper presents this form of life as a counterexample to the idea that being secure requires one to abandon his/her freedom. Moreover, a detailed description of such a form of existence is provided by interpreting the concepts of ontological security and freedom in Simone de Beauvoir's analysis of aging as well as Martin Heidegger's existential concepts regarding projection, death, and fear/anxiety, which (more or less) influence Beauvoir's existentialist-phenomenology.

Overall, this paper is divided into three parts. First, it examines Beauvoir's description of experiencing the ontological security of older people in *The Coming of Age* and points out that such security is a temporal concept through which one perceives his/her own life. In this regard, I share the same concerns with readers who have expressed dissatisfaction with her

negative evaluation of older people's strong desire for security as well as their tendency to maintain previous habits. However, the focus of this paper is not on her hopeless view on aging, but on the basis of this view i.e. the existentialist scheme of temporality and freedom; that is, more future, more freedom, and more past, less freedom. The second section addresses Heidegger's understanding of one's anticipation of death, particularly the affective element of anxiety. Unlike Beauvoir and other readers of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, the present paper points out that anxiety toward death is internally connected to *joy*, by calling attention to his use of the word *joy* (*Freude*), as the German translation of Aristotle's concept of *hedone*. This section also clarifies that Heidegger-Aristotle's joyful anxiety toward death is considered as a mood accompanied by the purest cognition of the world. In other words, it is a mode of the most perfect fit between an individual and the world. Moreover, it shows that, in Heidegger's framework, this joyful mode of *being-in-the-world* is only possible if any fear about death is already overcome. Finally, the third section argues that, at an old age, a person is more likely to cherish the joyful and pure cognition of the world, and it is a particular form of life that is only possible under two situations: 1) if one is detached from a life that is governed by certain projects and tasks; and 2) if one feels *safe*, in the sense of being free from any danger or threat. Furthermore, it points out that such fearlessness at an old age contributes to braveness and it makes one less likely to unreflectively follow socially accepted norms and beliefs.

It is hoped that this investigation will shed light on the importance of experiences that are typically made possible at an old age, without falling into an illusionary idealization of aging that Beauvoir repeatedly warned her readers about. It is also hoped that we, including those who have not been especially interested in the lives of older people or have seen them as socially irrelevant[1], could learn some lessons about this form of life, which would not necessarily threaten human freedom, but be resistant to the misuse of the concept of safety/security.

1. Beauvoir on Ontological Security: Experience of the Lack of Freedom at an Older Age

In Chapter 7 of *The Coming of Age* titled, "Old Age and Everyday Life," the ontological concept of security appears as follows: "Habit provides the old person with a kind of ontological security" (CA, 469). There is a good reason why she refers to this security as "ontological," since it is primarily related to the way that an old person *is* in the world and how he/she understands his/her existence. However, unlike most philosophers, it is noteworthy that she does not believe that ontological concepts can be applied to all

individuals, let alone all entities. Instead, the use of this concept is rather limited to older people. This treatment of ontological concepts is a natural consequence of Beauvoir's basic philosophy in which every subject is embodied/embedded in a situation and there is no such abstract entity as human beings without sex, age, and other backgrounds.

According to Beauvoir's thinking, the way that we are related to the world and how we perceive our lives can vary depending on our age. Ontological security is a concept that is supposed to describe the specific mode of *being-in-the-world* at a particular age. Thus, this concept has *temporal* implications, as shown in the following explanation of habit: "Habit is the past in so far as we do not re-present it but live it in the shape of attitude and forms of behavior" (CA, 466). What is distinctive in older people is that they are more likely to maintain habitual forms of life that were previously created and developed. To put it ontologically, this tendency of maintaining certain habits is only possible if they leave the past behind.

Beauvoir's analysis of security is also based on her temporal understanding of human existence. In Chapter 6 of *The Coming of Age* titled, "Time, Activity, History," she writes: "The aged man may be defined as an individual with a long existence behind him, and before him a very limited expectation of life" (CA, 361). To experience temporality as "a limited future and a frozen past" (CA, 378) does not merely mean that the future is shorter than the past in terms of quantity. Instead, the past maintains priority over the future in a way that "it is the past that defines my present situation and its outlet into the future" (CA, 372). Clinging to habitual behaviors and possessions (which is the intentional correlate of these behaviors) is caused by the modification of time-consciousness at an old age; that is, from a future-oriented temporality to a past-oriented one.

Beauvoir's analysis of ontological security is not neutral in terms of the evaluation of older people's lives. Beauvoir clearly shows a negative attitude toward the average form of life that simply clings to the past. Moreover, she prefers another form of life that rejects it altogether. To understand her negative attitude toward an existence that prioritizes the past, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that her moral philosophy is largely defined by the Sartrean existentialist interpretation of temporality that prioritizes the future. In what Beauvoir refers to as "existentialist ethics" in *The Second Sex,* the situation that the future is limited is directly associated with the *lack of freedom* or *decline of subjectivity*. In terms of existentialist ethics, freedom is accomplished by transcendence to the world, which occurs through the subject's positing of him/herself through certain projects (SS, 16). In *the Second Sex*, Beauvoir characterized the mode of existence of socially subordinated groups (e.g., women) as "immanence" in which transcendence is inhibited. In other words, the subjects are unable to commit themselves to the world through various projects and actions, due to

unfair social settings. Against the background of this framework, it is reasonable to believe that, if the future is not open, then transcendence lapses into immanence, as long as the projects include a temporal direction toward the future.

To locate the concept of ontological security in Beauvoir's broader attempt at existentialist ethics, it is useful to illustrate her image of the lack of freedom or immanence in the context of *The Second Sex*. Characteristically, there are similarities in both of her books regarding the everyday domestic lives of two groups: women and the elderly. In *The Second Sex*, she compares housework (which is historically undertaken by women) with the "torment of Sisyphus" (SS, 474). This analogy suggests that the specific temporality of housework is a meaningless repetition: "One must wash dishes, dust furniture, mend clothes that will be dirty, dusty, and torn again" (ibid.). Housework is also described as an endless "defeat of evil" and the lack of a future-oriented "progress toward good" (SS, 476). Beauvoir also points out that, even though there are cases in which some women are discharged from such work in their old age, it is often too late, as shown in the following:

> She lacks the drive, confidence, hope, and anger that would allow her to discover new goals in her own life. She takes refuge in the routine that has always been her lot; she makes repetition her system, she throws herself into household obsessions… (SS, 636)

In her descriptions of both women and old people, Beauvoir is consistent in the view that, if one is unaware of the open future, then he/she starts to escape to an existing habit/routine. In addition, sometimes one is stubbornly stuck in the habit, especially when it is the only matter that he/she is able to rely on to *spend* or even *kill time*. Ontological security is, in Beauvoir's framework, a mode of self-constraint that obscures human freedom.

Beauvoir's hopeless view on aging might be disappointing for some readers. It is understandable to expect phenomenological research to find positive meanings in regard to aging, as long as it is an inevitable phenomenon similar to birth and death[2]. In my view, Beauvoir's analysis is mostly successful in the explanation that the older one gets, the more he/she maintains habits and avoids risks to achieve a state of security. However, she fails to see the important aspects of old people's existence in regard to security and peace. One aspect that is lacking in her understanding is the *joyful* moment of feeling secure. Hence, the following section considers this moment in more detail by exploring Heidegger's concepts of projects, death, and anxiety/fear, all of which significantly influenced Beauvoir, but are more complicated than her somewhat simple version.

2. Heidegger on Joyful Anxiety

Beauvoir's major concepts, such as *existence*, *projects*, and *being-in-the-world*, originated from Heidegger's *Being and Time*. However, this does not mean that both philosophers generally view human existence in the same way. Their understanding of death suggests one difference: while Heidegger discusses a highly abstract notion of death, Beauvoir focuses on concrete instances of death. Moreover, in the final portion of *A Very Easy Death,* an essay about the death of Beauvoir's mother, she writes: "You don't die from being born. You die from something" (VED, 105). This example can be seen as a part of her objection against the essentialist way of defining human beings as *mortals*. In contrast, Heidegger seemingly continues to think inside the traditional framework when he writes: "Death is a way to be that Dasein takes over as soon as it is" (BT, 228).

Identifying the relevant differences between Beauvoir and Heidegger in terms of their views on human existence, however, is a more difficult task. In *Being and Time,* in which the existentialist thesis that existence precedes essence originates from, Heidegger discusses what he calls the "anticipation of death" as one's *possible* relationship to his/her own death. In addition, he does not mention it as an essential feature by which humans are defined. The understanding of one's own death, in the distinct form of the anticipation of death, is only possible through the existential change *from* the everyday conformist mode of *being-in-the-world* (in which one behaves in accordance to social norms and customs) *to* the most individualized mode of *being-in-the-world*. The idea of existential change/modification and the distinction between inauthentic and authentic modes of life (as the basis of this change) is also operative in Beauvoir's ethics[3].

In *The Coming of Age*, the authentic mode of existence is a form of life in which one commits him/herself in the world through concrete projects and actions, even as fear begins to increase during old age. In my view, what Heidegger believes regarding the authentic relatedness toward one's own death greatly differs from Beauvoir's version. Moreover, the mode of existence that Beauvoir suggests as authentic could even be considered as inauthentic, especially if it is viewed from Heidegger's point of view.

First, it is worth noting that anxiety includes joy in Heidegger's concept: "Together with the sober *Angst* that brings us before our individualized potentiality-of-being, goes the *unshakable joy* in this possibility" (BT, 286; emphasis added). It may sound odd to state that *sober* anxiety goes with *unshakable joy*, and it is also difficult to find clues in *Being and Time* to understand what Heidegger actually means by this sentence. However, his lectures on Aristotle, prior to the publication of *Being and Time*, provide important information regarding how Heidegger uses the word *joy* as a translation of the ancient Greek concept of

hedone. For instance, according to the interpretation of Book 10 of *Nichomachean Ethics* in his 1924/1925 summer lectures, Heidegger states: "The authentic being of humans is mixed with self-finding affectivity that corresponds to that being, that is, *hedone*, enjoy-itself" (GA19, 175). This idea that the anxiety of the authentic self goes with another affectivity of joy is hardly found in Beauvoir's thinking.

Second, the fact that Heidegger mentions joyful anxiety, based on Aristotle's understanding of human beings, explains why these seemingly contradictory feelings go together. In *Being and Time*, anxiety is considered as a "fundamental mood," since it is not related to ontic entities that are present within successive time. It also reveals, as an ontological mood, aspects that are non-existent as an entity: *being*, *world*, and *death*. Similarly, Aristotle states that *hedone* does not include any part that emerges and disappears, as is the case with pain and pleasure in hunger and eating. Moreover, it does not include speed, which means that it is not within the order of time (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 10, Chap. 3). Both anxiety and joy are ontological in the sense that they reveal the being or non-being (death) of humans as such, instead of being directed toward individual events or entities within one's existence. Furthermore, both anxiety and joy are characterized by being under a lack of danger or threat. While *joy* is regarded as a mood in which we do not care about the necessity of life, *anxiety* toward death, which is non-existent or a certain kind of nothingness, is sharply contrasted in *Being and Time* to the ontic mood of *fear* in which we find ourselves alongside entities that threaten us. Accordingly, as long as all entities (both natural and artificial) can be threatening (depending on the context), one is free from fear and peaceful in a distinctive way.

Third, the ontological mood is joyful and related to the pure cognition of the world, even though it does not include physical pleasure. Heidegger translates Aristotle's sentence about *hedone* as follows: "People agree with the idea that *sophia*, being present at entities, that is, purest observation, corresponds to the purest joy" (GA19, 175). This joy is a different type of affectivity than pleasure, which is satisfied (or unsatisfied) by practically coping with various entities. Instead, it is the ontological or philosophical mood that characterizes the distinct way of *being-in-the-world*; that is, to *see* the world as it is, instead of using tools, making artifacts, performing housework, etc.

Finally, it is important to point out the difference between Aristotle and Heidegger regarding their understanding about human beings. It is safe to say that the pure cognition of the world can be viewed (as a state of *being-in-the-world*) as the perfect fit between humans and the world, especially in the sense that no medium between them is necessary to make one's perception possible. Then, the question is how it is possible for us? For Heidegger, this question can be answered by analyzing the possibility of the existential change from the

everyday mode of *being-in-the-world* to its authentic mode. In addition, anxiety, as a distinctive ontological affectivity, plays a crucial role in such a change or alteration of one's existence. According to Heidegger, anxiety is the mood in which one experiences the total destruction of the meaning in the world, and that the world appears unfamiliar and uncanny. During anxiety, the familiarity of the world in our *everydayness* is lost, and all that has been taken for granted is questioned. As long as our everyday common understanding of the world is largely structured by social norms and rules that we as "the one" generally follow, anxiety offers an opportunity to question these social norms and rules. In the existential change from the everyday mode of *being-in-the-world* to its authentic anxious mode, common interpretations of the world that serve as the medium for one's direction toward the world in its *everydayness* are bracketed. Insofar, the existential change is the condition in which ones *sees* the world directly as it is or in Heidegger's perspective, to *disclose* the world as it shows itself.

In contrast to the concept of joy, Heidegger's concept of anxiety is not based on the interpretation of Aristotle[4]. The idea of anxiety toward death is rather related to Heidegger's criticism of Aristotle. For Aristotle, *sophia,* i.e., the purest observation with the purest joy, is the most perfect state of happiness in which a human being has reached its end (*telos*). Conversely, Heidegger (as existentialist thinkers such as Beauvoir rightly understand) refuses to define the internal essence of human beings as well as human happiness in general. Instead, he ontologically formalizes the concept of the end and takes it literally as the end of existence; that is, death. Moreover, anxiety is not directed toward certain goals in life, but it reveals the possibility of *non-being* in one's life. Anxiety is also related to the groundlessness of one's existence without goals, instead of fearing the physical threat of its existence.

By experiencing the ontological anxiety toward death, one's *being-in-the-world* is disclosed in a distinctive manner. In addition, while one is free from the fear of concrete life threats, he/she tends to experience *unshakable joy*. When Beauvoir writes, "You don't die from being born. You die from something," she apparently refuses to formalize the concept of death, as Heidegger does. On the one hand, I sympathize with Beauvoir and de-formalizes Heidegger's concept of death as well as re-interprets the affectivity of joyful anxiety in the concrete instance of *being-toward-death*; that is, aging. On the other hand, we could learn, based on Heidegger's viewpoint, about the positive meaning of aging that Beauvoir fails to see. Thus, the following section further clarifies what state of being enjoys the purest cognition of the world and suggests that aging is contributive to the realization of this state.

3. Braveness, Freedom, and Cognitive Joy in Older People

Although Beauvoir basically shows a negative attitude toward aging, she also points out what old people can do and what others can learn from them:

> The whole meaning of our life is in question in the future that is waiting for us. If we do not know what we are going to be, we cannot know what we are: let us recognize ourselves in this old man or in that old woman. (CA, 5)

According to Stoller (2014), for Beauvoir, "to recognize oneself in old people is a basic condition upon which an ethics of aging should be built" (198). In my perspective, the ethics of aging is certainly not developed in *The Coming of Age*, but it is possible to find some passages in which Beauvoir presents particular forms of life among the elderly that she considers to be worth living:

> I. *Practical Braveness*: In some cases, old people are ready to stake their reputations, careers, and even their lives, and act far more bravely than younger people who still hesitate to risk their lives, statuses, and possessions. As an example, Beauvoir cites a statement of Dr. Spock, the American pediatrician who was indicted at the age of eighty for his struggle against the Vietnam War in 1968: "At my age, why should I be afraid to make public protests along with Stokely Carmichael? [a prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement]." (CA, 490)

> II. *Intellectual Freedom and Clarity of Mind*: In some cases, old age liberates people from delusionary notions of life. In addition, the idea that life is advancing toward a goal reveals itself as a delusion. Thus, by being free from any self-deception, older people are in the best positions to examine their own lives and past achievements. For example, although aged artists, such as Rembrandt and Michelangelo, could have had "doubts about the value of [their] work, [they carried] it to its highest point of perfection" (CA, 492). "This sweeping away of fetishes and illusions is the truest, most worth-while of all the contributions brought by age." (ibid.)

Beauvoir does not claim that such contributions made possible by age appear in everyone. Instead, she repeatedly warns readers not to idealize old age by pointing out that the historical figures she mentions are exceptional in that they are "still full of projects," even during the last stages of their lives (CA, 492). Moreover, they still have an open future ahead in their minds, even though they actually have little time left. For this to be possible, "he must in his middle age have committed himself to undertakings that set time at defiance" (CA, 493).

Based on the fact that all of the examples that Beauvoir provides are male intellectuals, well-known activists, and artists, suggests that those who spend most of their time on routine/manual work are generally unable to find a meaningful end to pursue. According to Beauvoir, "in our society of exploitation, this possibility is refused to the immense majority of human beings" (ibid.).

In *The Coming of Age*, Beauvoir mentions the positive effects of aging that are only found in privileged men. Meanwhile, the lives of aged women are depicted as miserable. Is there then nothing worth noting in their lives? Hence, I believe that, when Beauvoir writes about the last stage of her mother's life in *A Very Easy Death,* she embraces a different viewpoint regarding the life of aged women than her strictly existentialist perspective on aging in *The Coming of Age*:

> I. *Cognitive Joy*: Beauvoir's mother showed her enormous joy in sensing the surrounding world: "What touched our hearts that day was the way she noticed the slightest agreeable sensation: it was as though, at the age of seventy-eight, she were walking afresh to the miracle of living. While the nurse was settling her pillows the metal of a tube touched her thigh –'It's cool! How pleasant!' She breathed in the smell of eau de Cologne and talcum powder –'How good is smells.' […] She asked me to open the window. 'How pleasant it is to have fresh air.' Birds are singing and she was enchanted. 'Birds!'" (VED, 50-51)

> II. *Uniqueness of One's Being-in-the-World*: Beauvoir suggests that the simple fact that someone no longer exists can change the entire meaning of the world, and that his/her existence or *being-in-the-world* is characterized by its uniqueness: "Her death brings to light her unique quality; she grows as vast as the world that her absence annihilates for her and whose whole existence was caused by her being there; you feel that she should have had more room in your life - all the room, if need be. You snatch yourself away from this wildness: she was only one among many." (VED, 94)

In these descriptions, Beauvoir clearly does not follow the existentialist doctrines. First, her mother's joy in sensations is not given, based on future-oriented projects or actions. Instead, these sensations are characterized by their lack of any practical purpose. Second, while the uniqueness of her mother's existence is seen as capable of providing and even annihilating the entire meaning of the world, the capacity of such extraordinary meaning-giving is based neither on what she still projected in her old age nor on what she had achieved

in her younger years, but rather on her bare existence. Third, her life does neither have the heroic character nor the historical importance of the figures Beauvoir mentions in *The Coming of Age*.

Although Beauvoir's aforementioned descriptions of her mother's later stage of life are most impressive, she does not engage in a phenomenological analysis of the meanings of cognitive joy and the uniqueness of an individual's *being-in-the-world*, which manifests itself in his/her death. This lack of analysis may not be a mere omission, but rather the result of her basic philosophical system in which these two characters can hardly be considered within the existentialist framework. To better understand these characters, it would be more useful to refer to what we saw as *joyful anxiety* in Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle.

First, it is important to call attention to Aristotle's analysis of happiness presented in Book 9 of *Metaphysics* in which he explains what types of actions can be referred to as "complete" or "perfect." To identify these actions, Aristotle distinguishes two types. On the one hand, there are actions related to an end, i.e., actions in which every movement is incomplete or in the process such as learning, walking or building. On the other hand, there are actions that are characterized by the "movement in which the end is present." Characteristically, it is not absurd to mention the latter type of actions, both in the present continuous tense and the present perfect sense. *Seeing* belongs to this type of perfect action (e.g., "at the same time, we are seeing and have seen"), although it is not true that we are learning and have learned or walking and have walked. In terms of its completeness, purposive, practical actions are not perfect, whereas cognitive acts, such as seeing and thinking, are perfect. However, the latter acts are not instrumental, since they lack the *end-means* structure. Moreover, their movements are not in a temporal order that includes the *end* in the future and the *means* in the process. Similarly, the joyful sensation or cognition of the world that Beauvoir's mother enjoyed is not oriented toward the end in the future. Thus, it can be seen as complete or perfect in its self-sufficiency.

Second, unlike Aristotle's treatment of seeing, Heidegger does not limit what he considers the actions of the authentic self into those of the theoretical or purely cognitive type. It is true that Heidegger also believes that the actions of Dasein in its resoluteness need to be considered differently from the everyday mode of coping with tools and natural resources. The former actions are possible, only if one finds him/herself experiencing anxiety toward death, and is subsequently liberated from all fears and threats in life, as long as one understands the world as the *end-means* network. However, Heidegger does not make a distinction between the mode of coping with things and resolute actions according to the types of actions (e.g., practical or theoretical). Instead, the emphasis is placed on the modification of *being-in-the-world*: "As authentic being a self, resoluteness does not detach

Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it as free-floating ego. How could it, if resoluteness as authentic disclosedness is, after all, nothing other than *authentically being-in-the-world*?" (BT, 274). From this perspective, the cognitive joy of older people is not necessarily regarded as theoretical in nature (as is the case with Aristotle's perfect action), even though it obviously lacks an instrumental character. Instead, as long as *being-in* means "dwell" (BT, 51), what the authentic self does is also related to *dwelling-in-the-world*: "Resoluteness brings the self right into its being together with things at hand" and "the 'world' at hand does not become different as far as 'content'" (BT, 274). Rather, being at things and with others is "now defined in terms of their ownmost potentiality-of-being-a-self" (ibid.).

In my opinion, it is impressive in the cognitive joy of older people that they take the most trivial events, such as birds flying, as something that matters to their lives or is related to their own potentiality of *being-in-the-world*. Beauvoir's mother does not see the world for any future projects, but rather for *no* purpose other than seeing itself. In Heidegger's term, one's potentiality of *being-a-self* is not related to any purpose that will be realized, but to *no* possibility of a future, i.e., death. In the anticipation toward death, one exists *in the moment*, instead of understanding the present and future in the framework of the *end-means* relationship. This temporal character of the *moment* is reflected in the cognitive joy described above. It is also the fact that she is a person who sees birds and feels the air, and no one else can make her *being-in-the-world* unique. Furthermore, it is not relevant for the unique quality of one's life if he/she is full of socially important projects. Thus, *dwelling-in-the-world* without the medium of social norms and discourses or a new intimate relationship with the world is what matters.

Third, what is referred to as "existential change" can be hardly explained as the result of previous experiences. Instead, affectivity, such as anxiety, is characteristic in that one is *invaded* by itself (BT, 301). Insofar, existential change is better seen as a sudden event that does not allow causal or developmental explanations. Similarly, in *The Coming of Age,* Beauvoir emphasizes aging as something that suddenly occurs to an individual, and she even compares it to *metamorphosis* (CA, 283) [5]. In my view, the emphasis on the sudden characteristic of aging leaves Beauvoir room to view her mother's later stage in life beyond the scope of the existentialist framework. Unlike the braveness and intellectual freedom that she mentions, the cognitive joy that her mother enjoyed is not the result of previous projects or achievements. Rather, such joy can be better characterized in terms of its self-sufficiency and the independence from one's past projects and their social significance.

I also suggest that the joyful cognition of the world that occurred to Beauvoir's mother in her old age is better seen as a form of *freedom*, although it lacks the projects and social commitment. As we have seen, the joyful cognition of the world can be considered as a

realization of the perfect fit between the subject and the world, and in this sense, the distinctive mode of *being-in-the-world*. Moreover, in both Heidegger and Beauvoir, *being-in-the-world* is the fundamental phenomenon of transcendence, which is a form of human freedom.

It is also important to point out that this form of *being-in-the-world* is related to two positive characters of aging that Beauvoir attributes to historic figures: braveness and intellectual freedom. First, both Aristotle's *hedone* and Heidegger's anxiety are characterized by being free from fear or finding oneself in a state without danger or threat. It is safe to say that, to be fearless, it is necessary to be brave, even if it is insufficient to do so. In addition, to bravely risk one's life, status, and possessions, one must be free from the fear of danger and threat. However, being free or fearless does not necessarily mean that he/she is practically brave. For instance, Beauvoir's mother in her later life enjoyed the distinctively peaceful *being-in-the-world* that is comparable with Aristotle's happiest state of human beings: *sophia*. Such existence is usually (as in Aristotle) distinguished from practical life in which braveness is relevant. Nevertheless, from Heidegger's perspective, the distinction of actions in terms of type (e.g., theoretical and practical) is not useful for understanding what occurs in the existential change in life. It is possible, however, to imagine individuals, especially those that dwell in their surrounding world and peacefully experience the world, acting bravely to *protect* their world when it is about to be destroyed. In such a case, they are not protecting their lives or possessions, but the world that they experience.

Second, according to Heidegger, in anxiety or in the existential modification of the "one" to the authentic self, familiarity of the world in one's everydayness can break down, and the understanding of the world that has been taken for granted is questioned. The ability to question socially accepted beliefs (as well as habits and norms) is an essential ingredient of what Beauvoir refers to as "freedom and clarity of mind," especially in the sense that one is free from a delusionary understanding of the self and the world. As Beauvoir writes, "doing, while at the same time 'placing one's activity into a parenthesis,' means achieving authenticity" (CA, 492). In this regard, placing one's *being-in-the-world* into a parenthesis is precisely the function that anxiety, as an ontological mood, achieves.

Unlike Husserl's phenomenological reduction, ontological anxiety is not seen as a methodological, theoretical operation. Instead, it (as a mood) affects us or invades our lives. The suddenness of existential change and aging (compared with metamorphosis) implies that authenticity is neither a causal, developmental result of the past nor is it determined by fortune or privilege. As stated earlier, all of the elements of one's life or *being-in-the-world*, such as braveness, freedom, and joy, are difficult to obtain. Although aging is contributive to the possibility of such existence, there is a strong tendency to experience fear that prevents us

from this possibility at a young age. To use Beauvoir's phrase, this might mean that it is worth letting us "recognize ourselves in this old man or in that old woman."

Concluding Remarks: Toward Another Notion of Security

As shown in the first section, ontological security in Beauvoir's *The Coming of Age* is a temporal concept. Old people seek ontological security by maintaining previous habits, which is made possible by the modification of time-consciousness; that is, from a future-oriented temporality to a past-oriented temporality. For Beauvoir, since old people have fewer possibilities of projects and actions in the future, aging is inevitably associated with the lack of freedom. In this case, security and freedom are incompatible.

The second and third sections presented another possibility regarding the modification or change of life in old age. This task is important, because if it is unavoidable to abandon our freedom for being secure, then "peace and freedom" may appear to be a mere ideal. However, it was also shown that there is a form of life that aging is contributive to and is characterized by features such as braveness, freedom, joy, and resistance to the security rhetoric. This form of life is not the human nature that all human beings possess, but it is a possible way of life or aging that one can eventually realize. Therefore, the form of life described in these two sections should be worth learning by younger people. This could lead to a future that humans have not yet experienced, since they have paid too little attention to the meaning of aging, have devalued it, and have learned little from the existence of aged people.

Finally, the fearlessness, peace, and freedom that this form of life achieves requires an important change in life. Although this change could happen to anyone as a sudden event, most of us are unlikely to remain in a joyful and fearless mood, and enjoy seeing the world as it is. Rather, the tendency toward fear is so strong that individuals generally maintain habits as well as social norms that others follow. To acknowledge old people's peace and freedom, it is necessary to explore the possible forms of aging and clarify their values. Aging has been too often underestimated or in other cases, it has been too idealized. As this paper has shown, the phenomenology of aging and death in Beauvoir and Heidegger can be viewed as a springboard for further understanding of aging and its unique contribution to peace and freedom in life[6].

References

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Notes

(1) In *Frontiers of Justice*, Martha Nussbaum claims that theories of justice have excluded people with disability, aliens, and animals from their discussions. More Recently, she further argued that old people are the last frontier of the theory of justice (in her Kyoto prize lecture on May 10, 2016titled "Aging, Stigma, and Disgust").

(2) See, Stoller 2014.

(3) In her earlier work *The Ethics of Ambiguity,* she interprets Husserlian phenomenological reduction as the reformation of life called "existentialist conversion" (Beauvoir 1948, 13).

(4) According to Heidegger, it was Kierkegaard who "got furthest of all in the analysis of the phenomenon of *Angst*" (BT, 405, footnote 4).

(5) See, Heinämaa 2014.

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