

Abstract

This thesis explores the link between existential anxiety and ontological security. It first establishes both concepts through conceptual analysis and then further analyses their interaction. To illuminate this interaction, anxiety has been divided into conscious and unconscious forms based on an interpretation of Heidegger's work. Contrary to the common framing of anxiety as either a source or a result of ontological insecurity, it is established as primarily a revelatory emotion. Anxiety as an unconscious emotion always exists because it arises as a response to future possibilities, which never disappear entirely. However, increased ontological insecurity can make the individual more vulnerable to experiencing the emotion consciously, which can, in turn, worsen the condition. Throughout the conceptual analysis, the thesis also highlights the main criticisms, paradoxes, and other issues facing the field. It provides arguments against the transition of ontological security to a level of the state and against using anxiety as a concept that leads to some form of determined outcome. Lastly, because ontological security is defined as "the security of the self," the thesis establishes this concept based on the theories of Kierkegaard and Giddens.