Abstract

Being and Intelligibility
by
Albert P. Pacelli

Being and Intelligibility is a philosophical treatise on the meaning of being in its two senses. The book explores the most originary ontological question, namely, "what do we mean when we say that something *is*?", and also the most originary existential question, namely, "what is the meaning of human experience?", in each case, by reference to a fundamental principle of being and intelligibility, which, following the pre-Socratics, is called the "*Logos*". The book posits that all rational experience is of objects which are at root a unity (ground) of relations (predicates) which include sequence, magnitude, and proportionality and hence are called "logical objects". From this simple premise, the book develops its three central theses. The first is that the beingness of beings (called "Being") and the intelligibility of Being are strictly self-same. The second is that, because nothingness (*i.e.*, absolute not-Being) entails the absence of the rules of its own conception, it is self-contradictory and unintelligible and, therefore, Being is logically necessary. The third is that the fullness of human rational experience cannot be explained in materially reducible terms and requires recognition of the existence of transcendent reality.

The book identifies the confused state of modern *mainstream* metaphysics as resulting from two fundamental errors. The first, which is laid at the feet of René Descartes, is the deconstruction of the unity of the human being into mind and body, which set modern philosophy down the parallel but ill-fated paths of rationalism and empiricism. The former imploded at its Hegelian end of "thought thinking about itself" and the latter expired upon the declaration of A.J. Ayer that metaphysical statements are meaningless because they are not verifiable. The second error, which is attributed initially to Immanuel Kant and is repeated by Martin Heidegger, is the failure to recognize the *essential logicality* of Being. In the case of Kant, who characterizes logic as a contentless abstraction from empirical categories of understanding, the scope of logic is limited to empirical experience and metaphysics is relegated to faith. In the case of Heidegger, Being holds privileged status over logic, with the results that Heidegger grants coherency to the possibility of nothingness, determines Being to ground all beings but itself to be ungrounded, and denies the necessity of Being.

Being and Intelligibility investigates the implications of the essential logicality of Being, which resound throughout the full range of human rational experience. The book shows how logically conceived Being underpins the possibility of objective knowledge of an inherently ordered universe, the homogeneity of logic and mathematics, and the necessary existence of God, as the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility and the ground of all Being including God itself. The book also shows how, from this epistemological and metaphysical context, human Being shows itself to itself from within itself as a substantive, persistent, morally obligated unity among the ordered manifold of its life experiences, whose essential Being is *orientation towards God.* In connecting Being and logic, *Being and Intelligibility* restores metaphysics to its proper place at the pinnacle of human understanding, which is precisely where reason, which (as Leibniz tells us) demands that the reasons for all that there is be rendered to it, insists that it must be.

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Introduction

THE WHY QUESTION

Anthropologists tell us that human beings are distinguishable from all of the other beings on the earth in many interesting ways. Human beings are the only animals who walk upright in normal locomotion, who require clothing to survive in most of the locations in which they live, who possess opposable thumbs that can reach all the way across their fingers and fingers that can reach to the base of their thumbs, who cook their meals, who often belie their true feelings by blushing, who require parental care well into their teenage years, who live long after the end of fertility, whose mental capacities are by far the greatest of the animals, and who can communicate in oral and written speech. From an anthropological standpoint, these are profoundly important characteristics and together they make man what he is: *Homo sapiens*, the wise human. From a philosophical standpoint, however, with the exception of speech (which is important in and of itself as a mode of communication and socialization but equally because of the cognitive activity that renders it possible), none of these characteristics, not even human brain capacity, is particularly notable. In contrast, the list of human characteristics that achieve philosophical importance is substantially different and much shorter and, as far as the philosophy presented in these pages is concerned, is strictly limited to consciousness of self as a persistent entity, objective propositional thinking and speaking, unremitting angst about being in the world, and an abiding sense of moral obligation.

The respective nature of the two lists makes manifest the fundamental difference between science and philosophy. The anthropological list treats man as a species of animal and comprises his unique biological characteristics. It considers him objectively, as science does any other entity in the world that is of interest to it. It deliberately refuses to take into account that the scientist who studies man is himself the object of his study, and the fact that man studies and classifies himself and other animals is in itself unique. By contrast, the philosophical list treats man in the full sense of his *beingness* and identifies those characteristics which are most relevant to how he thinks about himself and engages with the world in which he finds himself and, as we will see in a moment, it takes

as especially important (via self-consciousness and propositional thinking) that not only are the items in the list descriptive of man but the list itself is made by and for him.

Of all the beings in the world, only man both knows and knows that he knows and recognizes himself as a persistent entity in a manifold of empirical and conceptual experience. This capability and perspective ground all of the other characteristics which we have listed as philosophically important. Because man is self-conscious he can distinguish other entities in an *objective* manner and he can label them, consider them critically, and formulate, communicate, and test propositions about them. Man not only takes the world as it presents itself to him but his intellect demands that the world disclose the reasons for that which it presents. Man's reason does this on two levels. The first is imbedded in the very act of cognition; as Immanuel Kant teaches in his masterwork, *Critique of Pure Reason*, man organizes the material presented to his reason in space and time under the principle of *causality*. A world which presented itself to human reason *helter skelter* and not as a sequence of causes and effects would be incoherent and uncognizable. The second is a conscious act of thinking man. It occurs every time a child asks his parent why something is the way it is, or a scientist investigates empirical reality considered as a world of mind-independent objects, or a philosopher asks, as we will in these pages: *Why is there something instead of nothing?* This last question is one that we will call, following Martin Heidegger (in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*), the *Why* question. Indeed, thinking itself is the identification of the relations within and among its objects and their grounds.

It is also man's self-consciousness which enables him to consider *himself* and the world objectively; he can consider himself as part of the world in which he dwells or he can conceptually set himself over and against the world as if he does not belong in and to it. This is both a natural instinct and a cornerstone of philosophical inquiry. Man can appreciate and enjoy the world as the nurturing entity out of which he arises, but because he is self-conscious and finite, he can also see himself as alien to the very same world, as an unwitting warrior against it and his own physical nature, as the fighter of an inevitably losing battle with natural death. Indeed, of all the beings in the world, only man is *fundamentally* anxious about his place in the world and compelled by his own nature to live his life in the face of a pervading sense that it is fated to be short-lived and that after all is said and done it may very well amount to nothing objectively meaningful.

Yet man's brooding is also a great blessing to him because it impels him to be circumspect about how he makes use of his time on earth. Although all organisms have needs, only man is conscious of his in a way that allows him to formulate and prioritize his ends and to be aware that he is doing so; as a result, man can take the world and other men into account as both means and ends in themselves and he can measure his actions against other options available to him. Each decision that man makes at any moment to pursue a particular end is also a decision not to pursue a multitude of other ends open to him at the same moment. And the fact that such decisions by their very nature are made in the context of a world of other entities makes manifest what is perhaps the most interesting human characteristic of all: in acting and refraining from acting, in thought, word, and deed, man operates under an existential sense of *moral obligation*, that is, a perceived duty to comport himself in a certain way regardless of his own personal

desires. Kant calls this the "fact of morality" and it is a characteristic about which we will have much to say in this work.

So *ecce homo* (behold the man): a self-concerned and anxious asker of the *Why* question, who is confronted until the day he dies with the question of how he ought to comport himself in and toward the world into which he is thrown. So far, so good. But what about the *Why* question itself, the one that is so profoundly important to man, and what is its relation to the beingness of man? On its face, the question seems simple enough—it appears to ask about the cause or ground of the beingness of beings (meaning all objects that can be perceived or conceived), which (again following Heidegger) we will call "Being." But immediately, a difficulty appears: What sort of thing can the answer to the *Why* question *be*? Is the ground of Being itself a being? If it is not a being, then either the *Why* question is unanswerable or it requires *knowledge of the existence* of at least one non-being that serves to explain all the beings that there are. But it seems that we cannot even inquire what sort of thing a non-being might be without hopelessly involving ourselves with incoherency and self-contradiction. How can a *non-being* be? And even if that were possible, how could we have any knowledge about it? Is Being therefore itself a being? If so, what is the ground of *that* being, which itself is a ground? If Being is an ungrounded being we must again ask how we might have any knowledge of it—doesn't knowledge of a thing mean knowledge of its ground? Must Being therefore ground itself? If so, that would make Being unique among all beings and, as such, one the knowledge of which would demark, if not exceed, the limits of our understanding.

The fact that we even ask the *Why* question seems to tell us something important because its asking presupposes that we already know something about the objects as to which we seek understanding. Certainly, it seems that we can only ask the *Why* question if we already have some knowledge of what beings are, which is to say that, at the very least, in the figurative sense, we seem to know beings when we see them. But, even taking that as true, we are only pushed deeper into the complexities of our inquiry, because we must then assess what it means to have that kind of knowledge. Saying, for example, that "(I know) there is a coffee cup on my desk," reduced to its essence, appears to be nothing more than an acknowledgment of a particular state of affairs, namely, of the Being of the coffee cup (a being) and the Being of the desk (a being), the relation of the two beings to one another, and their relation to me, as the one who has knowledge of their Being. The profound relationship between Being and intelligibility thus becomes conspicuous but in a way that seems hopelessly circular: Being seems to characterize that which *is* (i.e., said to be) in such a way that any attempt to explicate Being must be had in terms of Being itself and the explication of Being appears to represent an attempt at knowledge of *the* state of affairs that is the state of *all* affairs, including itself. So, once again, the *Why* question appears to float in the air in a way that belies that the ground of things must ultimately either be groundless or self-grounding. Ironically enough, if this is the case, the only two possible answers to the *Why* question seem to be, in the first case, "For no reason at all!" and in the second case, the one given universally by parents to children who ask "Why?" one time too many times, is, of course, simply, "Because!"

But is the question of Being so hopelessly intractable? Oddly enough, modern mainstream philosophy recognizes the circularity of the question of Being but in an

utterly dismissive way, first, by acknowledging that knowledge of Being is both philosophically inaccessible and presupposed by all else and, then, by denying that this is a major difficulty or that its implications must be taken into account in its other investigations. This position may be fine for scientists who endeavor to account for beings, but, from a philosophical standpoint, it is patently unacceptable and its debunking occupies a substantial portion the excellent life work of Heidegger. Indeed, one of Heidegger's major themes is that philosophy unwittingly lost track of the question of *Being* as long ago as Plato and, instead, over the ensuing millennia, increasingly shifted its focus from the investigation of Being to the investigation of *beings* as such. In so doing, Heidegger argues, philosophy supplanted itself with empirical science and man increasingly came to define himself not in terms of his potentiality for Being but instead in terms of his own technology with the horrifying result that man's *tools* became his *ends* and man's historical Being was thereby obliterated. Heidegger asserts, quite rightly, that the failure of modern philosophy, in the first instance, and modern Western culture, consequentially, to take Being into account has led both philosophy and modern society to its current nihilistic mooring. Of course, Heidegger's indictment of mainstream philosophy would have limited value were it not accompanied by a viable alternative, which in the case of the apparently fundamental circularity of the *Why* question, requires a means of access to Being itself, which Heidegger provides by pointing out that *man himself is the one being whose Being is not presupposed by man but instead is disclosed to him in his asking of the* Why *question.* So, Heidegger tells us, the answer to the *Why* question must be had, if it can be had at all, by commencing with the interrogation of man as to his own Being.

Heidegger's superb methodological observation promises the possibility of yielding a presuppositionless philosophy, a goal which had been abandoned in the modern philosophical era until Edmund Husserl, Heidegger's mentor and the inventor of the philosophy of *phenomenology*, took it up at the beginning of the twentieth century. Husserl attempts to avoid all philosophical presuppositions by considering things simply in the way that they appear to consciousness, which is an approach that Husserl adopts from Franz Brentano, Husserl's mentor. Although Brentano describes his own work as the science of psychology, it is highly epistemological in its exposition and, from a historical perspective, Husserl's development of Brentano's methodology into a fully worked-out philosophical system represents an unsurprising step given Husserl's gifted mind and interest in philosophical investigations. But, as Heidegger quickly realized, taking things in their "giveness" (as the phenomenologists aptly characterize their methodology), although methodologically valuable, does not avoid the presupposition of the Being of the things so given, which remains uninvestigated by the phenomenologists. To achieve a presuppositionless philosophy, Heidegger demotes phenomenology from substantive philosophy to mere methodology and adopts it as such for his ontological investigations, including, especially, his interrogation of man as to his own Being. Heidegger calls man "*Dasein*" (literally, "Being-there" or "Being-open") because Heidegger understands him to be the ontological point at which the world discloses itself in its Being. It is difficult to imagine that anyone could ever characterize man more succinctly: for Heidegger, man is *the being for whom his own Being is an issue*. Given Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein*,

it is easy to see why he would lament so vigorously the loss of man's historical Being that is implied in the confounding of *Dasein's* means with its ends.

The phenomenological method is distinguished, quite brightly, from the traditional methods of philosophy which consider the objects of philosophical investigation as independent of the mind and the Being of the one who studies them and which, as a result, are heavily imbued with presuppositions about Being, cognition, and underlying reality. Although I am not an acolyte of Heidegger and will offer in these pages a profoundly different understanding of the nature of things, Heidegger's claim, that cognition is a unified experience to which man brings his own Being in his grasping of what is disclosed to him and that science, which attempts to remove the cognizing "I" in order to understand entities objectively, *presupposes without understanding* the very Being of the entities it treats, seems unassailable. We can also agree with Heidegger that the result is that the scientific pseudo-philosophy that constitutes the contemporary mainstream, together with its analytical handmaiden, is not philosophy at all; that it fails to address, because it does not possess the scope or tools to do so, the most fundamental and important philosophical questions, and that in so doing *Dasein*, as the scientist-philosopher, completely loses sight of *itself*, the being to whom the world is disclosed.

Even so, the conclusion that a scientific approach to philosophical inquiry is by its very nature doomed to failure seems itself to presuppose that the Being of beings cannot be found by examining beings. This is a position with which we are in strong disagreement. Although our discussion has begun from a more or less phenomenological perspective with our depiction of man, the philosophy in these pages gives philosophical credence to both approaches, *with the caveat that the philosopher must take into account at all times the perspective from which he or she conducts his or her investigations in order to avoid tripping over his or her own presuppositions*, and we will utilize both approaches quite heavily in our analysis. This equanimity toward both phenomenological and traditional philosophical methods invites the question: How is it possible to regard as meritorious two seemingly exclusive approaches, the first of which considers man as a critical aspect of a unified act of cognition and the second of which considers the objects of cognition as if they simply exist on a mind-independent basis? The answer lies in the fact that we reach the same answer to the *Why* question under each methodology, *which is that Being and intelligibility are identical and arise under a necessary (as opposed to contingent) and supreme principle which is the ground of itself and of everything else, including human cognition and moral obligation*. This is possible only because the cognizing "I" who may be interrogated as to his own Being and the beings which may be considered scientifically *all have Being in common*. Just as we can arrive at an understanding of Being by phenomenologically interrogating man as to his Being, we can take an entity scientifically as a mind-independent object and, by a process of reduction, arrive at its fundamental objectivity. In both cases, we will find that Being consists of a *logical unity among manifolds.* In our interrogation of man as to his Being, we find that human rational experience fundamentally is that of a persistent and unified self among the manifold of its life experiences, which occur, in the case of sensible experience, under the ordered rubric of spatio-temporality, and, in the case of internal experience, under the logical rubric of the rules of thought. In the investigations of the objects of experience considered

on a mind-independent basis, we find that their Being also consists of the unity among manifolds, this time as the unity of the ground of sensible predication with its predicates. The difference between the two approaches, however, is the one we have been emphasizing along with Heidegger, namely, that in the interrogation of man as to his Being we presuppose nothing whereas in the investigation of beings as such, we presume their mind-independent Being in the first instance. But, the identity between Being and intelligibility which arises as a result of the orderliness of Being inherent in the unity among manifold structure, in the end renders the starting point moot as a practical matter. In other words, when man brings his own Being to the world in the act of cognition of the Being of what is presented to him, he does not overwrite it.

The idea that Being and intelligibility are identical is, of course, not at all new, but it is not often recognized as such and certainly not in the radical way presented in this book. The identity between Being and intelligibility can be seen in God's self-characterization as the "I AM" in the book of Exodus, in Parmenides' statement that "thinking and Being are the same," in Heraclitus's *logos*, in Plato's *Ιδέα του Αγαθού* (Idea of the Good), in Descartes's *Ens Perfectissimum* (Most Perfect Being), and in Leibniz's Necessary Being, to name only a few. What *is* novel in the philosophy presented in these pages, however, is the *metaphysical* status we accord the identity relation. It will be argued here that *for a being to exist* it must be thinkable and that all thinkable entities share in common the just-described, irreducible unity among manifolds, which is inherently (indeed, definitionally) logical—in other words, that all beings are in their Being *logically grounded predication*, which we will assert consists of, at the most fundamental level, an identity (ground) of relations (predicates) of sequence, magnitude, proportionality, and other logical relations (e.g., negation, conjunction, disjunction, dependence), which we refer to herein as a "logical object." To emphasize the point, the central argument presented in these pages is not merely the epistemological one, namely, that we *understand* the world as unity among manifolds, but the *metaphysical* one, that world *exists as such and cannot exist otherwise*. We will show that logical objects ground: objective knowledge; the rules of thought, the deduction of natural numbers and the countability of the infinite; the structure of space, time, and causality; Being, including the Being of human beings; the connectedness of the phenomenological truth of disclosure and scientific propositional truth; and, finally, morality. Moreover, we will show that, as the structure of reality, logical objects imply the necessity of the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility, which, following Heraclitus, we will sometimes also refer to herein as the *Logos*. To state the case most fundamentally, logic is not a set of rules that apply to objects but an articulation of the essential relation of grounded predication that constitutes objects and their relations, which is to say, *logic is an articulation of Being*.

Before proceeding, we should address ourselves to one last question: If it is possible to arrive at the Supreme Principle through either of the avenues of phenomenology or scientific philosophy, why have both approaches failed until now to do so? The answer is that the investigations which have been conducted to date under both methodologies fail to recognize the most important consequence of the identity between Being and intelligibility, namely, the *fundamental logicality* of all that there is. By disregarding Being and starting with empirical objects, scientific philosophy attempts to infer rationality from

reality and in so doing demotes reason to an empirically reducible phenomenon. Thus, under modern materialism, intelligibility is a consequence of reality, not its essence. Even Kant, who seeks to reconcile rationalism and empiricism by arguing that sensible experience occurs under certain *a priori* categories of understanding, characterizes general logic as being derivative from such experience and therefore denies it any scope beyond such experience, which in turn is the basis for his rejection of the traditional arguments for the existence of God. Similarly, in the hands of Heidegger, the ontologist *par excellence*, Being is taken as the originary concept that is not itself a being and is accordingly placed above logic; in doing so, Heidegger makes allowance for the possibility of absolute nothingness and is forced to conclude that the very Being which grounds all beings is itself ungrounded. It is only when Being and intelligibility are seen to be the same thing that the fundamental logicality of all that there is and the self-grounding logical necessity of Being itself is revealed as the Supreme Principle. Therefore, while we agree with Heidegger's criticism of scientific philosophy, we must also level a similar charge at him as well: not only has modern mainstream philosophy lost sight of Being and of man in his Being, but modern philosophy, Heidegger included, has also lost sight of God, the *Logos*, the Being who is the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility and the ground of all that there is.

TRANSCENDENT REALITY

There are certain aspects of human experience that do not appear to be part of or explicable in terms of sensible experience, considered from a reductionist perspective. These include: self-consciousness; objective, necessary, and universal knowledge; moral obligation; and moral freedom. Of them, only the first is manifestly particular to, and dependent upon, the individual with whom it is associated and only the last may be unequivocally said to derive from another, namely, moral obligation. Because they are independent of the empirical world, these aspects of human experience must be understood to have their grounds on a transcendent basis. The transcendent aspects of human experience may be identified by their direct accessibility to intuition or by prescinding from the totality of human experience all that is empirically known or explicable.

Transcendent knowledge is wholly *a priori* and yet has objective content, takes subject-predicate form, and is governed by certain rules of thought, which we understand as general logic. The rules of *a priori* thought are part of a single, unified intellectual experience, which includes cognition of empirical reality, and are directly associated with the way in which human beings understand the empirical (i.e., sensible) world in spatio-temporal terms through logical categories of understanding. It follows that the objects of empirical cognition, to be intelligible, must be orderly in a way that is susceptible of application by reason of its logically derived categories of understanding. If sensible objects were not susceptible to such application, then either cognition would be impossible altogether or it would require reason to create its own empirical objects, which is a special power not available to man.

The presuppositions of the possibility of objective knowledge, which govern its accessibility to rational minds include, on the side of reason, the form and rules of thought

and its moral content, and the logical forms of empirical cognition (i.e., space, time, and causality) and, on the side of objective reality, objective empirical order. These are connected by reason in the process of empirical cognition under the categories of understanding, which represent the application of ontologically prior, general logic to spatio-temporal phenomena. The presuppositions of the possibility of knowledge provide an intuitively elegant order to the universe, which is utterly logical in nature.

The categories of understanding that will be postulated in these pages are structurally similar to those of Kant, which he derived from the work of Aristotle, insofar as all such categories are underpinned by logical judgments, but unlike the Kantian categories, the categories presented here include spatial, temporal, and mathematical classifications omitted by Kant on the ground that they provide the form of cognition and not the categories under which empirical objects are determined. The main reason for this difference is that, under the philosophy presented in these pages, which is called "transcendent realism," cognition has, depending upon its object, either internal or external reference, and although space and time are indeed the form of cognition of external and sensible objects, space and time are themselves determined by ontologically prior general logic, which in the case of space and time are mathematical, as the logically necessary means by which external objects (i.e., those of empirical cognition) may be recognized. Transcendent realism is also dramatically different from Kant's transcendental idealism because it is asserted here: that human reason has access to transcendent reality by *direct intuition*[1] of self, general logic, and moral obligation and freedom; that we have knowledge of the independent existence of objects of cognition (i.e., *things-in-themselves*) even if our knowledge of their attributes is limited to that which may be understood by application of the categories of understanding; and, most importantly, that general logic is ontologically prior to the categories and applies to all reality and not a mere abstraction from them, the applicability of which is limited to the empirical world.

The source of the moral obligation that is a component of transcendent reality is not the theoretical reason required as a precondition of its intelligibility. Theoretical reason can inform intelligent beings as to the logical course of action in a particular set of circumstances, but it can never *obligate* them to adopt such a course. Moral obligation is of a different source and character altogether. Moral obligation can only be understood as the intentionality of a transcendent will, called in these pages *Agape,* that exists independently of the morally conscious beings having access to it and which is ontologically prior to such beings. Such a transcendent will must be *good-in-itself* by definition and must intend itself as its own object or end. When morally conscious entities harmonize their will with *Agape* they instantiate it (to the extent of their ability) and, in doing so, act morally.

To the extent that God is knowable for man, he is most readily recognizable as the source of *Agape*, either in essential being or as its possessor (as a faculty). The term

1. "Direct intuition" is sometimes used to mean only that which is given to reason as immediately true, without further analysis or reference to sensible experience. In this book, by "direct intuition" we mean all that is objectively given to reason without reference to sensible experience, including that which is immediately known (e.g., the rules of thought), directly perceived as *objectively* existing (e.g., the soul as substance), and analytically known (e.g., logically derived from that which is immediately known or directly perceived).

Agape is thus used here to connote the divine good will that is the ground of Being and intelligibility. The Greek term "*Agape*" is chosen here over the equivalent notion of *unqualified good will*, which is the English translation that most closely corresponds to the manner in which it will be used in these pages, to underscore the important connection between the God of *Agape* as herein described and the God of Judeo-Christian conception as described in both the Old and New Testaments, which use the term *agape* in the Greek versions. That connection notwithstanding, this book is a work of metaphysics, not apologetics or theology. Although the God of *Agape* presented here is fully compatible with the God of orthodox Judaism and Christianity, to the extent God is presented to us by reason and not divine revelation, we know far less of him as philosophers than we do as believers and it is that narrower, philosophical understanding that is the subject matter of this book.

Agape, as used in these pages, connotes will, with all the mystical power given it by the German idealists, not emotive love, which is the common translation that appears in most English biblical translations. It is divinely intentional and creative, it provides the presuppositions by which human reason has access to it and to all reality, and it gives meaning to the human experience. However, it is not to be understood to be constitutive of reality in a pantheistic, immanent, or absolute way (as the German idealists would have it) but instead to operate separately from and above both the empirical and the supersensible worlds.

To be clear, *Agape* and the *Logos* are two ways of understanding a single Supreme Being; the self-intentionality of *Agape* and the self-grounding of the *Logos* are one and the same thing. Nevertheless, for emphasis, the tendency in the exposition presented in this book will be to speak of *Agape* when emphasizing the nature of God as divine good will, and to speak of the *Logos* when emphasizing God as the provenance of the identity of Being and intelligibility that provides and defines the orderliness of the universe. Moreover, because of the self-grounding nature of God as so conceived, it is sometimes necessary to emphasize God as the *source* of good will and moral obligation or the *Logos* as its own logical ground. So, it will be acceptable for us to speak of man instantiating the will of God through acts of good will or to say that logic *follows* the *Logos*. Similarly, when we speak of the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility we have in mind both a transcendently real being and the ultimate ground of existence and reason. All of this is not to deny that God must be his own end, which is precisely the point to be understood. This is not an instance of circularity; rather, it reflects the conclusion that Being, intelligibility, and the divine good will constitute a necessary and ontologically supreme unity; conceptually, they come together in a Being that perfectly *is*.

One of the purposes of this book is to provide philosophical grounds for the proposition that there is a transcendent reality which comprises, at the very least, *Agape* and the *Logos* and the souls of morally conscious beings who have access to it. The term "soul" is used in these pages to refer to a persistent, *substantive* self that is not merely self-conscious but is, in addition, *morally* self-conscious. As used in these pages, a "self" is something less, namely, a unified (ground) manifold of conscious experiences the substance of which is the subject of much philosophical debate. David Hume, for example, asserts that the self is illusory, while Kant asserts that the self is a mere unity of

apperception. Under transcendent realism, the self is asserted in fact to be a soul and the human being is said to be ensouled precisely *because it is a substantive entity that is the dative of Agape's disclosure and therefore obligated to comport itself in the world in a moral manner.* Moreover, under transcendent realism, transcendent reality is precisely that which is given to ensouled reason directly (i.e., by internal reference) and excludes all that is given to reason through the senses. That is not to say that there exist two different worlds; instead, it means only that the empirical world of extension does not constitute the entirety of reality.

The grounds of knowledge of God presented in this book include direct experience of moral obligation, an ontological proof from the logical impossibility of nothingness, and traditional cosmological and teleological proofs which are underpinned by the latter. Although none of these arguments are novel in form, to my knowledge, both the moral argument and the ontological argument presented here are new in substance and the latter provides what Kant and subsequent empiricists assert is missing from the cosmological and teleological proofs. All of them depend upon the identity of Being and intelligibility, the access to understanding of which depends upon the man's own, direct intuition of his own Being.

The premise of the ontological proof is not to be confused with the principle *ex nihilo nihil fit* (out of nothing, nothing comes) of Parmenides, which asserts that the existence of the world must be eternal and continuous, because the premise of the ontological proof makes a different claim which is that the existence of *something* is logically necessary and that that something must not only include the rules of its own conception, which means that it must be necessarily intelligible, but, in order to necessarily exist, it must also be self-instantiating. The ontological proof offered here differs from the one offered by St. Anselm and its subsequent variations in that it is not an argument from perfection. Although any conception of God must include his perfection by definition, I do not believe that there is warrant to infer the existence of God as the most perfect being from the conceivability of perfection as such. Since Kant, the usual formulation of the objection to the argument from perfection is that existence is not a predicate and, therefore, not a perfection, but I think there may be some merit to the counterargument that existence is analytical (i.e., the predicate is included in the concept of the subject) to a necessary transcendent being, so the question, if it were not circular, would become whether necessity (as opposed to existence) is a perfection. However, I believe that circularity is embedded in this whole form of ontological enterprise and that it arises because, if God is, as he must be, the sole reference by which perfection may be determined, then any predicate that reflects perfection must be by reference to God in the first place. So, even if existence is a predicate, it can only be shown to be a perfection if it is possessed by God and the premise that existence is a perfection assumes *sub silentio* the existence of the God it purports to prove.

The question of the existence of God is not one to be considered casually. If the universe is merely a causally determined, infinite contingency (which I believe is logically impossible), as many atheists contend, then man is different from other animals only in the scope and power of his intellect and there can be no moral obligation or responsibility. This is a conclusion that most material reductionists find unpalatable but their efforts

to escape it are demonstrably futile. If God is an indifferent creator, the conclusions are the same. But if God is *Agape* (or anything like the God of Moses, Abraham, Elijah, and Jesus), then man engages with God through moral will and is both morally responsible and free to be so and how man exercises that freedom may determine his fate for all eternity.

THE POSSIBILITY OF METAPHYSICS

The question of the existence of God is a metaphysical one; indeed, it is the ultimate metaphysical one. Unlike epistemology, which asks what we know and how we know it, metaphysics seeks to go behind epistemological knowledge to describe the ultimate nature of things. That there is an ultimate nature of things seems undeniable; whether it exists in reality in form and substance identical to human cognition of it is a different question; whether the human intellect can have access to reality beyond that which is presented to it by the senses is yet another. Current mainstream philosophy, in the form of material reductionism, answers only the first two such questions affirmatively. But the position of the mainstream today is remarkably unexplanatory and it comes at the cost of abandoning philosophy as a meaningful discipline altogether. If reason demands, as it does, answers to metaphysical questions, then any philosophy which asserts that such answers are beyond the reach of reason must also provide rational grounds for that unhappy circumstance.

Unlike the physical sciences, where the current thinking on a particular topic generally represents the complete body of usable knowledge, Western philosophy comprises a dialectic that has been ongoing for at least several millennia. Modified versions of arguments that were originally advanced by the Ancient Greeks and other classic thinkers and which were thought to have been definitively disposed of have risen again and again to command the stage, oftentimes after many centuries in hiatus. It is therefore not sufficient for a philosopher to study the current mainstream; he or she must also know fully how it came to be such or risk having no understanding of it at all. A physical scientist can be completely competent without knowing the history of science, but a philosopher, to be comparably competent, must be a student of the history of philosophy and, indeed, the distinction between philosophy and its history is largely illusory. In the instant case, it is important to understand, specifically, how mainstream philosophy came to deny both the possibility of metaphysics and the significance of its own epistemological investigations beyond supporting the empirical knowledge of the physical sciences, in order to determine whether those conclusions are well-supported and, if not, whether metaphysics remains to be reclaimed as the ultimate philosophical prize.

As Kant observed, it is possible to understand the history of modern philosophy specifically as a dialectic between rationalism and empiricism. In simple terms, rationalists hold that knowledge depends upon innate reason for its warrant and empiricists hold that all knowledge, including reason itself, comes through the senses. The classic modern philosophical debate began with the philosophy of René Descartes, the first of the three great continental rationalists, who, in 1647, posited *a priori* self-consciousness as the basis of all knowledge, and ended nearly a century later with Hume, who as the

last of the three great British empiricists posited a radical skepticism about not just the self but any causal connection between empirical events. In between Descartes and Hume were: Baruch Spinoza, whose rationalism led him to posit a pantheistic God with man being a mere mode of divine substance; John Locke, who as the father of modern empiricism (a title sometimes given to Francis Bacon instead) posited the mind as a *tabula rasa* (blank slate) and defined knowledge as the mind conforming to reality; Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, whose rationalism led him to posit a universe comprising completely closed monads (including as such each human soul) existing in a divinely coordinated harmony; and George Berkeley, whose empiricism led him to posit an ideal reality dependent upon its being perceived for its existence.

That each of these philosophers offers the world much brilliance cannot be denied, but neither can be the utter confusion that their divergent philosophies represent. Kant despaired of the state of the philosophy of his time, especially because metaphysics seemed to be developing in a progressively more chaotic manner while the physical sciences were making great advances. Kant's empiricism is such that he admits no possibility of metaphysics, but he resolves to rescue epistemology from the confusing array of systems of rationalists and empiricists by critiquing reason itself. Kant locates the source of the confusion in what he asserts is the misapplication of principles of empirical knowledge to non-empirical matters as to which they have no validity. Although a detailed argument will be presented in these pages to the effect that Kant errs in limiting reason to a transcendental empirical abstraction, he is commendably thorough in presenting a justification for his empirical premise, an explanation of the phenomenon of self-consciousness (as the unity of apperception), a theory of moral obligation, and the origin of what he regards as the transcendental "Ideas" of soul and God. One can reject (as will be done in these pages) Kant's transcendental idealism, but one cannot deny the great merit of his endeavors and of his willingness to confront all of the complicated issues that are associated with a philosophical system.

Kant was a traditional empiricist insofar as he believed that all knowledge originates in sensory experience; however, Kant also believed that in the process of the cognition of empirical objects reason contributes certain *a priori* concepts under which such cognition must take place. *Importantly, for Kant, these concepts are structural in nature and do not rise to the level of directly intuited, innate ideas.* For Kant, all empirical knowledge is therefore of reality as understood under the structure of human rational cognition, which Kant arranges under a table of categories, and not necessarily as it might independently be; indeed, that reality, called "*noumenal*" by Kant, cannot even be conceived of except as the limit of human empirical cognition because any attempt at a metaphysical understanding of *noumenal* reality can only be made by means of application of the categories of empirical understanding to a reality as to which they do not apply. According to Kant, general logic is nothing more than abstraction of all empirical content from categories of empirical cognition and therefore general logic has no applicability except in relation to such categories and to the objects of thought considered as abstract concepts. The problem of metaphysics arises, concludes Kant, because the intellect insists on answers to metaphysical questions even though it does not have the intellectual tools to provide them.

Although the various versions of empirical philosophies that developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in England and the United States, including, especially, logical positivism and material reductionism, draw upon Kant where convenient to refute rationalist arguments and other competing claims, current-era empiricists regard Kant with great suspicion. The reasons are of more than historical interest. First, the totality of Kant's philosophy retains much that is traditionally regarded as metaphysics because, although he denies that we can have knowledge of its basic problems, including God, eternality of the soul, and freedom, Kant argues that reason requires their acceptance as a matter of *compelled faith*. Apparently, in drawing a line between knowledge and compelled faith, Kant used too fine a pen for subsequent empiricists, so those philosophers have tended to cherry pick from Kant with limited or no justification of the grounds of their selectivity. In this regard, Bertrand Russell, who happily accepts Kant's refutation of the scholastic arguments for the existence of God but is otherwise generally dismissive of Kant's transcendental philosophy upon which Kant's refutation is based, is a glaring example.

Second, certain difficulties with Kant's philosophy that relate to his unwillingness to acknowledge *noumenal* reality except as representing the limits of empirical cognition and to acknowledge the self as anything more than a formal condition of thought, left the door open for the German idealists to seize upon Kant's transcendental philosophy to formulate their own unabashedly radical idealistic system, which is, of course, anathema to empiricists. Although Kant offers a theory of how objective and universal logic derives from the process of abstracting all empirical content from empirical cognition, he is precluded by the limitations of his own philosophy from offering an explanation of how it is possible for there to be a reality that is organized in a manner such that the categories of human understanding of it can logically be applied to that reality. If reality does not exist *noumenally* or is not compatibly organized, then human reason must be regarded as creative in the sense that we normally attribute to the divine and a solipsistic conclusion is inevitable. Neither does Kant connect an organized objective reality with human consciousness considered as an aspect of empirical man such that we can understand how the faculty of reason *evolves* from an organized material world; instead, Kant accepts conscious cognition as an empirical fact. Worse still, Kant's theory of self-consciousness is impermissibly circular because the self, considered as the *unity of apperception*, is determined by reference to the objects it knows, which knowledge requires its presence in the first place. Kant acknowledges this circularity but somehow finds it both necessary and permissible because in his conception the self is only knowable as the form of representation of thought and not the representation of a thought about the self as an object. The German idealists responded vigorously to these difficulties by transferring human consciousness to the universe in a constitutional way and in its ultimate expression by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, characterized the universe as "thought thinking itself."

Finally, if one accepts Kant's system as representing the pinnacle of empiricism, then its failure is suggestive of the inherent deficiency of that philosophical line and it is quite natural and predictable for those subsequent empiricists who are unwilling to abandon empiricism to distance themselves as much as possible from Kant's version.

Instead of attempting to address the difficulties of Kant's empiricism (perhaps because doing so would necessarily expose the fruitlessness of the empiricist line), the modern British and American empiricists have gone in a different direction altogether, sometimes lumping Kant together with the German idealists, and pursuing a wholly reductionist approach with much more limited epistemological ambitions. In its current reductionist form, empiricism adheres to a strict doctrine that states that all knowledge comes from the senses, that reality is precisely as it appears to the human intellect to be, and that there is no knowledge that cannot be scientifically demonstrated or that is not analytically determined by examination of the relationship between the objects of such scientific knowledge. The main difficulty with reductionism is that it fails to describe great portions of human experience, including the evolution of the world, human consciousness, universal and objective knowledge, moral experience, and freedom (which it must reject). Reductionism does not deny its limitations; instead, it asserts that its limitations are *human* limitations and that, to the extent, a phenomenon is not reducible, reductionism is not required to provide an explanation. The following paradigmatic excerpt from the famous debate on the existence of God between Frederick Copleston, SJ, and Bertrand Russell on the Third Program of the British Broadcasting Corp., 1948, demonstrates, via the words of Russell, the predominant view of analytical philosophers on metaphysics:

> RUSSELL: But when is an explanation adequate? Suppose I am about to make a flame with a match. You may say that the adequate explanation of that is that I rub it on the box.
>
> COPLESTON: Well, for practical purposes—but theoretically, that is only a partial explanation. An adequate explanation must ultimately be a total explanation to which nothing further can be added.
>
> RUSSELL: Then I can only say that you're looking for something which can't be got, and which one ought not to expect to get.[2]

In taking this line, modern reductionism has no recourse for the explanation of the things it considers explicable but to appeal to science for answers and in the process of doing so, it has, together with the scientists, declared metaphysics to be impossible and philosophy to be dead.

It is important to remember that although skepticism and subjectivism have from time to time held sway, for most of the history of philosophy man's access to objective and universal truth has not been subject to serious doubt. The skeptical views are unstable because the demonstration of skepticism cannot be made on skeptical grounds and, similarly, the subjectivist views ultimately can be supported only by resorting to objective reason and objective reason can only rest in its inquiry upon direct intuition, which must be regarded as fundamental to sentient beings existing in an intelligible universe. Kant's attempt to abstract the rules of thought from the categories of empirical cognition cannot explain how those categories arise or how man acquires the ability to abstract general logic from them or why the objects of such cognition are intelligible in

2. Copleston and Russell, "Debate on the Existence of God."

the first instance. In asserting that the categories themselves are transcendental, Kant walks up to the cognitive divide between sensible and supersensible reality, but because he is unwilling to cross it, he is left with a circularity that corresponds to his circular thinking on the self-concept. The materialist response is to argue that reason is subjective and dependent upon man considered as animal, individual, or group.

There is another, far better alternative, one which answers reason's call to metaphysics by postulation of the *Logos* and by considering intelligibility (not universal consciousness) to be a fundamental ordering characteristic of the universe including the transcendent and the empirical world. Such a view requires direct intuition of the soul and the placement of general logic above the categories of empirical cognition so that the latter might be conceived of as the implementation of the former in the determination of contingent sensible objects. By so doing, an explanation of the possibility of universal, necessary, and objective knowledge of the sensible and supersensible worlds can be provided and the attributes of the objects of theoretical, empirical, and moral knowledge, which are necessary for such objects to be intelligible, can be worked out. Postulation of the *Logos* also renders possible the ultimate ontological task of identifying the relationship between the directly intuited objects of transcendent reality, namely, the soul and God, who is known to reason by the direct perception of moral obligation and analytically, by virtue of the ontological proof of his existence. Indeed, if metaphysics has for a time been dead the time for its resurrection is at hand.

Of course, it is one thing to say that the rules of logic are known with certainty and quite another to say that such knowledge comes from direct intuition and, indeed as has just been mentioned, Kant argues otherwise. But by its nature, logic is abstract, without content or reference to the empirical world, and self-justifying; therefore, the burden of the argument must lie with those who would assert, nevertheless, that the source of the rules of logic is somehow given in empirical reality. Moreover, not only must the empirical case be made in the face of all appearances to the contrary, but it must be built from the ground up and include not just the logic of cognition, but the power to abstract from such logic, including the power to critique itself. Kant's transcendental idealism represents a mighty attempt to do just this; however, that philosophy cannot overcome its own circularities and neither Kant nor any empiricist since has succeeded in overcoming the presumption of the direct intuition of the rules of thought and, indeed, the project, like most other philosophically important ones, has been ceded by the material reductionists to the scientific community.

It is similarly the case with the soul and moral obligation. The soul is disclosed to itself from within itself as a persistent, morally obligated, and substantive unity among a manifold of life experiences. The substance of the soul is given to itself both as the internal perception of a unique "me-ness"and as the perspective from which objectivity is obtained. Because the self is the locus of personal experience there can be no experience of the self that is not by the self and, indeed, in my view, that is what self-consciousness is. Self-consciousness must be more than the unity of apperception or any other formality because it includes not just a bundle of perceptions but also the perception of perceiving. That the self, in turning its attention inward in search of itself, finds nothing but the search does not mean there is no self; to the contrary, because an object cannot

be both the subject and predicate of a non-trivial thought, if an internal search for self were to yield anything but internally intuited predicates (such as moral responsibility or freedom), our concept of self would logically have to be held to be in error. Being is given to itself as grounded experience and never as the experience of mere ground. Moral experience implies a soul as its own ground. Although moral obligation governs empirical (as well as spiritual) relations, it is itself given to reason internally both in the direct intuition of being an object of *Agape* and in the analytical intuition of the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility and is externally reflected in the empirical fact of morality.

AGENDA-BASED PHILOSOPHY

Since the Renaissance, metaphysics has been a central part of the politically charged battle between church and state. During the medieval era, metaphysics, along with mathematics and the physical sciences, was conducted under the heavy-handed scrutiny of Rome and was compelled, sometimes under penalty of torture and death, to support church doctrine. Perhaps the most significant development of the period was the introduction of Aristotle into Western philosophy and the formulation by St. Anselm and St. Thomas Aquinas of important Aristotelean arguments for the existence of God. But from the Enlightenment onward the pendulum has swung increasingly away from the church, and philosophy in general has become ever more secular in its orientation and ever more closely aligned with the physical sciences in its doctrines. The Reformation challenged the authority of the church and the French Revolution sought to subordinate it to the state. The tendency toward secularism gained impetus from the movement of philosophy away from the private studios of philosophers who labored on their own into the halls of the great universities, which in the century just concluded have become increasingly dependent upon relations with the nation-states in which they are located for grants and other financial support. Since Kant offered his refutation of the scholastic arguments for the existence of God, modern mainstream philosophy has done its best to treat such arguments as anachronisms. Modern mainstream philosophy, which is the grandchild of classic British empiricism, does not like the idea of God any more than does the modern nation-state. God is seen as the source of natural human rights, which stand in opposition to the power of government and government-controlled science and, indeed, it is the formal recognition of God's endowment to humanity that is the source of the genius of the founding fathers of the American Revolution. Christianity, in particular, puts the individual above the state and the laws of God above the desires of man. Theism stands in opposition to humanism, which is the populist religion of the day, and to which the modern nation-state can pander in its assertion of authority over the individual.

That mainstream philosophy has come to embrace materialism during a political era of secularism in and of itself is not an indictment of the philosophy because, even so, that philosophy is entitled to consideration on its own merits. But the fact that material reductionism has done so by paying the ultimate price of declaring itself to be irrelevant is nothing less than self-damnation and belies an underlying agenda that is not only inapposite to the advancement of its own discipline but, considered together with the

vitriol of its proponents against those who would argue in opposition to it, tellingly indicates that it is not merely atheistic but rather fully anti-theistic. John Stuart Mill declared that "God is a word to express, not our ideas, but the want of them." Karl Marx called religion "the opiate of the masses." Frederick Nietzsche declared God to be dead and himself to be the Antichrist. Russell published a collection of atheistic essays under the title *Why I Am Not a Christian*. And consider this passage from Thomas Nagel, one of the best of living philosophers, which, tellingly, appears in a chapter entitled "Evolutionary Naturalism and the Fear of Religion," from his very interesting book, *The Last Word*:

> In speaking of the fear of religion, I don't mean to refer to the entirely reasonable hostility toward certain established religions and religious institutions, in virtue of their objectionable moral doctrines, social policies, and political influence. Nor am I referring to the association of many religious beliefs with superstition and the acceptance of evident empirical falsehoods. I am talking about something much deeper—namely, the fear of religion itself. I speak from experience, being strongly subject to this fear myself: *I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that.*[3] (Emphasis added.)

The charge against reductionism of unphilosophical anti-theistic bias is further supported by the *ad hominem* nature of the outcry that is heard when one of the noteworthy among their members separates himself on this issue. Examples include the mainstream criticism of Antony Flew, who in his last years abandoned atheism in favor of a belief in a disinterested, Aristotelian God, and Nagel, the atheist philosopher just quoted above, after he published his anti-reductionist book, *Mind and Cosmos*, in which he asserts that reductionism is insufficiently robust to explain the evolution of the universe, including human rational experience of it.[4] This sort of blatant bias far exceeds the bounds of legitimate intellectual discourse and cries out for reprimand, and, even more so, justifies the strictest sort of scrutiny about the ideas in favor of which it is demonstrated.

Since Kant, the empiricist project has been conducted on a piecemeal basis, without the support of an encompassing system or even a broad-based epistemology. Indeed, in retaining and working out select Kantian themes, for example the need for precision of definition and consistency of syllogistic terms, and rejecting certain others, for example the supplantation of the traditional Aristotelean logic upon which Kant relied with the predicate logic which the logical positivists invented, not only do the post-Kantian empiricists utterly ignore the importance of presenting a complete epistemology in support of their claims but they flaunt their unwillingness to do so, asserting instead that it is a badge of philosophical prowess. Russell, in characterizing the analytic philosophy that he was instrumental in popularizing and which is embraced at present

3. Nagel, *Last Word*, 130. It should be noted that Nagel is not himself a material reductionist but the quoted passage is offered here as an example of the agenda-driven philosophy that typifies the anti-theism that the material reductionists share in common with Nagel.

4. See, e.g., Chorost, "Where Thomas Nagel Went Wrong."

by the overwhelming majority of Anglo-American university philosophy departments, brags about its independence from any such system:

> Modern analytical empiricism . . . differs from that of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume by its incorporation of mathematics and its development of a powerful logical technique. It is thus able, in regard to certain problems, to achieve definite answers, which have the quality of science rather than of philosophy. *It has the advantage, in comparison with the philosophies of the system-builders, of being able to tackle its problems one at a time, instead of having to invent at one stroke a block theory of the whole universe.* Its methods, in this respect, resemble those of science. I have no doubt that, in so far as philosophical knowledge is possible, it is by such methods that it must be sought; I have also no doubt that, by these methods, many ancient problems are completely soluble.[5] (Emphasis added.)

Not too many decades later, A. J. Ayer, one of the founders of positivism, argued that metaphysical statements are meaningless because they are not verifiable and a few decades after that Flew argued that for a claim to be meaningful it must be refutable and that since religious claims may not be refuted they are essentially meaningless, in each case without grounding their claims in an epistemological system. The positions of Ayer and Flew seem to represent a view that not only is truth propositional in nature but so is human experience of the world, neither of which can be maintained on a merely analytic basis and without addressing its presuppositions, including its presuppositions of Being. Moreover, it has been pointed out by many that Ayer's claim itself is not verifiably true and therefore does not pass its own test. As for Flew's assertion about religious claims, it is of course true that one cannot perceive God with one's senses; however, one *can* endeavor to logically infer God's existence from human rational experience and one can also endeavor to refute such inferences and it seems that good philosophy depends, in the case of all arguments for and against the God-proposition, that they be openly grounded upon a sound epistemological foundation.

The anti-theistic agenda of contemporary empiricism notwithstanding, the demand for precision of analytical philosophy will, to the extent possible, be taken to heart in the presentation of transcendent realism in this book, and it is only fair that I confess in advance my own biases in the development of the philosophy presented in these pages. The qualification on precision is required because, in my view, as reason approaches its limits and attempts to peak beyond them in considering God *as an object,* it is inevitable that such precision yield somewhat to metaphor. We have already suggested that God, as *Agape* and as *Logos,* must be self-willing and self-grounding, and in these respects both unique and beyond sensibility in an empirical world that is organized under the principle of causality. God is important to most lay people in their daily lives and many assert a personal relationship with him. Those who have even a rudimentary Western religious education will describe God as having the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. The God of the scholastic proofs is naturally characterized in accordance with the nature of the proofs and many such formulations end with the words "and this Being we call *God*," such that God is seen to be the most perfect possible Being, the creator of the world, the designer of the world, the sufficient reason for all that

5. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy,* 834.

exists, etc. Such formulations can be viewed in several ways. One is merely definitional, which is to say, for example, that God is by definition the entity who created the world, if there is such an entity. Another is a shorthand for the additional metaphysics that would be necessary to connect God, perhaps defined as an ontologically necessary being, with the God of the particular proof. This is one way of understanding Kant's assertion that all proofs other than the ontological proof presuppose that proof for their validity. It is clear that claims about God are attended by a unique difficulty. One need be especially careful not just about the nature of God, considered as the object of the argument, but also about the applicability of the argument to an object of the type God is asserted to be and whether God is even intelligible as an object of thought in the first place.

As noted, the grounds asserted here for the proposition that God, as *Agape* and as *Logos*, exists include both direct intuition of moral obligation and an ontological argument that has the consequence of supporting traditional scholastic arguments for the existence of God. Once the notion of direct intuition is adequately described, the assertion that moral obligation is directly intuited seems straightforward enough. In transcendent realism, the source of moral obligation is *Agape*. In this case, *Agape* can be understood in most important respects like any other will, that is, the determination of a mind that its object be instantiated. Whether there is such a faculty as direct intuition or that moral obligation is recognized by such a faculty are fair grounds for discussion. There does not seem to be an insurmountable conceptual or linguistic problem with the analysis. Moreover, since access to *Agape* is asserted to arise by virtue of the *Logos*, which is the ground for the intelligibility of the world, there is no basis for denying the applicability of the other structural components of reason to the idea.

The ontological proof to be offered in these pages requires some additional anticipation here. As noted, the gist of the argument is that because absolute nothingness is impossible there must be a necessary object that is the ground of Being and intelligibility. But in this case, it must be clear from the outset that the word *object* is used in a uniquely metaphoric sense. In the *Logos* of transcendent realism, we have direct experience of *Agape* but not necessarily of God as the divine Being whose will it is understood to be. In the ontological proof, we are setting God up against absolute nothingness and therefore as the ground of Being and intelligibility. But, because God is asserted uniquely to be its own ground, we have no direct intuition of God as an *ordinary* object and, therefore, we cannot be certain that our categories of theoretical knowledge are directly applicable. This is even clearer in the case of the scholastic arguments. We might, for example, conclude that there must be an uncaused cause, an unmoved mover, a designer of himself and the universe, etc., but because we cannot fully relate them to any experience, external or internal, it is doubtful that they have any significance other than metaphorically. The closest we can come to an understanding of the necessary is in our understanding of the self-grounding of the rules of thought and in their identical Being. That does not mean that the traditional ontological and cosmological characterizations of God have no significance or even less than the intended significance. In my interpretation, they assert the need for something that is their functional equivalent and can only be understood as such. In other words, there appears, beyond the point of our ability to comprehend fully but before our ability to comprehend ends altogether, an ambiguity that nevertheless

may fruitfully be filled metaphorically by accepting, in lieu of the concrete understanding demanded everywhere else, a vaguer notion of a function to be served without requiring knowledge of how it might be accomplished.

Although the God of *Agape* is wholly compatible with the Judeo-Christian deity, the philosophy presented in these pages is not intended as apologetics. Judaism and Christianity are profoundly broader and deeper. They include portrayals of the human fall from grace, direct communication with God, prophesies, miracles, God's presence on earth in the form of Jesus, and his crucifixion, death, and resurrection, the eternality of the soul, and descriptions of heaven and hell. Except for the elucidation of the concept of *Agape*, the possibility of the eternality of the soul, and some brief remarks about Kant's portrayal of life after death, none of these matters will be discussed in these pages. Nevertheless, it is only fair to confess here another possible bias, which despite my best efforts may be presumed to influence my philosophy, namely, my religion, which is Roman Catholicism, which, as G. K. Chesterton once summarized so succinctly, may be taken as simply stated in the Apostle's Creed.[6] My faith includes, on an intellectual basis, the philosophy included here and all of the doctrines that go along with Roman Catholicism, which I accept as a matter of divine revelation. I should probably go the further step of acknowledging that if I were to determine that my faith conflicted with my philosophy, I would almost certainly go to my grave investigating where my reason failed me. Fortunately enough, that is a fate of which I have been spared.

Additionally, as a matter that is in part intellectual and at least equally as much sentimental, I should state that I cannot accept any philosophy that cannot *positively* justify any limits it would impose on the ability of human reason to understand the world of human rational experience. That is why I have such great respect for Kant who aspires mightily to do so, even though I believe the fatal flaw in his transcendental idealism lies in where he places that limit, and very little regard for positivists or reductionists, whose assertions as to such limitations often go without even an attempt at justification, beyond my admiration of the physical sciences with which they have aligned themselves. How can an understanding of human experience, which is rational in character, be beyond the ability of a reason that has the power to ask metaphysical questions? In a related vein, I should confess bias against any understanding of the world that includes as its highest form of intellect a creature such as man, pitifully conceived as a being whose rationality has reached a pinnacle at which he is only sufficiently intelligent to recognize that his life is fleeting and brutish, lived as an automaton with a perverse illusion of ego and freedom, devoid of any meaning yet subject to a moral obligation that he cannot possibly uphold, and without any ability to understand why it should be so. I cannot imagine a creature that is more pathetic and it is not in my nature to be so pessimistic or self-effacing. It is undeniable that there remain many important, unsolved metaphysical puzzles. The solution to them will not come from science because they are not the subject matter of science. Neither will the solution come from philosophers who abandon their posts. What I take from the desolate state of mainstream metaphysics is only that

6. Chesterton, *Othodoxy*, 10–11.

there is much work left for philosophers to do. In this I am not alone and I think that the following words of C. E. M. Joad are especially poignant:

> Unless I thought that philosophy had some contribution to make to the answering of such questions as "What sort of universe is this in which we are living?" and "How ought we to live in it?," I, for one, should have no interest in philosophy. I believe that most philosophers are in similar case. In spite of the scantiness of the light which philosophy has managed to throw upon the constitution of the universe and the status of human existence, in spite of the meagerness of the rules which it has succeeded in drawing up for the right conduct of life, we are, most of us feel convinced, not knocking at a door irrevocably closed, when we look to it to provide understanding and guidance.[7]

7. Joad, *Guide*, 258.

9

Being and Intelligibility

DASEIN[1]

Heidegger's philosophy is heavily dependent upon his own voluminous glossary of terms that are etymologically well-crafted but which render his exposition to be less accessible than may be desired, especially to we Anglophones. In recognition of the burden Heidegger imposes upon us in asking that we acquire a new philosophical lexicon to access his work, Heidegger offers as one of his foundational themes that post-Socratic western philosophy has neglected the fundamental question of Being and has, as a result, become so substantively and definitionally rigidified that it is impossible to offer a concrete exposition of Being without employing new terms which are not imbued with the mistaken nuances that attend modern philosophy. The most obvious example of Heidegger's definitional revolution is "*Dasein*," which is the term that is most central to his philosophy and which represents the human being's peculiar mode of Being and which literally translates from German to "Being-there" or "Being-open."

At the highest level, insofar as Heidegger's philosophy is relevant to the philosophical investigations in these pages, it may be regarded as a life-long "interrogation of Being" (to employ Heidegger's own description) by asking, over the course of several major works, three questions.[2] The first is the one already alluded to, namely, "What is the meaning of Being?" which Heidegger asks in *Being and Time*. The second question is, "Why are there beings at all instead of nothing?" which Heidegger asks in his *Introduc-*

1. In addition to my own study of the major works cited in this section, I have consulted certain secondary sources the authors of which, as noted authorities on Heidegger, have far greater access to the vast body of Heidegger's scholarship (some of which is not translated into English) and doubtlessly a broader and more insightful understanding of Heidegger's meaning. These sources include: Mulhall, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook*; Sheehan, "Dasein"; and Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger."

2. There is at least one other question that would naturally be explored in a complete collection of Heidegger's work that, due to the scope of our inquiry and the interests of not enlarging an already long summary, we will not address in this book. That question is, "How does Being occur essentially?," which Heidegger addresses in *Contributions to Philosophy*, a work that although written in 1936–37, was not translated and published in English until after Heidegger's death but which has been recognized as among his more important works.

tion to Metaphysics. The final question is, "What is the ground (*grund*) of Being?" which is the subject of Heidegger's *The Principle of Reason*.

In recognition of the length of the ensuing review of Heidegger's rich and important investigations, it will be helpful to provide at the outset some detail of our plan. In this and the following two sections, after providing a brief background, we will undertake a more or less sequential analysis of Heidegger's response to the three questions posed above. However, as we will see from our review, notwithstanding the profundity of Heidegger's ontology, there remains in his work and that of his predecessor phenomenalists a gaping hole as regards the fundamental questions of ethics. Although some phenomenalists would argue otherwise, there is nothing compelling in the philosophy of Brentano, Husserl, and Heidegger itself that provides any ethical guidance other than a relativism that is left undiscussed except to the extent one might endeavor to extract it from Heidegger's call to revert to historical *Dasein.* Nevertheless, there are two distinct (although not mutually exclusive) possibilities for an objective ethics that emerge from a view of humanity that is compatible with the phenomenological perspective. One such ethical system is presented in the *Credo* of Jeff Bergner in his *Against Modern Humanism*, which takes the human Being as the open dative of self- and world-disclosure and explores how such a being, who is free to pursue his possibilities for Being *only within the boundaries of his historical, cultural, and personal history and talents, on the one hand, and the world into which he is thrown, on the other,* ought to comport himself or herself in life. Bergner's philosophy, which will be discussed in the fourth section of this chapter, is a highly moral (and admirable) one, which is based neither upon reason as such nor upon obedience to God. The other such ethical system is the one that, beginning with section five of this chapter, will be offered in the remaining pages of this book as part of the metaphysical system that we will complete using Heidegger's phenomenology as a springboard. Although, as a practical matter, our ethics is substantially compatible with Bergner's *Credo,* the philosophy presented here is based upon a fundamental recharacterization of *Dasein* as the being who is, in essence, *Being-towards-God,* and it is upon that understanding that our ethics will be based.

Heidegger's early, pre–*Being and Time* years were spent under the close tutelage of Husserl who, as we have seen, was deeply affected by his own study under Brentano. As a result, all three were profoundly and explicitly influenced by Aristotle. One of Brentano's earliest writings was *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, and the concept of intentionality, upon which his descriptive psychology is founded, harkens back directly to Aristotle. Similarly so with respect to Husserl's phenomenology, which is also fundamentally an exploration of the concept of intentionality, albeit one which expands its scope from the psychology of mental activity to the science of consciousness and employs additional methods of investigation which Husserl invents. Heidegger read and was greatly influenced by Brentano's work on Aristotle's theory of being and, as Husserl's protégé, Heidegger began his career as a phenomenologist. Although Heidegger shared with Brentano and Husserl the goal of a presuppositionless philosophy, Heidegger harbored, from his earliest years, a fundamental disagreement concerning their claims to success on this score. At the root of Heidegger's criticism is that the foundational concept of presentation or giveness, as the case may be, is itself a theoretical construct, the

preconditions of which neither thinker has adequately explored. As a result, Heidegger rejects (to Husserl's great disappointment) phenomenology as a philosophy and, instead, adopts it as a mere method of investigation, and asserts, quite rightly, that the point of origin of philosophical investigation must be the question of the meaning of Being.

Heidegger's critique of phenomenology did not diminish his regard for Aristotle and it would not be an over-simplification to characterize Heidegger's own study of Being as phenomenological in method but neo-Aristotelian in substance. To address the deficiencies of Brentano and Husserl, Heidegger reverts to Aristotle, not for his concept of intentionality which inspired Brentano and Husserl, but for Aristotle's theories of knowledge and the teleology of Being. Heidegger interprets Aristotle's theory of knowledge as positing that every *meaningful* appearance of beings in their multiplicity of modes of Being involves an event in which a human being "takes a being as" something. Heidegger accepts Aristotle's description structurally but asserts that "taking as" is not grounded in multiple modes of presence, but in a temporal unity of intelligibility which Heidegger characterizes as "Being-in-the-World."[3] And this temporal unity grounds *Dasein's* teleology as well insofar as *Dasein* is always in the mode of projecting forward into its potentiality-for-Being. These matters will be explained in detail in the remainder of this section.

At the end of the first part of the previous chapter, we refrained from endeavoring to list all of the Husserlian concepts that would be adopted or expounded upon by Heidegger because they are simply too numerous and, indeed, some current scholars disagree with the mainstream view that Heidegger's ontological philosophy is a rejection of Husserl's phenomenology and instead prefer to characterize Heidegger as advancing the development of Husserl's work. There are many interesting arguments in favor of and against this point of view. Whether this view is correct, as a preliminary matter it will be helpful to note a few points of contrast between the two philosophers. One such difference is that, unlike Husserl whose philosophical investigations are for the most part epistemological and classificatory (in the sense of Kant with whom Husserl acknowledges the fundamental compatibility of his philosophy), Heidegger proposes what he calls a fundamental ontology, which attempts to describe Being in a concrete manner. The second major difference is that Husserl's subject matter is consciousness and its objects, whereas Heidegger's subject matter is *Dasein* and Being generally. A third difference is that, as just noted, Husserl's formal structure of the human side of cognition is built upon intentionality, whereas Heidegger's formal structure of *Dasein* is temporality, which although structurally quite similar to Husserl's conception of temporality, Heidegger asserts *constitutes Dasein*'s *essential concern for its own Being*.

With this background, we turn to Heidegger's first great work, which is *Being and Time*, the avowed goal of which is the presentation of a concrete science of Being. Notwithstanding the fact that Heidegger abandoned the full work (the outline of the abandoned portion of the book was not excised from the introduction to the book) prior to

3. The term "world," which is not generally capitalized in the translations of Heidegger's work or in the related secondary literature, is used by Heidegger to connote the matrix of intelligibility that, as will be explained, is structured by human beings from the things found within the world as ordinarily understood. See 231–233. Hence, I have decided to do the unthinkable and capitalize the term "World" when using it in the Heideggerian sense.

its completion, *Being and Time* has greatly influenced the course of twentieth century philosophy, especially in continental Europe. The work surprises from the very first line, which quotes Plato's *Sophist* and which is translated by Heidegger as follows:

> For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression "being." We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed.

In doing so, Heidegger immediately directs us to the question of the necessity, structure, and priority of the question of Being, with the obvious implication that it remained unanswered in the thousands of years that transpired since it was raised by Plato and, indeed, Heidegger tells us that not only is that the case, but, far worse, we no longer even bother to concern ourselves with it. Heidegger assesses the sanctioning of the neglect of the question in the modern era by dogma that, because Being is the most universal concept, it is empty and impervious to definition and, further, that this circumstance is untroublesome because, to the extent that Being is susceptible of being understood, it is accessible to everyone in their ordinary thinking and language.

Heidegger tells us that although Being is the most universal and that its understanding is therefore included in everything, Being is neither a class nor a genus and was therefore understood by Aristotle as the "transcendental universal constituting a unity of analogy" (which is a view with which we are in agreement) and by Hegel as the "indeterminate immediate." But Heidegger draws a very different conclusion from the special ontological status of Being than does the modern mainstream. Heidegger tells us that, instead of concluding that Being is not a matter of philosophical concern, the only conclusion to be drawn from the supreme universality and indefinability of Being is that *Being is itself not an entity* and Heidegger insists that we must ask *what Being means notwithstanding that it is undefinable*. Heidegger buttresses his position in opposition to the modern mainstream by arguing that the fact that we continually, in our everyday discourse, employ the undefinable term, should only serve to highlight the importance of its investigation.

Heidegger tells us that, as a threshold matter, the question must be appropriately formulated and that the starting point in doing so is the observation that all questioning is a seeking of something that is guided beforehand by what is sought. Heidegger adds to that observation the deceptively simple one, which will run throughout his entire philosophy, that all interrogation of Being is itself conducted by a being and concludes that we must therefore identify the way in which we, as the being conducting the inquiry, understand Being in advance of asking the question of its meaning. Heidegger tells us that Being is *that which determines entities as such*:

> Everything we talk about, everything we have in view, everything towards which we comport ourselves in any way, is Being; what we are is Being, and so is how we are. Being lies in the fact that something is, and in its Being as it is; in [r]eality; in presence-at-hand (i.e., being as it naturally occurs outside of the context of having any meaning for *Dasein*); in subsistence; in validity; in *Dasein*; in the "there is."[4] (Parenthetical added.)

4. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* H6–7. All page references are to the later German editions as indicated in this work.

It should be pointed out immediately, because it runs to the heart of our differences with Heidegger, that one may agree with his characterization of Being as the determining characteristic of beings without acquiescing in the idea that Being is therefore excluded from being an entity itself. Because the elucidation of this point requires that the analysis conducted in the first three sections of this chapter be completed first, it will not be further mentioned until the latter parts of this chapter.

Returning to Heidegger's own analysis that Being is in *Dasein* gives us *ourselves* as a viable (indeed, according to Heidegger, the only viable) point of access to the meaning of Being:

> Looking at something, understanding and conceiving it, choosing, access to it—all these ways of behaving are constitutive of our inquiry and therefore are modes of Being for those particular entities which we, the inquirers, are ourselves. Thus to work out the question of Being adequately, we must make an entity—the inquirer—transparent in his own Being. The very asking of this question is an entity's mode of Being; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about—namely, Being.[5]

Anticipating the complaint that his approach is circular, Heidegger tells us it is not the case because we can determine the nature of entities in their individual Being without having explicit any concept of Being and, therefore, there is no logical circularity in interrogating beings as to their Being. I understand this to mean (validly so) that, because we have an idea, however unphilosophical it may be, of how to employ the concept of Being in our ordinary usage, we can identify what we mean when we say something "is" by asking of that thing what makes it something that *is*. Heidegger tells us that, instead of being circular, the relationship between the inquiry, as a mode of Being (of *Dasein*), and that which is being interrogated is a "relatedness back and forth," and, as a result, *Dasein* is shown to be *the being that inquires into its own Being*.

Heidegger next introduces another foundational concept that adds detail to his theme that the philosophy that followed Aristotle, especially from Descartes onward, which treats itself as though it were an empirical science, is based upon the mistaken objectification of reality inherent in scientific investigations, which can only occur because science leaves unaddressed the ontologically most originary question of Being, which must precede all scientific investigations. Heidegger explains that defining the subject matter of a field of inquiry (such as empirical science) entails, as a threshold matter, interpretation of the subjects with respect to their basic state of Being and observes that the question of Being permeates *every* region of investigation and is the most fundamental one:

> The question of Being aims therefore at ascertaining the *a priori* conditions not only for the possibility of the sciences which examine entities as entities of such and such a type, and, in so doing, already operate with an understanding of Being, but also for the possibility of those ontologies themselves which are prior to the ontical sciences and which provide their foundations. *Basically, all ontology, no matter how rich and firmly compacted a system of categories it has at its disposal, remains blind and perverted from its ownmost aim, if it has not first*

5. Ibid., H7.

> *adequately clarified the meaning of Being, and conceived this clarification as its fundamental task.*[6]

This is a point that is not too far removed from Kant's criticism of the mainstream empirical conception of truth as conformity of reason to its object on the grounds that for such a definition to be meaningful reason must first have grasp of its objects.

Having established the ontological importance of the question of Being, Heidegger turns to the question of its ontical (i.e., empirical) importance and concludes that its priority extends there as well. Heidegger tells us that *Dasein* is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, *Being is an issue for it* and that, inasmuch as Being is an issue for *Dasein*, it is a constitutive state of *Dasein's* Being and, therefore, *Dasein* must be said to have a relationship *towards its* Being, which is itself one of Being. In other words, for Heidegger, *Dasein's* explicit understanding of its Being is an ontic characteristic which, unlike many other such characteristics, renders the issue of its Being ontologically important for *Dasein*.

Heidegger next introduces another foundational concept, which he will describe in detail phenomenologically, namely, that *Dasein* always understands itself *in terms of its existence and the possibilities presented to it thereby*. As a result, *Dasein's* pre-ontological understanding of its Being extends to "something like" a world and to the Being of each being that is presented to *Dasein* in the world. These characteristics render *Dasein* as both the ontologically and ontically prior entity with the import being that fundamental ontology can only be had in the *existential analytic of Dasein*:

> *Dasein* accordingly takes priority over all other entities in several ways. The first priority is an ontical one: *Dasein* is an entity whose Being has the determinate character of existence. The second priority is an ontological one: *Dasein* is in itself "ontological," because existence is thus determinative for it. But with equal primordiality *Dasein* also possesses—as constitutive for its understanding of existence—an understanding of the Being of all entities of a character other than its own. *Dasein* has therefore a third priority as providing the ontico-ontological condition for the possibility of any ontologies. Thus *Dasein* has turned out to be, more than any other entity, the one which must be interrogated ontologically.[7]

It would not be an over-generalization to describe the remainder of *Being and Time* as the working out of what Heidegger has already described as the close connection between the Being of *Dasein* and Being (in general); indeed, as we will see, for Heidegger, although the existence of mind-independent reality is undeniable, the question of Being is one that has no meaning in the absence of *Dasein*.

With this, Heidegger has successfully validated (if not achieved the justification of the necessity of) the investigation of the Being of *Dasein* as the way to understand Being. But Heidegger is immediately confronted with a philosophical difficulty, which is that the ontico-ontological priority of *Dasein* means that although *Dasein* is ontically closest to itself, the ontological priority of *Dasein*, which is based upon its manner of Being, means that manner of Being is concealed *from itself from within itself*. In other words,

6. Ibid., H11.
7. Ibid., H13.

although *Dasein* can capably recognize as an ontical matter that it is concerned with its own Being, the ontology of *Dasein's* manner of Being, which includes self-concern and self-investigation, is not a matter that is subject to empirical observation and it therefore remains hidden within *Dasein*. Therefore, access to the Being of *Dasein* depends upon identifying a method of analysis which enables *Dasein* to *show itself from within itself* and that, in turn, requires examination of *Dasein* in its *everydayness* (i.e., the way in which *Dasein* comports itself in and to the world in its everyday life). From such an examination, which is to be conducted phenomenologically, Heidegger hopes to identify the formal structures of the Being of *Dasein* that are characteristic of it. Heidegger recognizes, however, such structures can provide only a provisional understanding of the Being of *Dasein*; they do not provide the meaning of *Dasein*, which must be elicited from them by a higher level of analysis of them. And even then we will not have completed our inquiry because a third level of investigation will be required by reinterpreting the provisional understanding of *Dasein* in the context of its meaning so elicited. In other words, we will begin with an assessment of how man comports himself generally in the world, which will yield a structural understanding of man, which can finally be examined to determine what the essential elements (i.e., those elements that make man *Dasein*) of that structure are.

We just noted Heidegger's observation that *Dasein* always understands itself in terms of its existence and the possibilities presented to it thereby. By possibilities, Heidegger does not mean the discrete contingencies of everyday life but rather *possible ways of Being towards which Dasein may press forward*. Because of the forward-looking nature of *Dasein's* self-understanding, it should not surprise us that our provisional understanding of *Dasein's* existential structures will yield that temporality is critical to the Being of *Dasein*. So, to complete the analysis of the meaning of the Being of *Dasein*, it will be necessary first to justify the priority of *Dasein's* temporal character and then to reinterpret the structures of *Dasein* provisionally identified in the context of their temporality.

It is interesting to note that, unlike Aristotle's (and Kant's and Husserl's) categorical investigation and Hegel's triadic method of logical investigation, Heidegger's interpretation of the question of Being represents a process of interpretation and reinterpretation until one has arrived at the most fundamental level of understanding. Neither should it surprise us that Heidegger's understanding of temporality, although phenomenological in nature and similar to Husserl's, is uniquely his own and differs importantly from his mentor's in that Heidegger emphasizes the future as the mode of temporality in which *Dasein* discloses its primordial concern for its Being which Heidegger calls "care"[8] and which represents a radically new phenomenological interpretation of *Dasein*. In other words, unlike for Kant and Husserl, where temporality is a phenomenon that is associated with reason, for Heidegger, temporality is *Dasein's* essential mode of Being.

8. It should be acknowledged that the use of the word "care" instead of the more syntactically comfortable word "concern" is deliberate. Both words are terms of art for Heidegger. "Care" is the term that comprises *Dasein's* ontological structure and is used for that purpose in the sense that *Dasein*, as the being for whom its Being is an issue, cares about (i.e., attaches fundamental importance to) itself. "Concern," on the other hand, is used in the sense of matters with which *Dasein* may from time to time be concerned (i.e., paying attention), usually in its everyday activities and comportments.

We turn next to a summary, albeit a lengthy one, of what Heidegger calls appropriately the "existential analytic" (of *Dasein*). This is Heidegger's first level of analysis of the Being of *Dasein*. As the being for whom its own Being is an issue, *Dasein* may be understood to be concerned about its existence existentially. So, although Heidegger's terminology is a bit strange to the uninitiated, it makes sense that Heidegger would assert, on a phenomenological basis, that *Dasein's* basic engagement with the entities of the empirical world is as "equipment," that is, as entities that are more or less relevant to the satisfaction of *Dasein's* existential concerns. And, again, strange as it may appear at first blush, Heidegger's conception is compatible with the common sense notion that from the standpoint of evolutionary success, *Dasein* (in similar fashion to all other sentient organisms) should encounter the empirical world through a lens that highlights what is most relevant to it its survival as a species. In any case, Heidegger tells us that our most primordial encounter with such entities is in manipulating them for the sake of our own purposes and, as a result, calls such entities, when encountered in this way, "ready-to-hand." Entities that are not *ready-to-hand*, that is to say, not experienced as being meaningful to such concerns, are called by Heidegger "present-at-hand" and are sometimes referred to as "Things." *Present-at-hand* entities may broadly be understood as the objective, mind-independent entities understood in the standard empirical manner. Readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand constitute the two categories of encounter with the world and, as a result, comprise the entirety of the world except for *Dasein*, which, as the being who brings the two categories to its cognition, is *in* neither category (but, to be clear, *Dasein* is in the world). It is important to note that, depending upon the context in which it is encountered by *Dasein*, an entity may be both ready-to-hand and present-at-hand and we see immediately the profundity of the importance of *Dasein's* attitude in the manner in which it experiences reality. Consider, as an example, one used by Heidegger, namely, *Dasein's* encounter with a hammer. Our experience with a hammer may be had scientifically or, perhaps more precisely, theoretically (as an engineer might do), in which case, it occurs in the traditional subject-object structure as being present-at-hand and is a mere Thing to be studied. But our experience with a hammer may also be had in the course of fulfilling a task that is existentially meaningful to us (such as roofing a house), in which case it is the act of hammering that overwhelms the distinction between the hammering subject and the hammer with which the subject fastens a nail and, indeed, the experience takes on the character of a structurally unified, absorbed engagement that is not subject-object in nature. When *Dasein* is in a scientific or theoretical mode, it assumes the perspective of an independent investigator, which is a particular mode of its Being, and its task is to categorize, explain, and predict the behavior of present-at-hand entities. When *Dasein* is fully engaged in a world of ready-at-hand entities (we will hereinafter refer to the world considered equipmentally, as the "World"), its experience is quite different and it is on this difference that Heidegger wishes to focus.

For Heidegger, the World is a "totality of involvements" or a "network of intelligibility" comprising equipmental relationships that is experienced by *Dasein* according to its projects and concerns. When *Dasein* uses a hammer in the fulfillment of a task, the hammer loses its character as a World-independent entity (i.e., a present-at-hand object) and instead is understood relationally as part of such a totality (similarly to Hegel's notion that each entity in the universe can only be understood in relation to each other

such entity) and, indeed, Heidegger tells us that there really is no such thing as "an equipment."[9] The relation of *Dasein* (i.e., its *involvements*) as the being who determines its projects and concerns varies according to each aspect of an experience and includes the following relationships or engagements: *with-which; in-which; in-order-to; towards-this;* and, most important of all, *for-the-sake-of-which*. Michael Wheeler offers examples of his involvements in writing an article on Heidegger as follows:

> Thus I am currently working with a computer (a *with-which*), in the practical context of my office (an *in-which*), in order to write this encyclopedia entry (an *in-order-to*), which is aimed towards presenting an introduction to Heidegger's philosophy (a *towards-this*) for the sake of my academic work, that is, for the sake of my being an academic (a *for-the-sake-of-which*).[10]

The last type of involvement, for-the-sake-of-which, is the most important one because it is asserted by Heidegger to lay at the end of all of the totalities of *Dasein's* involvements and it provides the analytical connection between the idea that *Dasein* is constantly choosing between the Being that will characterize its self-understanding and the not-Being that it rejects and, therefore, determines the way in which *Dasein's* World is intelligible to it.

Having so depicted the World, the next and most obvious question is whether and how *Dasein* may be characterized as existing *in* it. Here, Heidegger's analysis follows neatly from his categorial understanding of entities. If *Dasein* is the origin of its unique, equipmental understanding and is engaged with its World as the entity that experiences the World in unity with it, *Dasein* cannot, in its usual, non-scientific mode of Being, be said to be *contained in* the World in the Cartesian sense of space and time. Instead, another mode of description is required to convey that *Dasein* is *in relation to* a World that reflects its projects and concerns and with which it is "familiar" pre-ontologically and with which, in its actual existence, it dwells as an entity that is unified with it. Heidegger describes this relation as "Being-in-the-World."

Heidegger continues to elucidate his concept of what he calls the "worldhood" of the World by contrasting it with Cartesianism. As is to be expected, Heidegger's critique is cast in terms of his own brand of phenomenology. It will be recalled that early on in this book we presented Descartes as unjustifiably bisecting the psychosomatic unity of the human being into soul and body, and in the preceding chapter we presented Husserl's separate criticism of Descartes that, in attempting to doubt everything, Descartes neglected to doubt his own methodology. We now add to these Heidegger's criticism of Descartes that the Cartesian view is fundamentally scientific in nature and as such represents a theoretical view of the world that is at odds with the philosophically more important equipmental World of *Dasein's* rational experience. Heidegger characterizes Descartes as presenting the world, including *Dasein*, as a collection of present-at-hand entities and ascribing *Dasein's* spatial relation with the world as being contained in the Cartesian, extension-based space that came to represent the empirical mainstream view. In contrast, we have the view of Heidegger already presented, namely, that *Dasein* is, at

9. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* H97.

10. See, Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger," §2.2.3.

the most fundamental epistemological level, in unified relation to its objects as Being-in-the-World. For Heidegger, *Dasein dwells* in relation to the World in a spatial manner, but that spatiality is not at all Cartesian, which cannot possibly apply to *Dasein* because it is not a present-at-hand Thing. To the contrary, Heidegger asserts that equipmental space is *functional space defined by Dasein-centered totalities of involvements*.

In the course of Heidegger's criticism of Descartes, Heidegger provides a profoundly important elucidation, which is that in *Dasein's* experience of reality, which is Being-in-the-World, it is in relation to entities *qua* equipment and that to achieve the theoretical Cartesian understanding of reality it is necessary to prescind from the World its *Dasein*-given meaning. In other words, epistemologically the raw material of reality is not laying there, present-at-hand, for constitution by *Dasein* as meaning-imbued and ready-to-hand—instead, the World and its equipment is present to *Dasein* as such *ab initio* and the Cartesian, present-at-hand world of Things is a theoretical reduction in which *Dasein* is contained in the world as the subject of the cognition of the objects (Things) with which it co-exists. In still other words, the Cartesian world of Things presupposes the ready-at-hand World and not the other way around.

After completing his sojourn with Descartes, Heidegger returns to his existential analytic of *Dasein*, this time addressing himself to the question of what he calls the "who" of *Dasein*. Here the analysis is subtle and a bit obscure and it goes in a surprising direction. Heidegger starts with the observation that in every case, *Dasein* is an entity that is "I myself" but he cautions us that this is merely an ontologically constitutive state of Being. Ontically, we distinguish ourselves from all other entities by referring to our own "I" as a present-at-hand subject. Again, we are cautioned not to be misled—additional questioning must be undertaken to determine whether the "I" as so understood "does proper justice to the stock of phenomena belonging to everyday *Dasein*" and we must be careful to avoid the obvious temptation to take the giveness of the "I" as requiring a phenomenological investigation that disregards everything else that is given to the "I" including the world and other "I's." Indeed, such an approach is contrary to the one that is appropriate because it disregards the fundamental unity of *Dasein*'s experience (i.e., its Being-in-the-World). Recognizing this state of affairs demonstrates that the giveness of the "I" is merely a non-committal formal indicator which, upon phenomenological analysis, may indicate something that is, in some particular mode of Being, the opposite of the ordinary understanding, which is to say that in some contexts, such as when the "I" loses (in a manner which will be explained shortly) itself, the persistent "I-hood" of experience may manifest itself in a "not-I." And in fact, this turns out to be precisely the case most of the time.

To get at the proper interpretation of "I-hood" we must begin with Being-in-the-World. It follows from *Dasein's* essential Being-in-the-World and from the fact that much of the equipment found there is for the sake of other beings who share similar concerns and are in other important respects (to be identified) similarly situated (such beings are called by Heidegger, the "Others" or the "they"), that the World discloses another mode of *Dasein's* being as "Being-with." Heidegger tells us:

> By "Others" we do not mean everyone else but me—those over against whom the "I" stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does not

> distinguish oneself—those among whom one is too. . . . By reason of this with-like Being-in-the-[W]orld, the [W]orld is always the one that I share with Others.[11]

Being-with Others is different from Being-with equipment or Things because, unlike equipment and Things, Others, who like the "I," relate to the World through its equipment, are not "in" the world as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand but are also *in relation to* the World. As a result, *Dasein* cannot relate to Others in a concerned mode of Being as it does to the equipment in its World. Heidegger refers to the special Being-with Others and the special interrelations with Others as "*Dasein*-with" and "solicitude" (*fürsorge*), which apparently is only a rough translation of the German and which seems to mean concern for the welfare of others. To arrive at an understanding of the "who" of *Dasein*, it is therefore necessary to conduct a phenomenological examination of the *Dasein*-with in its everydayness to determine what its existential structures are. And in these special relationships, Others are freed from the environmental world by *Dasein* and it becomes evident that *Dasein*-with, as a way of Being, is *essentially for-the-sake-of Others*. The for-the-sake-of-ness of *Dasein*-with manifests itself in selflessness (e.g., charity) and in conformity (i.e., doing what one does) and discloses an ontologically important structure of *Dasein*, namely, that in most circumstances, as Heidegger foreshadowed, the "I-hood" of *Dasein* manifests itself as a "not-I." In a very important passage, Heidegger asserts this and asks the next obvious question:

> One's own *Dasein*, like the *Dasein*-with of Others, is encountered proximally and for the most part in terms of the with-[W]orld with which we are environmentally concerned. When *Dasein* is absorbed in the [W]orld of its concern—that is at the same time in its Being-with Others—it is not itself. *Who* is it then who has taken over Being as everyday Being-with-one-another?[12]

The answer to Heidegger's rhetorical question is interesting and foundational. *Dasein*, in its Being-with Others (*Dasein*-with), comports itself in certain ways which disclose certain of its and the they's existential characteristics, namely, distantiality (awareness of the way one differs from Others), averageness (conformity to social norms), levelling down (noiseless suppression of the exceptional), publicness (that which comprises distantiality, averageness, and levelling down), the disburdening of one's Being (the ceding personal responsibility by appropriating the judgments of the they), and accommodation (the disburdening of *Dasein* in its everydayness by the they). Because *Dasein*, by appropriating the they in its everydayness, acts existentially and is essentially the "they-Self," it is distinguished from the authentic self, which is the self that, as we shall see, takes hold of, as owner, its *Dasein*.

Up to this point Heidegger's elucidation of *Dasein* as Being-in-the-World has focused on *the World* in relation to which *Dasein* dwells, which is to say he has provided an ontological depiction of the World and the modes of Being that characterize *Dasein* in its relationship to the World. But that still leaves the question of what it means for *Dasein* to be *in relation to* the World and it is to this question that Heidegger next turns

11. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* H118.

12. Ibid., H125.

his attention, with the bold promise that analysis of the "Being-in" aspect of the Being of *Dasein*, will "pave the way to grasping the primordial Being of *Dasein* itself. . . . "[13]

Heidegger begins by reminding us (once again) that "Being-in" is an essential kind of Being of *Dasein* and that in conducting our investigation we must take care not to break-up the "Being" and the "in." Heidegger elucidates:

> The entity which is essentially constituted by Being-in-the-[W]orld is itself in every case its "there." According to the familiar signification of the word, the "there" points to a "here" and a "yonder." The "here" of an "I-here" is always understood in relation to a "yonder" ready-to-hand, in the sense of a Being towards this "yonder"—a Being which is de-severent, directional, and concernful. *Dasein's* existential spatiality, which thus determines its "location," is itself grounded in Being-in-the-[W]orld. The "yonder" belongs definitely to something encountered within-the-[W]orld. "Here" and "yonder" are possible only in a "there"—that is to say, only if there is an entity which has made a disclosure of spatiality as the Being of the "there." This entity carries in its ownmost Being the character of not being closed off. In the expression "there" we have in view of this essential disclosedness. By reason of this disclosedness, this entity (*Dasein*), together with the Being-there of the [W]orld, is "there" for itself.[14]

In this passage, it is interesting to note the significance of Heidegger's break from Cartesian spatiality. Heidegger has made clear that to "Be-in" is to "Be-there" at the point where the World is disclosed to *Dasein* as such and that these are essential elements of *Dasein* insofar as *Dasein* is at the epicenter of its own phenomenal experience in which it opens up the World *in its relation to* the World.

Heidegger's exposition of Being-in (the Being of the "there") proceeds in two parts. The first is the exposition of Being-in in terms of the existential constitution of the "there," which will be in terms of "understanding" and "state-of-mind," and the second is in terms of the everyday Being of the "there" which is the "falling" of *Dasein* (as the they-Self). As will be explained, state-of-mind and understanding are characterized equiprimordially by "discourse," which Heidegger defines as *the articulation of intelligibility*. As he frequently does, Heidegger reminds us that the exposition is existential in nature and therefore is not a description of something present-at-hand but of ways for *Dasein* to be in its everydayness.

For Heidegger, the ontological state-of-mind connotes what we ontically understand as our mood or manner of attunement, but unlike the standard psychological depiction, these states-of-mind are not internally generated responses to mind-independent reality but rather manifestations of "how one is" in its "thereness," by which I understand Heidegger to mean that they are ways of Being *in relation to* the World and, as such, are an inseparable part of it. And, indeed, Heidegger tells us that *Dasein is* the "there" of its state-of-mind.

Heidegger characterizes the facticity of our moods as the "that-it-is" and our "thrownness," which is an important Heideggerism that describes the *manner* in which *Dasein* is there in its Being-in-the-World. In this regard, it is important to remember

13. Ibid., H131.

14. Ibid., H132.

It is essential to understanding Heidegger's philosophy to recognize that he has just told us that *Being* is *becoming*. It is this notion, which Heidegger formally describes as *Dasein* understanding itself in terms of the totality of its potentiality-for-Being and continually pressing forward into those possibilities which matter to it, that will ultimately ground his assertion that *Dasein* is to be fundamentally interpreted in terms of temporality and that the vulgar notions of time are derivative from it. But we are not quite ready for that yet. Having completed his exposition of the existential constitution of the "there" with the discussion of states-of-mind and understanding, Heidegger turns to the completion of his final preparatory task, namely, the description of the everyday Being of the "there" and the falling of *Dasein*. Heidegger characterizes this dimension of Being as "fallenness," which is not intended to be pejorative (as in a fall from grace) but instead to connote that *Dasein*, in its circumspection and absorption with its World, is lost in the publicness of the they and has therefore fallen from itself as an *authentic* potentiality-for-Being into *inauthentic* Being-with-one-another, which is characterized by what Heidegger calls idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity.

Thus far, *Dasein's* ontological structure, which is holistically conceived, may be defined (as Heidegger explicitly does) in its average everydayness as "Being-in-the-[W]orld which is falling and disclosed, thrown and projecting, and for which its own-most potentiality-for-Being is an issue, both in its Being alongside the "[W]orld" and in its Being-with Others."[19] But this does not go far enough to explain *Dasein* and with it the meaning of Being. What is missing from this definition is *its own ontological foundation*. Heidegger tells us that "[t]he Being of *Dasein*, upon which the structural whole as such is ontologically supported, becomes accessible to us when we look all the way through this whole to a single primordially unitary phenomenon which is already in this whole in such a way that it provides the ontological foundation for each structural item in its structural possibility."[20] In other words, the provisional understanding of *Dasein* in its everydayness that has been achieved must itself be questioned regarding its ontology to see whether there is a more fundamental phenomenon that characterizes each of the elements in the provisional definition. This is the second level of interpretation.

As we have just seen, *Dasein* knows itself through state-of-mind and understanding. Success in identifying the foundational ontological phenomenon underlying the formal structure of *Dasein* in its average everydayness will depend upon whether there is a state-of-mind in which *Dasein's* ownmost understanding of itself will be disclosed to itself. Not surprisingly, Heidegger is able to identify such a state-of-mind and the phenomenon it discloses. The former is what Heidegger calls "anxiety" and the latter is what he calls "care."

The first question, then, is what is so special about anxiety that it brings *Dasein* before itself in its own Being and discloses what sort of entity *Dasein* is? It turns out that it is anxiety that motivates *Dasein* to flee from its authentic Being and to turn towards Being-with Others and Being-alongside the World in its inauthentic mode of Being. Anxiety is not the same as fear but it is what makes fear possible. Fear is always about something in the World that is threatening. Anxiety is not about any entity at all but

19. Ibid., H181.

20. Ibid.

instead about the indefinite—about Being-in-the-World as such, and not in the face of anything within-the-World. It is in the state-of-mind that is anxiety, therefore, that the World is disclosed to *Dasein* as World. Anxiety, therefore, removes the possibility of *Dasein* understanding itself inauthentically in terms of the World into which it falls and discloses to *Dasein* its authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-World. Heidegger tells us:

> Anxiety throws *Dasein* back upon that which it is anxious about—its authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-[W]orld. Anxiety individualizes *Dasein* for its ownmost Being-in-the-[W]orld, which as something that understands, projects itself essentially upon possibilities. Therefore, with that which it is anxious about, anxiety discloses *Dasein* as Being-possible, and indeed as the only kind of thing which it can be of its own accord as something individualized in individualization.[21]

In projecting itself upon its possibilities for Being, *Dasein* is revealed as being both *free* and *ahead of itself in its Being*.[22] With this, we arrive at the final formal characterization from which, as we will soon see, we can interpret *Dasein* in terms of temporality, namely, as "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-[W]orld) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-[W]orld)."[23]

For Heidegger, entities *are*, albeit in a special way to be discussed, independent of *Dasein*, but Being *is* only in the understanding of *Dasein* (and any other Being to whom *something like an understanding of Being* belongs). As noted, in Heidegger's understanding, Being is not itself an entity but something that is characteristic of entities (as we shall also see, as their *ground*). Accordingly, a question arises as to the relationship between the Being of *Dasein* and the manner in which other entities may be said *to be*. The fact that *Dasein* is for the most part falling into the they-Self means that it is in the world in a mode of Being in which it takes the world as present-at-hand. As a result, *Dasein* tends to interpret Being as meaning "Being in general" and it thus acquires a meaning that is equivalent to "Reality" (understood as a world of Things and sometimes referred to as "the Real"). So one way that entities (other than *Dasein*) may be said to be is in the world as "Things." However, such an interpretation is particular only to one of the two primary modes of *Dasein*, and is therefore both one-sided and limited and makes clear the necessity that, to understand Being, one must understand the connection between Being and Reality in all of the fullness of Being (i.e., including, in any event, *Dasein*'s authentic mode).

Reality is commonly understood as the "external world" which is consistent with *Dasein*'s fallen interpretation of it. As a result of this interpretation, the question arises as to whether the Real can be understood to exist independently of consciousness. In modern philosophy, the question is routinely asked without any understanding of the extent to which the Being of entities whose very existence is being put into question has been clarified. Heidegger tells us that "[t]he question of whether there is a world at all and whether its Being can be proved, makes no sense if it is raised by *Dasein* as Being-in-the-World" (i.e., as Being *in relation to* the World) and then asks rhetorically "who else would raise

21. Ibid., H187–88.

22. It is important to note that freedom is part of the Being of *Dasein*.

23. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* H192.

it?"[24] In other words, because *Dasein* is the site at which the world is disclosed along with the Being of *Dasein*, the very posing of the question answers it affirmatively.

Heidegger refers us to Kant to frame the discussion. In Kant's "Refutation of Idealism," Kant calls the failure of philosophy to have proven the existence of mind-independent reality the "scandal of philosophy." Kant's proof of empirical reality is based upon the empirical character of the very consciousness which asks it: "The mere consciousness of my own *Dasein*—a consciousness which, however, is empirical in character—proves the *Dasein* of objects in the space outside of me."[25] Kant's argument proceeds on the basis of our experience of time. In Heideggerian terms, Kant treats each human consciousness as present-at-hand together with the multiplicity of the representations that are internally given to it in a process that is understood as *change*. For there to be a determinate temporal character there must be permanence against which change can be recognized as such, either within or outside of consciousness. But, if consciousness itself exists temporally (i.e., in time) as present-at-hand and experiences the changes within itself (i.e., the multiplicity of representations), the permanence against which its being in time must be external to it. What is externally permanent is the condition which makes it possible for the changes "in me" to be present-at-hand. Heidegger characterizes Kant as having proven that entities which are changing and entities which are permanent are present-at-hand together. But, as we have just seen, this is a one-sided proof that presupposes that consciousness is exclusively inauthentic (i.e., present-at-hand). Heidegger says, "But the Being-present-at-hand of the physical and the psychical is completely different ontically and ontologically from the phenomenon of Being-in-the-World."[26]

According to Heidegger, the scandal of philosophy is not that the proof of external reality has yet to be given, *but that any such proof is expected and attempted over and over again.* Such expectations arise because of the mistaken conceptual separation of Being and the world of beings, which arises because of the failure to recognize that *Dasein*'s Being is Being-in-the-World. On this false premise, the object becomes to prove the existence of a world independently of *Dasein* and outside of it. And, as we have just noted, the illusion upon which the false premise is based arises because *Dasein* buries itself in the world in its inauthentic they-Self.

The subject matter of the scandal philosophy is the "pure presence-at-hand" of Things. But Reality, as understood by *Dasein*, is the totality of its engagements as readiness-to-hand, present-at-hand, or Others. All modes of Being of entities within-the-world are founded ontologically upon the worldhood of the World, and accordingly, the phenomenon of Being-in-the-World. Reality, therefore, refers always back to care as the way of Being in which *Dasein* is in-the-World. Even so, Heidegger tells us that "the fact that Reality is ontologically grounded in the Being of *Dasein*, does not signify that only when *Dasein* exists and as long as *Dasein* exists, can the Real be as that which

24. Ibid., H202.

25. Ibid., H203, quoting Kant, *Pure Reason*, B275.

26. Ibid., H204.

in itself is."[27] In one of the most interesting and important passages of *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains:

> Of course only as long as *Dasein* is (that is, only as long as an understanding of Being is ontically possible), "is there" Being. When *Dasein* does not exist, "independence" "is" not either, nor "is" the "in-itself." In such a case this sort of thing can be neither understood or not understood. In such a case even entities within-the-word can neither be discovered nor lie hidden. *In such a case* it cannot be said that entities are, nor can it be said that they are not. But *now*, as long as there is an understanding of Being and therefore of presence-at-hand, it can indeed be said that *in this case* entities will still continue to be.[28]

So the question and its answer are intelligible only because it is being asked by *Dasein* in the context of *Dasein*'s understanding of its own and the Being of Things. If *Dasein* no longer is, then what remains becomes *unintelligible but not nothing*. It must be mentioned in passing here, for later elucidation, that this is another point with which we are in profound disagreement with Heidegger; indeed, it is the position of the philosophy expounded in these pages that Being and intelligibility are the same and that the logical structure of the world empowers its persistence even in the absence of all of the sentient beings of the world.

With this (and a brief discussion of truth which will be postponed until the summary of *Introduction to Metaphysics*), Heidegger's preparation for the exposition of *Dasein* as temporality is complete. As we turn to the question of temporality, it will be helpful to remind ourselves that the reason for Heidegger's relentless interrogation of *Dasein* is to arrive at an answer to the question of the meaning of Being in general, which Heidegger hopes to obtain by first identifying *Dasein's* essential Being. Heidegger appropriately tells us that in order to arrive at *Dasein's* essence, we must reach a primordial interpretation of the Being of *Dasein*, which means that our interpretation must extend to the *whole* of *Dasein*. In arriving at care as the most primordial interpretation of *Dasein* the formal structure has been provided but the existential analysis of care remains phenomenologically incomplete in two respects. First, because the characterization says nothing about *Dasein's* beginning or end, it does not address the finite nature of *Dasein*. Second, until now, the existential analysis of *Dasein* has not covered its *authentic* Being. So, in order to arrive at an answer to the question of the meaning of Being in general, it will be necessary to provide an existential interpretation of care as a formal characteristic of *Dasein* in its finiteness and in its authentic mode of Being.

Heidegger begins to address these questions by recognizing a difficulty which risks rendering his whole project unfeasible. What is required is an interpretation of *Dasein* in its totality, that is, its Being-a-whole. However, if, under the aegis of care, *Dasein* is always ahead-of-itself, the question arises as to how to understand the end of all of *Dasein's* possible relations which must occur in a death that *Dasein* itself can never experience (i.e., we cannot experience the no-longer-Being that attends death because only Beings can experience the World). In other words, if we cannot experience death ontically, then

27. Ibid., H212.

28. Ibid.

it appears that we cannot determine its character ontologically in its Being-a-whole. Heidegger's solution to this problem is not to amend the concept of care but instead to assert that although the totality of authentic *Dasein*, that is, its Being-a-whole, can never include its own death, it does include, as an outer boundary, *the possibility of its own death*.

It is therefore important to interpret the possibility of death (not death itself) in terms of care. With respect to projection, because care includes Being-ahead-of-itself in its possibilities, care must always include Being-towards-the-end (i.e., death), which as we have just noted is always one of such possibilities. Heidegger calls Being-towards-Death (as a possibility) "anticipation." With respect to thrownness, Being-towards-the-end is a possibility into which *Dasein* has been thrown and which is revealed to *Dasein* as *anxiety*. In the inauthentic mode of Being that characterizes fallenness, Being-towards-the-end is disclosed in its everydayness, in which death is acknowledged by the they but in depersonalized and ambiguous terms, which convert anxiety into a mere fear which the they insists must be faced with a stiff upper lip, so that in its everydayness Being-towards-Death is a "constant fleeing in the face of death." Each individual *Dasein's* death, more than any other possibility, uniquely belongs to it insofar as it is specific to it and it is the moment when it ceases to be in relation to all of the other entities in the World. In light of the foregoing, Heidegger expresses the full ontological conception of death as "*Dasein's ownmost* possibility—non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped . . . [and] in the Being of this entity towards its end."[29] Heidegger characterizes Being-towards-Death in terms of anticipation as "anticipation reveals to *Dasein* its lostness in the they-Self, and brings it face-to-face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concernful solicitude, but of being itself, rather in an impassioned freedom towards death—a freedom which has been released from the [i]llusions of the 'they', and which is factical, certain of itself, and anxious."[30]

So far, so good, but there is still a piece missing from the puzzle. If death is *Dasein's* ownmost possibility, it must have an authentic dimension, even if *Dasein* is able to flee from it. However, if Being-towards-Death is grounded in care and care is characterized by the three dimensions of projection, thrownness, and fallenness, and if fallenness is inauthentic, the question is whether and how Heidegger can account for Being-towards-Death in terms of care. If Heidegger cannot do so, then care is not the primordial structure of *Dasein* that accounts for the *whole* Being of *Dasein*. So it would seem that Heidegger must either abandon care or provide, in addition to the other dimensions of care, a fourth dimension that will, in lieu of fallenness, operate as an *authentic mode* of care.

In a methodologically consistent manner, Heidegger defines the task as identifying an authentic potentiality-for-Being that will be disclosed (Heidegger says "attested") as an ontical possibility by *Dasein* itself. Because *Dasein* is, in normal circumstances, lost in the they of everydayness, its possibilities-for-Being are *inauthentic*, unless and until something allows it to find its authentic possibilities. What is needed is an ontical potentiality-for-Being-its-Self (authentically) and Heidegger claims that such is provided by what we commonly understand as the "voice of conscience." Heidegger is quick to point out that the sort of conscience to which he is referring is neither a materially

29. Ibid., H258–59.

30. Ibid., H266.

reducible nor a theological phenomenon, but rather something in the Being of *Dasein* that discloses to inauthentic *Dasein* its potentiality-for-Being-its-Self (authentically). And as a basic state of *Dasein*, it is constituted by state-of-mind, understanding, falling, and "discourse" (by virtue of which we hear it).

For Heidegger, conscience is a "call," which is a type of discourse that can be heard above the inauthentic idle talk and other noise of the they which bombards *Dasein* in its everydayness. *Dasein* is the subject of the call (discourse) of conscience. The call reaches the they-Self of concernful Being-with-Others and calls *Dasein* to its ownmost (authentic) self. Significantly, in keeping with Heidegger's assertion that the call to conscience is not a call to morality, Heidegger tells us that the call is contentless:

> But how are we to determine what is said in the talk that belongs to this kind of discourse? *What* does the conscience call to him to whom it appeals? Taken strictly, nothing. The call asserts nothing, gives no information about world-events, has nothing to tell. Least of all does it try to set going a "soliloquy" in the Self to which it has appealed. "Nothing" gets called to this Self, but it has been summoned to itself—that is to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being. The tendency of the call is not as to put up for "trial" the Self to which the appeal is made; but it calls *Dasein* forth (and "forward") into its ownmost possibilities, as a summons to its ownmost *potentiality-for*-Being-its-Self.[31]

If *Dasein* is the subject of the call, then who is the caller? Heidegger tells us that conscience is the call of care, with the caller being *Dasein* itself, which in its thrownness is anxious about its potentiality-for-Being. So it is *Dasein*, in its inauthentic everydayness which summons itself to its ownmost (authentic) potentiality-for-Being. Heidegger tells us that the call of care does not speak to us in terms of an ideal or universal potentiality-for-Being, but rather in terms of an individualized one that belongs to the *Dasein* being called, that the nature of the call is, ontically, a declaration of "Guilty!"[32] or "not-Guilty!," and that *Dasein's* concept of guilt can only originate from the interpretation of its own Being. He goes on to formalize existentially guilt as "Being-the-basis for a Being which has been defined by a 'not'"—that is to say, as "*Being-the-basis of a nullity*." Although Heidegger's prose on this subject is particularly obscure, I am understanding this in the overall context of his presentation to mean that the call of conscience is a call from inauthentic *Dasein* to authentic *Dasein* to *take responsibility* for those potential ways of Being which *Dasein* does not actualize in the continuous course of choosing a way of Being at each moment of its Being-in-the-World. This makes especial sense in a phenomenological context where "not-Being" constitutes absence, which is a way of Being and not the negation of existence. So, although *Dasein* is proximally and for the most part Being-inauthentic, because *Dasein* is care it is always subject to the call of conscience, which means that it must be responsible for its way-of-Being and its ways-of-not-Being, both of which are determined from the manifold potential ways of Being that are available to it at each moment. We can summarize the foregoing as meaning that the call of con-

31. Ibid., H273.

32. From the context (in which Heidegger expressly disavows a normative connotation), I am understanding the translation of the German *schuldig* to "guilty" to be intended to connote "to be wanting" or "falling short."

science, which is an ontical occurrence, attests to *Dasein* that it always has an authentic, ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is in *Dasein* itself. Conscience attests by calling *Dasein* to Being-guilty (i.e., to take responsibility for its potentiality-for-Being). Hearing the call (which Heidegger calls wanting to have a conscience) allows one's ownmost Self to take action in itself of its own accord in its Being-guilty and represents, phenomenally, authentic potentiality-for-Being.

According to Heidegger, hearing the call is a way in which *Dasein* discloses itself to itself. As is to be expected, this disclosedness is constituted by discourse and state-of-mind. The state of mind is anxiety about the uncanniness of Being-towards-the-end, so wanting to have a conscience entails a readiness for anxiety. Because the discourse of the call is contentless and one-sided, *Dasein* listens to it but does not respond. This mode of discourse is therefore called "reticence." The distinctive and authentic disclosedness attested to by conscience, which Heidegger calls "resoluteness," is thus reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety. Heidegger tells us:

> Resoluteness, as *authentic Being-one's-Self*, does not detach *Dasein* from its [W]orld, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating "I." And how should it, when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness, is authentically nothing else than *Being-in-the-[W]orld?* Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concernful Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others.[33]

In other words, resoluteness does not entail *Dasein's* drawing itself into itself in order to treat the World as present-at-hand, but instead calls *Dasein* to reinterpret the World in accordance with its authentic potentiality-for-Being.

A final point to be emphasized before completing the preparation for the interpretation *Dasein's* authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole, and temporality as the ontological meaning of care, is the relationship between resoluteness and irresoluteness. In this context, it is helpful to remember that the issue of conscience as a call of care arises because it is an ontical occurrence which "attests" to an authentic potentiality-for-Being which required the addition of *discourse* to the three dimensions of care (thrownness, projection, and fallenness) that comprise inauthenticity. If, in hearing the call of conscience, *Dasein* is delivered to its ownmost, authentic way-of-Being, pronounced "Guilty!" (i.e., responsible for its own life choices), and freed from the "they," then any decision by *Dasein* to return to an inauthentic mode of Being must also be freely and responsibly made. And inasmuch as *Dasein* is subject to the call of conscience while in such a mode, then it is never fully free from the prospect of being called back to authenticity, anxiety, and Being-towards-the-end. *Dasein* always has the potentiality-for-Being authentic and inauthentic and the responsibility for each such possibility.

With *anticipation* (i.e., Being-towards-Death) and *resoluteness* (i.e., authentic potentiality-for-Being as exhibited ontically and understood existentially), Heidegger has identified two of the three pieces necessary to complete the existential exposition of the potentiality-for-Being-a-whole required for validation of the ontological adequacy of

33. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* H298.

understanding *Dasein* as care. What remains is to connect them so that the ontical phenomenon of resoluteness attests not just to authentic potentiality-for-Being in general but to potentiality-for-Being-towards-Death specifically, which is always, as Heidegger puts it, the uttermost possibility which lies ahead of every factical potentiality-for-Being of *Dasein*. And Heidegger claims that *resoluteness* in its very meaning accomplishes just that.

Heidegger is finally prepared to unveil the meaning of the Being of care, which, he told us in the introduction, would be in terms of temporality. Heidegger's exposition will focus on the concept of Self, which is so central to the philosophy presented in these pages. Interestingly, Heidegger presents a metaphysically new characterization of Self—one which subsists, but is neither substance nor mind nor mere unity of experience:

> Ontologically, *Dasein* is in principle different from everything that is present-at-hand or Real. Its "subsistence" is not based on the substantiality of a substance but on the "*Self-subsistence*" of the existing Self, whose Being has been conceived as care. The phenomenon of the Self—a phenomenon which is included in care—needs to be defined existentially in a way which is primordial and authentic, in contrast to our preparatory exhibition of the inauthentic they-Self. Along with this, we must establish what possible ontological questions are to be directed towards the "Self," if indeed it is neither substance nor subject.[34]

Heidegger promises that this method will clarify the phenomenon of care so that it may be interrogated as to its ontological meaning and, in arriving at that, "temporality will have been laid bare," and tells us that in temporality we get a "conception of the entire phenomenal content of *Dasein's* basic existential constitution in the ultimate foundations of its own ontological intelligibility" and further that "[t]emporality gets experienced in a phenomenally primordial way in *Dasein's* authentic Being-a-whole, in the phenomenon of anticipatory resoluteness."[35]

To recapitulate, we have before us *Dasein* as having been characterized ontologically as care, which as a unified structure comprises thrownness (Being-already-in-a-World), fallenness (Being-alongside), and projection (Being-ahead-of-itself). Care, however, does not give us the whole of *Dasein* nor its authentic potentiality-for-Being; instead it gives us the condition for the possibility of the ontic existence of the potentiality-for-Being-a-whole. The question is how can *Dasein* exist as a unified Being whose essence is care? Not surprisingly, answering this question requires reversion to the only *Dasein* that each of us knows essentially in our existence, namely, the "I" or the "Self" that is each *Dasein*. And, also not surprisingly, for exposition of the Self, Heidegger begins with a discussion of Kant's transcendental Ego.

Heidegger's position on Kant is that Kant is correct in rejecting the ontical theses that the soul is substance but Kant fails to achieve an appropriate ontological interpretation of Selfhood. The gist of Heidegger's criticism is that Kant's "I think" is, as the form of representation of empirical objects, itself treated as "the constant Being-present-at-hand of the 'I' along with its representations" without giving any consideration to the "I think something" and its ontological presupposition of the World. If one takes the

34. Ibid., H303.

35. Ibid., H303–4.

World into account correctly, it will be seen as co-determining the state of Being of the "I" and, therefore, must be considered ontologically in that relationship. Although Kant avoids severing the "I think" from the "something" that it thinks, in Kant's philosophy *the objects of thought remain indefinite as to their Being* and so, therefore, must the "I think." For Heidegger, the "I (think something)" is always Being-in-the-World, which provides the clarity necessary for its further interrogation. But even this is not sufficient because *Dasein* interprets itself differently depending upon its manner of Being. In its everydayness, *Dasein* treats the "I" inauthentically as the "they-Self," which, although self-same, is self-forgetful, simple, and empty.[36] Even though one "is that with which one concerns oneself" it does not mean that, philosophically speaking, we need to lose ourselves, so we need to keep in mind that the "I" that is ontologically important for elucidation of the meaning of Being is the *authentic* one, the one for which Being is an issue and which is itself *care* (which expresses itself in both the inauthentic and authentic modes). Heidegger summarizes the implications as follows:

> If the ontological constitution of the Self is not to be traced back either to an "I"-substance [Descartes] or to a "subject" [Kant], but if on the contrary, the everyday fugitive way in which we keep on saying "I" must be understood in terms of our *authentic* potentiality for Being, then the proposition that the Self is the basis of care and constantly present-at-hand, is one that still does not follow. Selfhood is to be discerned existentially only in one's authentic potentiality-for-Being-one's-Self—that is to say, in the authenticity of *Dasein's* Being as *care*.[37]

Accordingly, it is *authentic* care that constitutes the Self and it is anticipatory resoluteness that illuminates the Self-constancy that characterizes authentic Being-in-the-World. In other words, when we speak of Self, we are speaking of a constant *authentic* Self and not the entirety of *Dasein*, which, insofar as it is constituted by care, includes the absence of Self which characterizes irresolute fallenness of the they-Self. Heidegger says:

> *Care does not need to be founded in a Self. But existentiality, as constitutive for care, provides the ontological constitution of Dasein's Self-constancy, to which there belongs, in accordance with the full structural content of care, its Being-fallen factically into non-Self-constancy*. When fully conceived, the care-structure includes the phenomenon of Selfhood. This phenomenon is clarified by [i]nterpreting the meaning of care; and it is as care that *Dasein*'s totality of Being has been defined.[38]

Heidegger's motivation in identifying Selfhood with *authentic* care (as opposed to the whole of the care structure which includes the inauthentic they-Self) is twofold: first, to highlight *existential Dasein* as Being-in-the-World in a way that is self-subsistent and not present-at-hand, and second, to make manifest the authentic Self that provides the constancy necessary to articulate *Dasein* as a unified, potentiality-for-Being-a-whole.

Having accomplished that, Heidegger is now finally in a position to provide the promised reinterpretation of the Self in terms of temporality. Near the beginning of *Being and Time*, Heidegger tells us that when he says that "*Dasein* is in such a way as

36. Ibid., H321–22.

37. Ibid., H322.

38. Ibid., H323.

to be something which understands something like Being," he means that "whenever *Dasein* tacitly understands and interprets something like Being, it does so with time as its standpoint" and that, accordingly, "[t]ime must be brought to light—and genuinely conceived—as the *horizon* of all understanding of Being and every way of interpreting it"[39] (emphasis added). It should be obvious that Heidegger does not intend to show that *Dasein* interprets itself in its Being as existing in what we have previously referred to as "transcendent" time (i.e., the objective time of worldly processes and events) because that would mean that *Dasein* is essentially *Being-in-time* and, as such, merely present-at-hand. Instead, since Heidegger has defined *Dasein* as care, his objective will be to explain how care is essentially temporal. As we shall see, there is a clear relationship between Heidegger's phenomenological depiction of time and that of Husserl, and it will be helpful in understanding Heidegger's conception to bear in mind that, whereas Husserl's characterization of time-consciousness is oriented toward cognition and therefore centered around the present, Heidegger's conception will be determined by his ontological understanding of Dasein as teleologically concerned with its ownmost potentiality-for-Being and therefore centered around the future. In a similar vein, we will also see that Heidegger will supplant Husserl's notion that consciousness of immanent time is the presupposition of all cognition with the more radical idea that transcendent time is an *abstraction from the temporality of Dasein*, the latter of which is therefore primordial temporality.

We begin by reminding ourselves of the structure of *Dasein's* Being as consisting of existence, facticity, and falling, which in turn yields that *Dasein* means "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-World) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-World)." It is not at all hard to see how each of the elements of this characterization contains a temporal component and it is upon this observation that Heidegger rests his assertion that the "primordial unity of the structure of care lies in temporality."[40] "Being-ahead-of-itself" (i.e., projection or pressing ahead into one's possibilities) is futuristic in the sense of being forward-looking, "Being-already-in-the-World" (i.e., thrownness) is "having been" and backwards-looking, and "Being-alongside" the objects of one's concern connotes the present. What Heidegger seeks to extract from the language of temporality is a horizon in which the forwardness of "Being-ahead" and the "having been-ness" of "Being-already-in-the-World" provide the conditions for the possibility of *Dasein's* essential character of having its potentiality-for-Being be an issue for it. So Heidegger tells us that Self-projection upon the "for-the-sake-of-oneself" is grounded in the future and therefore the future is the primary meaning of existentiality; *Dasein's* Being is *based upon* thrownness and always *exists* has "having been" and never as an entity "with a bit of it past already" (in the sense of present-at-hand entities that no longer exist); and that the "making present" of "Being-alongside" is included in both projection and fallenness which constitute the "there" of *Dasein*. Thus, for so long as an individual *Dasein* exists, it exists as always having been and always caring about its potentiality.

39. Ibid., H17.

40. Ibid., H327.

Heidegger asserts:

> The future, the character of having been, and the [p]resent, show the phenomenal characteristics of the "towards-oneself," the "back-to," and the "letting-oneself-be-encountered-by." The phenomena of the "towards . . . ," the "to . . . ," and the "alongside . . . ," make temporality manifest as the ἐκστατικόν (*ecstases*) pure and simple. *Temporality is the primordial "out-side-of-itself" in and for itself.*[41]

Heidegger calls the "towards . . . ," the "to . . . ," and the "alongside . . . " of temporality "ecstases" because they disclose the unity of *Dasein* to itself by comprising its constitutive elements so that they stand out as its (phenomenological) moments. Heidegger tells us that temporality does not arise as a cumulative sequence of *ecstases* but that temporality temporalizes itself in their equiprimordiality. Heidegger explains this in a sentence that is difficult but important to grasp: "Primordial and authentic temporality temporalizes itself in terms of the authentic future and in such a way that in having been futurally, it first all awakens the [p]resent."[42]

It is helpful in understanding Heidegger's characterization of temporality to note that the common understanding of our sequential passage through space and time is at odds with its phenomenal presentation in which each of us is always *here and now* and that from the perspective of here and now we are each *always and everywhere* a "having-been," a "being," and a "possibility-of-being," with the implication that we cannot go back to the past or forward into the future as they are commonly understood because they never really exist as such, and are, instead, conditions of the possibility of our Being (here and now). The three elements of *Dasein's* temporal structure are (phenomenological) moments of an indivisible unity but have the described temporal character as providing *horizons for the intelligibility of the process* of Being or, as Heidegger earlier expressed it, becoming what one is. Ontologically, *Dasein* does not have a past, a present, and a future—it has only its care, which is thrown projection plus fallenness/discourse. It is only in ontic existence that the common notions of time, which are fully derivative of *Dasein's* temporality, come into view as *Dasein*'s past, present, and future.

Perhaps an example will help. Among my potentialities-for-Being is Being-a-philosopher. As I press forward into the possibility (*projection*), I read, study, think, and write about philosophical issues, all for-the-sake of Being-a-philosopher. In so doing, I am alongside the World of books, desks, computers, etc. (*fallenness*), which I can manipulate toward that end. The existing philosophical literature, the World in which it arose, my education in schools already in Being when I began to project upon the potentiality-for-Being-a-philosopher, and the intellectual capabilities that I inherited, are the foundation (*thrownness*) which ground that potentiality and from which I may project myself onto it. Significantly, nowhere in the foregoing description of my Being-towards-philosophy is there reference to a date, time, timespan, or *state of being* that lies in the future, is in the present, or occurred in the past, and, ontologically speaking, the description is complete even though it makes no reference to the ordinary time that we understand as a succession of "nows."

41. Ibid., H328–329.

42. Ibid., H329.

In common parlance, *Dasein* is a unity that is always in the figurative motion of becoming itself and never in that stasis of having achieved its potentiality for Being. *Dasein* is the totality of its potential and it is not an actuality that is anything other than its potentiality. Understood in this way, *Dasein* is essentially a process of pressing forward into its own possibilities (projection) which cannot be realized because they are always merely potentialities. Moreover, *Dasein* is not a free-floating Being that presses forward from nothingness but instead does so from the context of its world-historical circumstances, its cultural circumstances, its own history, and its own aptitudes (which collectively constitute thrownness) which are also in constant flux. *Dasein* presses forward into what matters to it by engaging with the entities in its World as they are disclosed to it (concerned fallenness). At each step in the process *Dasein* may "use up" its possible ways of Being by choosing one way of Being and eschewing the others but all that accomplishes is to alter *Dasein*'s thrownness and present *Dasein* with a new understanding of itself as constituted by a new set of potential-ways-of-Being. It should be noted, however, that even this last characterization seems to be overly imbued with the vulgar understanding of temporality and that instead of speaking in terms of a temporally sequential consumption of possible ways of Being it would be better to speak in terms of *Dasein's* disclosing itself to itself in its pressing forward into, and its repetitive reinterpretation of, its potentiality-for-Being.

It should also be noted that *Dasein*'s understanding of itself temporally differs according to whether it is an authentic or inauthentic mode of Being. Authentically, the anticipatory process of *Dasein*'s pressing forward is described by Heidegger as coming towards one's ownmost self by coming back to one's ownmost self, by which I understand him to mean that one's potentiality-for-Being is always understood from the standpoint of one's authentic thrownness and that pressing forward is not a temporal going ahead and leaving behind but instead a continuous reinterpretation of one's care. The way in which authentic *Dasein* understands itself as temporally Being-in-the-World is called a "moment of vision" and the process of authentic temporalizing is called "repetition." The repetitive temporalizing constitutes *Dasein* as a historical Being and is called "historicizing." When *Dasein* is in an inauthentic mode, as the they-Self, it presses forward toward its possibilities from a having-forgotten (its authentic self) and toward a future in which it awaits its authentic possibilities (i.e., its authentic self).

With this understanding, we are now in a position to inquire of Heidegger as to the derivative connection between his conception of the temporality of care and its relation to ordinary time. For Heidegger, there are two philosophically important senses in which time is commonly understood. The first is what Heidegger calls World time and the second is what Heidegger calls ordinary time. World time is time that is characterized in accordance with the meaning that *Dasein* brings to the World. It is significant, datable, spanned, public, sequential, or successive and it is part of the structure in which we understand the ready-to-hand World. Ordinary time is the Newtonian "container" which holds extended objects (i.e., the present-at-hand). So, ontologically speaking, we have a hierarchy in which *Dasein*, for whom its Being is an issue, is always thrown into a World (of equipment) in which it projects itself upon its *potentiality-for-Being*. This World is understood in an "equipmental" World-time, which is embedded in originary

time as one of its *ecstases* and "flattened-out" into a "before" and an "after" which opens up the present of our engagements as we project ourselves onto our potentiality-for-Being, and ordinary time is merely an objectified, abstracted structure from which *Dasein's* care has been prescinded leaving only the span of World time within it.

In the interest of clarification, it will be helpful to briefly revert to our earlier summary of Heidegger's position on the existence of mind-independent Reality in the context of our discussion of temporality. As noted, Heidegger does not doubt that there is a real world that is independent of *Dasein* but, because Heidegger's understanding of Being and temporality are unabashedly transcendental, the world of time and space and the intelligibility of the Being of beings requires *Dasein*; in other words, it is *Dasein* that brings temporality into the world of Reality; however, the latter may be said to be constituted in *Dasein's* absence.

At the end of Part I of *Being and Time,* after reminding us that philosophy is "universal phenomenological ontology, [which] takes its departure from the hermeneutic of *Dasein*, which as an analytic of existence, has made fast the guiding-line for all philosophical inquiry at the point where it *arises* and to which it *returns*,"[43] Heidegger provides the following assessment of what has been accomplished in Part I and what remains to be accomplished in Part II:

> Something like "Being" has been disclosed in the understanding-of-Being which belongs to existent *Dasein* as a way in which it understands. Being has been disclosed in a preliminary way, though non-conceptually; and this makes it possible for *Dasein* as existent Being-in-the-[W]orld to comport itself *towards entities*—towards those which it encounters within-the-[W]orld as well as towards itself as existent. *How is this disclosive understanding of Being at all possible for Dasein?* Can this question be answered by going back to the *primordial constitution-of-Being* of that *Dasein* by which Being is understood? The existential-ontological constitution of *Dasein*'s totality is grounded in temporality. Hence the ecstatical projection of Being must be made possible by some primordial way in which ecstatical temporality temporalizes. How is this mode of the temporalizing of temporality to be [i]nterpreted? Is there a way which leads from primordial *time* to the meaning of *Being*? Does time itself manifest itself as the horizon of *Being*?[44]

As it turns out, Heidegger is about to take a radically different approach to answering the questions he raises at the end of *Being and Time*—one that is not a repudiation of his exposition of *Dasein* but which nevertheless requires him to leave his great interrogation of *Dasein* behind, only half completed.

THE BEING OF BEINGS

Had Heidegger completed his *phenomenological* analysis of the Being of beings it is not difficult to see where he would likely have come out. *Dasein* has revealed itself from within itself as the being for whom its own Being is an issue, the being whose Being is Being-there, the being whose Being is openness to the World, the Being whose essential

43. Ibid., H436.

44. Ibid., H437.

Being is Being-with, the being whose Being consists of the totality of its possibilities and who is always choosing among ways to be and not be. Since *Dasein's* Being is co-determined with the world as a unified whole, the Being of non-*Dasein* beings would be expected to be ontologically that which is disclosed to *Dasein* as presenting itself from within itself to *Dasein*. And, as we will now see, that is where Heidegger comes out notwithstanding his employment of a vastly different methodology.

But why did Heidegger feel the need to dramatically change his manner of investigation? Apparently, as Heidegger was working out the implications of *Dasein's* temporality, the importance of the historical aspects of thrownness became increasingly apparent to him to the point where Heidegger concluded that understanding Being from any starting point within modern philosophy (including phenomenology) is impossible because the mistaken modern concept of Being as a Thing reaches back all the way to the inception of metaphysics with Plato and Aristotle. If the current objective of philosophy is, as it should be, to *reset* ontology in a way that will enable historical *Dasein* (i.e., man's historical Being) to project itself forward on a sound footing, the task is not so much a phenomenological one as it is a historical one, and the appropriate methodology must be the hermeneutic analysis of ancient Greek philosophy. Moreover, with regard to the last point, in Heidegger's view, although the seed of the annihilation of ontology may have been sewn by Plato, the degeneration got going in earnest with the *translation of ancient Greek philosophy to Latin* by virtue of which the original understanding of the meaning of Being developed by the pre-Socrates was utterly perverted. Heidegger's methodology and starting point, then, will be the hermeneutic investigation of the pre-Socratic philosophers, with a special emphasis on the etymological usage by the pre-Socratics of the Being-related language.

For the purposes of our further investigations, we will focus on two of Heidegger's works. The first is the lecture series that is embodied in *Introduction to Metaphysics*. The second, *The Principle of Reason*, is a shorter work which embodies a subsequent lecture series. After completion of our analysis of these two works, we will finally be in a position to use Heidegger's work as a springboard to discovery of our own, quite different, interpretation of the meaning of Being.

Introduction to Metaphysics proceeds in discrete sections the enumeration of which will assist in organizing our presentation: (1) the most originary question is identified, provisionally, which, as it turns out, is the *Why* question; (2) the *Why* question then gives way to the more originary question: How does it stand with Being?; (3) the meaning of Being, as understood by the pre-Socratics is identified as *phusis*, which means "emerging abiding sway," by grammatical and etymological analysis of pre-Socratic philosophy; (4) the ontology of *phusis* is provisionally worked out in terms of its priority and its presencing to *Dasein*; (5) the four manners in which Being, as a concept, is commonly considered restricted (i.e., fenced in) by the scope of other related concepts (Being versus becoming, Being versus seeming, Being as thinking, and Being versus the "Ought") is shown to be philosophically unfounded and such concepts are shown to be incorporated in and subsumed by Being; and (6) Being is shown to be the *ousia* (substance) of beings. All of the foregoing is presented under the thematic umbrella of identifying and correcting the mistaken path of modern philosophy that began with the

seeming innocuousness of Plato's theory of Ideas and culminated in the incoherence of Hegel's Absolute.

With respect to the *Why* question, Heidegger tells us that it is broadest in scope and limited only by Nothing, deepest in that it seeks the ground of everything, and most originary in that it is implicit in all other questions (including its being presupposed by science). Heidegger then lays out the theme of his turn towards etymological hermeneutics by placing philosophy in historical context and asserting its importance as it unfolds historically. Specifically, Heidegger argues that although modern philosophy began to veer off course with Plato's theory of Ideas, its fate was not sealed until classic philosophy was translated from Greek to Latin. Here, Heidegger introduces *phusis* as the fundamental Greek word for beings as such and tells us that *phusis* was translated to *natura* (i.e., nature) in Latin, which means, instead, birth. In pre-Socratic philosophy *phusis*, as the emerging abiding sway, was understood as *the fixed continuity of that which arises from the concealed*. In Heidegger's historical view, the translation of *phusis* to *natura* underpins the movement from ancient ontology to the modern philosophy of science. Heidegger tells us:

> *Phusis* as emergence can be experienced everywhere: for example, in celestial processes (the rising of the sun), in the surging of the sea, in the growth of plants, in the coming forth of animals and human beings from the womb. But *phusis*, the emerging sway, is not synonymous with these processes, which we still today count as part of "nature." This emerging and standing-out-in-itself-from-itself may not be taken as just one process among others that we observe in beings. *Phusis* is being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable.[45]

In highlighting what Heidegger regards as the fundamental error of modern philosophy, Heidegger emphasizes the difference between studying beings as such and the question of Being. Heidegger proposes to investigate not what is characteristic of beings but what is characteristic of Being.

Heidegger proposes to unfold the *Why* question by means of the question of Nothing. Heidegger at first acknowledges that the phrase "instead of Nothing" contained in the *Why* question appears superfluous. Heidegger tells us that at first blush the *Why* question would appear to be identical with the question of "why are there beings at all?," which, so formulated, clearly and unequivocally seeks the ground of Being, and that, not only is the reference to Nothing apparently superfluous but *that the idea of Nothing is logically contradictory and incoherent.* Nothing, after all, is *no thing*. But that is precisely the point that Heidegger wants to have understood. For Heidegger, modern philosophy is the home of logic and reason and not the home of Being and speaking of Nothing in philosophical terms is therefore an affront to modern philosophy and suborns nihilism. However, there is a hidden presupposition in this position and its rejection is the ground upon which Heidegger's entire thesis will stand; namely, that logic has priority over all that there is, including Being. Heidegger readily agrees that talking about Nothing is unscientific, but his fundamental point is that because logic is dependent upon Being,

45. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics,* 11. Page references are to the 1953 edition of *Einführung in die Metaphysik* published by Max Niemeyr Verlag (Tübingen).

and not the other way around; logic can never be the tribunal in which Being is to be judged. Heidegger concludes that science is derivative of philosophy and, transgressing the border into mysticism, that philosophy, properly understood, stands in a "higher domain and rank of spiritual *Dasein*" where it keeps company only with poetry which is constituted (when good) by an essential superiority of spirit.[46]

Heidegger next turns to the *Why* question itself. On its face, the question interrogates beings by asking what makes a being a Being instead of a non-Being. But in so doing, it is really asking an even more fundamental question, namely, the ground for the fact that beings *are*. And that is a question not about beings but about the being of beings, which we have been calling *Being* all along. So the question that has been identified as most originary is seen to presuppose an even deeper question, which Heidegger formulates as: How does it stand with Being? And this is precisely the question that modern philosophy has forgotten all about.

After a lengthy discussion of the historical disintegration of philosophy, culture, and spirit that coincides with the philosophical and linguistic misunderstanding that ensued as a result, Heidegger turns to a grammatical and etymological exposition that focuses on the understanding of Being in terms of the pre-Socratic Greek language, which may be summarized as follows. The grammar of the ancient Greeks developed under the influence of their conception of Being. In the infinitive form (to be) the definite meanings of Being are blurred so that it is no longer clear what it means for something to be. The substantive (Being) fixes and objectifies the blurring so that it becomes a name for something indefinite. The word *Being* is a leveling off, to the point of emptiness and evanescence, of three root meanings, namely *es*, *bhū*, and *wes*. *Es* is the oldest, from the Sanskrit, and means life, living, that from which out of itself and in itself stands and goes and reposes. *Bhū*, which is Indo-Germanic, belongs to the Greek *phuo* and means to emerge, hold sway, to come to a stand from out of itself and to remain standing. In its original meaning it connoted *c*oming to presence and appearing and coming into the light, illuminating, and shining forth. *Wes* is also Germanic and appears in the inflection of the German word *sein* and means to dwell, to abide, to sojourn. From the three stems we derive three originary meanings: living, emerging, abiding. These three meanings have died out in the abstract indefiniteness of the word "to be."

Accordingly, it serves to ask: Does the emptiness and indefiniteness of the word "being" mandate that our inquiry be abandoned? Must we turn, as modern philosophy has done, to a scientific investigation of beings as such as the horizon at which our knowledge is delimited? Heidegger's answers to these questions are of course in the negative for it cannot escape our notice that in our everyday experience we are surrounded by all sorts of entities and know that they are beings and exist. Says Heidegger:

> We understand the word "Being," and hence all its inflections, even though it looks as if this understanding were indefinite. We say of what we thus understand, of whatever *opens itself up* to us somehow in understanding, that it has meaning. Being, insofar as it is understood at all, has a meaning. To experience and conceive

46. Ibid., 29.

> of Being as what is most worthy of questioning, to inquire especially about Being, then means nothing other than asking about the meaning of Being.[47]

And, indeed, Heidegger's argument proceeds that we, as *Dasein,* have an understanding of Being as implicit in our very constitution of care, for how else can we be the being for whom its own Being is an issue? And this understanding of the Being of *Dasein* must therefore be of the highest rank. For Heidegger (as well as transcendent realism), this is a fact that modern philosophy cannot (even though it attempts to) ignore.

Heidegger's analysis next takes a completely different turn. This time he seeks to understand Being in terms of four specific limitations that have been placed upon it over the history of philosophical inquiry. These are Being and becoming, Being and seeming, Being and thinking, and Being and the Ought, and they are presented in the order in which they have appeared in the history of philosophy. Heidegger's intention is to show that, contrary to common understanding, Being is not restricted by these related concepts and that, instead, Being, as the originary concept and ground of all beings, encompasses and subsumes them.

With respect to *Being* in contradistinction to *becoming*, as might be expected, Heidegger refers us to Parmenides and Heraclitus, two of his heroes. The modern understanding of distinction between Being as having completed the process of becoming is a perversion of the originary meaning of Being and reflects, says Heidegger, a completely artificial opposition of the two pre-Socratics that has been mistakenly adopted by modern philosophy. Instead, asserts Heidegger, Being is the emerging sway and as such represents perdurance in the face of change. In other words, the *Being* of a thing is its *becoming* what it is.

With respect to *Being* in contradistinction to *seeming*, Heidegger tells us that the modern understanding that Being represents the actual and that seeming represents illusion is also incorrect. Upon etymological analysis, seeming is shown to have three modes of meaning: manifestation or self-showing; luster and glow; and semblance or appearance; with the first such modes being primary and comprehending the other two, secondary meanings. As was the case with the first-discussed restriction of Being, the second restriction is seen to be illusory because Being, as the emerging sway, is in itself the seeming or appearing of that which presents itself. And here Heidegger makes the important connection between Being and truth:

> The emerging sway is an appearing. As such, it makes manifest. This already implies that Being, appearing, is a letting-step-forth from concealment. Insofar as Being as such *is*, it places itself into and stands in *unconcealment, aletheia*. . . . [T]he Greek essence of truth is possible only together with the Greek essence of Being as *phusis*. On the grounds of the unique essential connection between *phusis* and *alethiea*, the Greeks could say: beings as beings are true. The true as such is in being. This says that what shows itself in its sway stands in the unconcealed. The unconcealed as such comes to a stand in showing itself. Truth, as un-concealment, is not an addendum to Being.
>
> *Truth belongs to the essence of Being*. . . .[48]

47. Ibid., 63–64.

48. Ibid., 77–78.

With respect to *Being* in contradistinction to *thinking*, we come to the heart of Heidegger's misgivings with modern philosophy and, accordingly, a somewhat deeper analysis is required. Heidegger begins by observing that the opposition between Being and thinking is different from the three others because thinking is not merely put forth in contrast to Being as a faculty by which Being is purported to be understood, but thinking is put over and above Being. As noted earlier, by "thinking," Heidegger means the free re-presenting by *Dasein* to itself of that which appears in order to analyze by means of identifying applicable universals. And thinking occurs under formal rules of thought which we have understood since Aristotle as logic. Logic is the science of *logos*, which is understood here as meaning *assertion*. But, Heidegger tells us that it is by no means clear that thinking is the application of logic and his task is, therefore, to show how its misconstrual as such arose. Heidegger tells us that it began with the introduction by Plato of his theory of Ideas and the development by the Platonic-Aristotelian schools of the rules of logic. Originally, *phusis* and *logos* were closely connected. *Logos* did not mean thinking, understanding, and reason. *Logos* originally meant gathering or bringing together in a process of comparing and contrasting. To make the point, Heidegger reverts yet again to Heraclitus, analyzing two fragments as follows:

> What is said of *logos* here corresponds exactly to the authentic meaning of the word "gathering." But just as this word denotes both 1) to gather and 2) gatheredness, *logos* here means the gathering gatheredness, that which originally gathers. *Logos* does not mean sense or word or doctrine and certainly not the sense of a doctrine but instead the originally gathering gatheredness that constantly holds sway in itself.[49]

Heidegger concludes that "*Logos* is constant gathering, the gatheredness of beings that stands in itself, that is, Being."[50]

Having conjoined *phusis* and *logos* in their original usage, it is now incumbent upon Heidegger to show how they became separated in subsequent philosophy and how logic rose to a position of supremacy over Being. Not surprisingly, Heidegger attributes the inception of the disjunction to a misinterpretation of a famous statement by Parmenides that "thinking and Being are the same." The misinterpretation turns on the meaning of "*noein*" which, according to Heidegger, etymologically means *apprehending* (not thinking) with the consequence that Parmenides is misunderstood to mean that "to be is to think or reason." Instead, Parmenides's meaning is "belonging-together reciprocally are apprehending and Being"—in other words, that Being consists in the apprehension of what is present to it and that apprehension is nothing less than the *coming into Being of man*. As it progressed, the disjunction coalesced around a change in the interpretation of another closely related word, that is, "*eidos*," which means *idea*. Originally, *eidos* stood for that which is apprehended. The *eidos* of something originally meant what is seen in it as it appears, the *look* of something, that "within which and as which the thing comes-to-presence. . . . " Considered in this way, the idea of something has two aspects. The first is that it represents the appearance of that which appears and the second is that it

49. Ibid., 98.

50. Ibid., 100.

represents the *what* of a being. Plato's theory of Ideas, in which the appearance of a thing was reduced to an imperfect copy of the Idea of the thing, formalized the diremption. Heidegger summarizes these circumstances as follows:

> However, as soon as the essence of Being comes to consist in whatness (idea), then whatness, as *the* Being of beings, is also what is most in being about beings. On the one hand, whatness is now what *really is*, *ontōs on*. Being as idea is now promoted to the status of what really is, and beings themselves, which previously held sway, sink to the level of what Plato calls *mē on*—that which really should not be and really *is* not either—because beings always deform the idea, the pure look by actualizing it, insofar as they incorporate it into matter. On the other hand, the *idea* becomes the *paradeigma*, the model. At the same time, the idea necessarily becomes the ideal. What is produced by imitation really "is" not, but only participates in Being, *methexis* (participation). The *chōrismos* (separation) has been ripped open, the cleft between the idea as what really is, the prototype and archetype, and what really is not, the imitation and likeness.[51]

Heidegger goes on to explain that the reinterpretation of *phusis* as idea is accompanied by a corresponding change in the interpretation of *logos*. In the inception, *logos* is the occurrence of unconcealment. But because the gathering that characterizes *logos* is expressed in language (discourse) its nature changes from speaking about beings (as such) to speaking about ideas and gets reinterpreted as assertion. The truth of disclosure is supplanted by the truth of correctness and truth itself becomes a mere property of *logos*. As a result, *logos,* instead of being the gathering gatheredness of that which appears, becomes a proposition to be tested against beings and Being. Being becomes Being-in-a-state, which can be tested against the *logos*, ontology becomes the theory of categories, and *logos* becomes the categorial determination of Being. *Ousia* becomes substance. And with the ascent of the Idea and its categories, all that remained for Western philosophy was to work out the implications. The reinterpretation of Being as thinking requires reinterpretation of becoming, which becomes mere *motion*, and seeming, which becomes *illusion*. And the reinterpretation of Being as Idea gives rise to the Idea of all Ideas, the Idea of the Good. The separation between the Idea of the Good and all the lesser Ideas culminates in rationality's highest achievement, the grounding of morality in Kant's categorical imperative.

To summarize Heidegger's analysis, in the entire history of philosophy, only the pre-Socratics were on the right track to understanding Being. The degeneration of ontology began with Plato's interpretation of Being, which had been understood by the pre-Socratics as *phusis*, as *eidos*. The etymological meanings of the critical Greek terms, especially *logos* and *ousia*, were irretrievably lost when Western scholarship became Latin scholarship. The truth of disclosure became the truth of propositions. Being as Idea culminated in Hegel's Absolute idea and in Kant's moral philosophy.

Heidegger is determined to restore ontology to its pre-Socratic footing so that Western culture can start anew on a sound philosophical basis. Such a beginning must recognize that Being is unrestricted, Being is becoming, Being is appearance, and Being

51. Ibid., 140–41.

is prior to and encompasses thinking and, to the extent it might be fairly said to exist, the Ought. Heidegger concludes that Being is the ground of all there is.

THE GROUND OF BEING

In *Being and Time* and *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger has asked and answered two of the three questions that we will cover in these pages. *Dasein*, as the temporal being for whom his own Being is an issue and as the site at which the world opens up in its disclosure and apprehension, is itself the *meaning* of Being. Surely, without *Dasein*, beings other than *Dasein* would continue to be, but they would no longer be apprehended in the manner that they are by *Dasein*. Temporality, including originary time, World time, and ordinary time, would not exist as such. Beings could not be said to be *in time*. Neither could beings be said to have any meaning, because beings receive their meaning from *Dasein*. Beings would merely be present-at-hand. But *Dasein* is in the World and beings are disclosed to *Dasein* as *phusis* and they are so apprehended. Being is the ground of all beings.

Still, there remain some obvious questions. If Being is the ground of all beings, what is the ground of Being? If Being is not an entity, can it be said to have a ground? How can something exist that is not a being? Or is the question of the existence of Being a tautology?

In *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger addresses these questions through the vehicle of Leibniz's law: *Nihil est sine ratione* (Nothing is without reason). Heidegger, acting quite naturally, reverses the double negatives and shows that the principle states that everything has a reason. But Heidegger explains that Leibniz deliberately formulated the principle in the double negative so that it does not appear as an assessment that invites testing by, for example, scientific method and which can never be proven. By formulating Leibniz's law in the double negative, Leibniz is free to argue that it is a rule of thought that is "directly illuminating," (i.e., that is known by direct intuition).

Heidegger tells us that the principle of reason is no ordinary rule of thought (if there can be such a thing). His explanation is as follows. The other such rules, all of which have been previously examined in these pages, apply as they should, to logical thinking. A thing is identical with itself. A thing cannot be and not be. If a thing is equal to another and that other thing is equal to a third thing, then the first thing is equal to the third. But the principle of reason says that everything has a reason and, as so understood, seems to apply to all of the other rules of thought and, importantly, in the word "reason," which it contains it speaks also to itself. *The principle of reason is, therefore, the principle of all principles.*

But, Heidegger tells us, even this status is insufficient to comprehend the importance of Leibniz's law. Not only does the scope of the principle of reason make it unique but so also does the way it operates within the act of thinking. The principle of reason is a *modus vivendi* lying at the foundation of our pre-ontological cognitive acts. We are by nature cognitive agents and, as such, we always seek proximate and sometimes the most remote causes of things. We ask "why" over and over again until we are at the edge of the

abyss (*abgrund*) of reason. So even if we never heard of the principle of reason we would still operate existentially under its enduring spell.

Heidegger next identifies an important difficulty with this characterization of the principle of reason. We said a moment ago that the principle of reason speaks to itself. But that seems to create a circularity that cannot be abided. Two possibilities therefore emerge. One such possibility is that the principle of reason is not within its own jurisdiction and, therefore, the principle of reason does not require that there be a reason to support it. But this involves a contradiction. The other such possibility is that the principle of reason requires that it have a reason itself and that any such reason also have a reason, and so on, so that the principle of reason is, by its own operation, incoherent. So, like the first possibility, the second possibility seems to be unacceptable on its face. If the principle of reason does not have a reason, then the principle of reason is false. Heidegger's way out of the conundrum is dubious at best. He asks whether, in applying the principle of non-contradiction to the principle of reason, we act mindlessly. He notes that the principle of non-contradiction is a keystone of scientific reasoning to be sure, but, tells us that, ever since Hegel's *Science of Logic*, philosophy must acknowledge the possibility that the fact that something contradicts itself does not mean that it is not real. So where does this leave us with respect to the principle of principles? Heidegger provides an answer that we will soon call into question: "The [p]rinciple of [p]rinciples without reason—for us this is inconceivable. But what is inconceivable is by no means unthinkable, given that thinking does not exhaust itself in conceiving."[52] What is implicit in Heidegger's attempted escape is what was explicit in *Introduction to Metaphysics*; namely, that Being is to be privileged over logic. However, in yielding to this disappointing conclusion, Heidegger fails to consider a third possibility, which is the one that we will adopt and which is that the principle of reason, as the principle of all principles, speaks to itself necessarily and without circularity and in so doing *is its own ground*.

Heidegger is nevertheless prepared to press onward with his exposition of the principle of reason, this time by appeal to the following etymology. As the principle of principles, the principle of reason requires that everything about which it speaks must have a reason, whether or not it speaks to itself. We accept the principle of reason because we regard it as axiomatic, but in saying something is a principle or an axiom we are almost always too glib and must take care to be clear about our meaning. The Latin word for principle is "*principium*." "*Principium*" means that which contains the *ratio* of something else. A principle is an *axiom* to the Greeks. In Greek, "*axiom*" means that which I find worthy and "worthy" means to bring something to shine forth in that countenance in which it finds its repose, and to preserve it therein. The principle of principles is the "*principium-id quod primum*," which means that "which has been grasped, captured, and thus contains what is first, and in this manner is that which stands first in rank." In German, these all connote "Grund-Satz," which although directly translatable to the Greek as "*hypothese*" (hypothesis) was used by Plato to mean "that which already lies at the basis of something else and which always already has come to light through this other, even if we people do not immediately or always expressly notice it." We begin now

52. Heidegger, *Principle of Reason,* 18.

to see where Heidegger is heading, that is, on the path that leads to *phusis* and to *logos* and to Being itself and to the identification of Being with intelligibility.

Heidegger returns to Leibniz. Leibniz calls the principle of reason a *principium grande*, a mighty principle. He says that *Nihil est sine ratione seu nullus effectus sine causa* (nothing is without reason, or no effect is without a cause), thereby rendering the principle of reason equivalent to causality. But he also says "there are two supreme [p]rinciples for all proofs, the [p]rinciple—it goes without saying—of contradiction and the [p]rinciple *reddendae rationis*" which says that "for every truth [true proposition] the reason can be rendered." Thus, the *principium rationis* is the *principium reddendae rationis*. It runs to the heart of cognition: In Latin cognition is *representatio*. Heidegger tells us:

> What is encountered is presented to a cognizing I, presented back to and over against it, made present. According to the *principium reddendae rationis*, cognition must render to cognition the reason for what is encountered—and that means give it back (*reddere*) to cognition—if it is to be discerning cognition. . . . Therefore, for Leibniz the [p]rinciple of [r]eason is the fundamental principle of rendering reasons.[53]

So, the principle of reason is not only the first rule of thought and the *modus vivendi* of *Dasein*, but it is also the fundamental principle of cognition itself, and what is *mighty* about the principle is that it pervades, guides, and supports all cognition that expresses itself in sentences or propositions.

The interpretation of the principle of reason as a principle of cognition raises a profoundly important question the elucidation of which will motivate Heidegger throughout the remainder of *The Principle of Reason*. This question may be stated thusly: as a principle of cognition is the principle of reason restricted only to that which is discernible or does it mean that nothing can be said to be if it cannot be cognized? Heidegger makes unmistakably clear how the *principium reddendae* rationis identifies Being with intelligibility:

> Cognition is a kind of representational thinking. In this presentation something we encounter comes to stand, to a standstill. What is encountered and brought to a standstill in representational thinking is the object. For Leibniz and all modern thinking, the manner in which beings "are" is based in the objectness of objects. For representational thinking, the representedness of objects belongs to the objectness of objects.
>
> But then again the *principium rationis* as the *principium reddendae rationis* says that this representational thinking and what it represents, that is, the object in its obstancy, must be a founded one. The obstancy of the object amounts to the manner in which the object as such stands, which means, is. So the strict formulation of the *principium rationis* as the *principium reddendae rationis* is not a restriction of the principle of reason; rather, the *principium reddendae rationis* is valid for everything that is an object, which means here everything that "is." Accordingly, the strict formulation of the *principium rationis* as the *principium reddendae rationis* contains a very specific and decisive explanation of what the unrestricted [p]rinciple of [r]eason says: nothing is without reason. This now says: something "is," which means, can be identified as being a being, only if it is stated in a sentence that satisfies the fundamental [p]rinciple of [r]eason as

53. Ibid., 22.

> the fundamental principle of founding. What is mighty about the [p]rinciple of [r]eason displays its power in that the *principum reddendae rationis*—to all appearances only a [p]rinciple of cognition—also counts, *precisely in being the fundamental principle of cognition, as the [p]rinciple for everything there is.*[54] (Emphasis added.)

But, Heidegger tells us, even this does not exhaust the might of the mighty principle. The *principium reddendae rationis* means that reasons are not indeterminately and indifferently present but instead that beings may be said to exist only insofar as they appear to reason as a *founded* cognition:

> Only what presents itself to our cognition, only what we en-counter such that it is posed and posited in its reasons, counts as something with secure standing, that means, as an object. Only what stands in this manner is something of which we can, with certainty, say "it is."[55]

At this point, Heidegger has delivered all that he considers important in Leibniz's development of the principle of principles, which can be summarized as Leibniz's recognition that the principle of reason is no mere rule of thought but instead is the mighty principle of the cognition of all that may be said to be, and Heidegger is now ready to part company with Leibniz over its implications, which for Leibniz include proof of the existence of God. Heidegger explains that the principle of reason is a normative principle in the Leibnizian system because it is related to everything there is and that it applies to all *Natura* including all being, nature, and history. Leibniz tells us that "[t]here is a reason in Nature why something exists rather than nothing." Leibniz also tells us that "[t]his reason (in the "Nature" of things according to which they have the inclination to exist rather than not to exist) must be in some sort of real being, or in its cause," and, finally, "(that being in which necessarily exists as the highest reason) is usually named with one word: GOD." Leibniz calls God the "*ultimo ratio Rerum*" (the "highest existing reason of all things"). So we see that Leibniz's characterization of the mighty principle extends it to all that there is and can be thought or said to be, including God, as the First Cause. However, Heidegger accepts the modern mainstream criticism of the First Cause on the basis that it is circular insofar as the principle purports to prove the existence of the same God upon whose existence the principle itself depends:

> Taken to its extreme, [the First Cause argument] means that God exists only insofar as the principle of reason holds. One immediately asks in turn: to what extent does the principle of reason hold? If the principle of reason is the mighty [p]rinciple, then its bepowering is a sort of effecting. In fact . . . Leibniz speaks of an efficacy, an *efficere* that accrues to the supreme principles. However, (according to the principle of reason) all effecting requires a cause. But the first cause is God. So the [p]rinciple of [r]eason holds only insofar as God exists. But God exists only insofar as the [p]rinciple of [r]eason holds. Such thinking moves in a circle.[56]

54. Ibid., 23.
55. Ibid., 27.
56. Ibid., 28.

Heidegger cautions, however, that we should not conclude that Leibniz "acquiesced" in the circularity or that the circularity fully eviscerates the mighty principle. And with this Heidegger makes a subtle distinction that will unfold as his fundamental theme throughout the remainder of his lecture series, namely, the distinction between reason and Being as the subject of the principle of reason:

> What still remains [valid in Leibniz's thinking] is the insight into that upon which everything depends: the [p]rinciple of [r]eason is the [p]rinciple that pervasively bepowers everything insofar as reason, according to the strict formulations of the fundamental principle, insists that each thing that is, is (exists) as a consequence of . . . , which is to say, by virtue of the express, complete fulfillment of the demand of reason. . . .
>
> The *principium reddendae rationis* requires that all cognition of objects be a self-grounding cognition and, along with this, that the object itself always be a founded—which means, securely established-object.[57]

So how does reason "securely establish" an object? The answer is in the completion of the object's conditions of its own possibility. Heidegger explains:

> Reason, which insists on its being rendered, at the same time requires that it, as a reason, be sufficient, which means, completely satisfactory. For what? In order to securely establish an object (*Gegenstand*) in its stance (*Stand*). In the background of the definition of sufficing, of sufficiency (of *suffectio*), there is the guiding idea of Leibnizian thinking—the idea of *perfectio*, that is, of the completeness (*Vollständigkeit*) of the determinations for the standing (*Stehen*) of an object (*Gegenstand*). Only in the completeness of the conditions for its possibility, only in the completeness of its reasons is the status (*Ständigkeit*) of an object through and through securely established, perfect. . . . [T]he title of the [p]rinciple of [r]eason reads, when thought strictly and completely: *principium reddendae rationis sufficientis*, the fundamental principle of rendering sufficient reasons.[58]

Heidegger continues his interpretation more deeply by restating the mighty principle as "Nothing is without a why" in order to employ as a vehicle a wonderful verse from the poetry of Angelus Silesius:

> The rose is without why: it blooms because it blooms,
> It pays no attention to itself, asks not whether it is seen.[59]

Heidegger points out that in the poem the rose is without a "why" (a seeking of its ground) but yet has a "because" (ground) and it exists, unlike *Dasein*, without any concern for its own being. So the mighty principle holds in the case of the rose *qua* object (of our cognition) but not for the rose in its rose-being (in its own right). And this brings us to a new understanding of the mighty principle, in which lies Heidegger's most fundamental of all assertions: the mighty principle tells us that reason demands that reasons be rendered in all cognition of objects, but it tells us nothing about reason itself. In Heidegger's hands, the principle of reason states nothing directly about the

57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., 33.
59. Ibid., 35.

essence of reason and it tells us nothing about from whence the mighty principle makes its demands. For Heidegger, the principle of reason is a principle of Being and it reads in a completely different intonation: "*Nihil est sine ratione*"—every being (as a being) has a reason.[60] So we see that the mighty principle, by way of the example of the rose, shows us that grounds (*grund*) can stand in manifold relationships to us as the cognizing creature. Compare animals and inanimate objects. According to Leibniz (as we saw in chapter 2, "The Death and Resurrection of Metaphysics"), every being is a living being and as such is a representation-striving being. But it is only *Dasein* who can bring before itself grounds of things *qua* grounds. Like the rose, other living things are grounded in their existence but do not live according to reasons. They have a because but not a why. Reason grounds our cognition of objects in Being but it is not, as such, in the Being of such objects.

Heidegger elucidates as follows. The question arises as to whether reasons are always associated with objects, either as "why's" or "because's," or whether they can become dissociated from objects and still be reasons. The question calls upon the principle of reason for some particulars about the essence of reason itself. We see *in the second intonation* that the subject is "every being" and the predicate is "has a reason." It is definitely a statement about Being. The principle of reason represents reason in an essential way, certainly, but it speaks to beings not reason as such. This representation of reason allows it sufficient scope to serve as the guiding principle in the derivation and founding of propositions. The principle of reason itself is under this intonation underivable and therefore the sort of thing that limits thinking. But if we listen to the principle of reason we will hear what it says "to Being belongs something like a ground." Heidegger rephrases the idea simply: "Being : Ground, the same."

Heidegger comes now to the fundament of the analysis embodied in the three volumes under consideration in these pages. The principle of reason, "Nothing is without reason" and "every Being is with reason" contain "is" as their copulas. But Being implies the "is" and renders it redundant. Therefore, the principle of reason means that Being and reason belong together. Heidegger tells us:

> Being and ground/reason belong together. Ground/reason receives its essence from its belonging together with [B]eing *qua* [B]eing. Put in the reverse, [B]eing reigns *qua* [B]eing from out of the essence of ground/reason. Ground/reason and [B]eing ("are") the same—not equivalent—which already conveys the difference between the names "[B]eing" and "ground/reason." Being "is" in essence: ground/reason. Therefore [B]eing can never first have a ground/reason which would supposedly ground it. Accordingly, ground/reason is missing from [B}eing. Ground/reason remains at a remove from [B]eing. Being "is" the abyss in the sense of such a remaining-apart of reason from [B]eing. To the extent that [B]eing as such grounds, it remains groundless. "Being" does not fall within the orbit of the [p]rinciple of [r]eason, rather only beings do.[61]

For Heidegger Being : Ground, the same, but Being itself is ungrounded.

60. Ibid., 39–40.

61. Ibid., 51.

BERGNER'S CREDO

To my knowledge, Heidegger never offered what we would normally regard as a traditional ethics but instead challenges us to return to the openness of Being so that human history can play itself out on a philosophically sound basis. Certainly, Heidegger decries the contemporary epoch which he asserts begins with Plato's objectification of reality as Idea and ends with Nietzsche's nihilism and results in the utter oblivion of Being. As a result, Heidegger is sometimes said to be a cultural relativist. But I think this misses Heidegger's point altogether. Heidegger is anything but a subjectivist and he certainly regards the historical-cultural epochs in Western history from Plato onwards to be predicated upon a profoundly flawed understanding of the essence of humanity. Doubtless, there is a theme in Heidegger's thinking that naturally flows from his idea that reality is *aletheia* that truth is not an absolute entity that is frozen throughout the ages, but that nowise implies that the *mode du jour* is what it *ought* to be, and Heidegger's main emphasis is that precisely opposite the case has prevailed for more than two and a half millennia.

The case that an understanding of the Being of man as *Dasein* does not rule out objective justice is well made by Bergner in *Against Modern Humanism*. Although Bergner is not an avowed phenomenologist or phenomenological ontologist, his philosophy is explicitly compatible with Heidegger's core understanding of the human being as the agent of unconcealment. Bergner traces the history of the West from a different perspective than does Heidegger but reaches a similar conclusion, namely, that modern humanism is ungrounded. Nevertheless, Bergner's thesis is uniquely his own and quite startling. Bergner treats in sequence ancient Judaism, ancient Greece, medieval Christianity, modern philosophy through German idealism, and, finally, modern material reductionism, and identifies the core understandings of each epoch and shows how each relates to the others. For the ancient Jews, the understanding of the human being was membership in the tribe, but insofar as it is based upon faith in Yahweh and not reason its doctrines are not philosophically founded. For the ancient Greeks, the human being is understood primarily as soul (*psuche*) and the theme as developed through Aristotle is striving toward living a completely human life. The most jarring event in Western history was the birth of Jesus, whose teaching propelled the West into Christianity. During the Christian epoch, the human being came to be understood as a psychosomatic unity possessed of the freedom to turn toward or away from God, which represents a melding of the Greek notion of man as body and soul with the Hebrew emphasis on the centrality of religion in human life. As we have seen, modern idealism began with Descartes's division of the human being into body and mind and ended with Hegel's Absolute Ego. And here comes what is perhaps Bergner's most interesting observation: although contemporary mainstream materialism rebukes idealism in general and especially German idealism, it surreptitiously retains the notion of the Ego as the center of its moral philosophy, even though on its own reductionist principles this position is utterly indefensible.

Bergner's other innovation is with respect to the question of how human beings conceived as revealers of Being ought to live. Bergner begins with the observation that human philosophical understanding is achieved by individual effort and requires

pushing forward "beyond every limited view, toward the fullness of what is human" without any guarantee of success:

> What does such a life look like? What is a life which expresses beyond all essentialist views of human beings as tribal members, as souls, as embodied wills, or as minds? What is a life which is open to the fullness of human being, but which understands that such openness is not infinite and complete, but is always somehow rooted in the finitude of a persisting self-awareness? How shall we come truly to know ourselves?[62]

In "Credo," the final chapter of *Against Modern Humanism*, Bergner addresses four areas of human Being, namely, the relationship of man to Nature, to other human beings, to the gods, and in internal life. Inasmuch as Bergner's work is an exposition of the case against humanism, much of his presentation is by way of contrast with other main lines of philosophy, which we will summarize in passing. But what is most interesting to us in our own search for the meaning of Being is not only what Bergner has to say positively about how we ought to live but also the way in which Bergner derives his ethics from his Heideggerian-compatible view of man as the agent of disclosure of the world.

We begin with man's relationship to Nature. Bergner's argument is as follows: As revealers of Being, it is one of our fundamental characteristics to regard Nature with wonderment. We share with Nature our Being and we human beings and Nature reciprocally bring to each other the elements of our unique relationship. Nature is in a certain sense an "idea" of our own making but only to the extent that it is by virtue of human cognition that the world of external things comes out of its concealed potentiality to actuality. Nature can be known only through human classifications and therefore the emergence of Nature into the light of human understanding is dependent upon human understanding. But none of this implies that the human Ego creates, determines, or owns in any way Nature. Neither is the world arbitrary. Nature is given (*es gibt*) to human beings in its relationship of shared Being with us. Accordingly, to be fully human is to recognize our co-determinacy with Nature, to recognize our shared Being with Nature, to regard nature with wonder and gratitude, and to be attentive and open to Nature as it continues to reveal itself and us out of itself and ourselves.

Bergner drives home the point against modern humanism as follows:

> To look upon the world and all within it, including our own [B]eing, as "given" is bound to invoke a certain wonder or surprise. It may, depending on the temperament of the observer, also generate responses from pious gratitude to Schopenhauerian disgust—but wonder is the underlying and more or less inevitable response of anyone who has ever contemplated all that is given to him. This sense of wonder is far from the sense of creative mastery of the contemporary ego. It is far from the idea that the external world is merely given its qualities on loan by the freely creative ego. It is far from the idea that the external world is merely "standing reserve" waiting to be shaped and utilized by the creative ego. It is far from being a "mere pensioner" on human ego.[63]

62. Bergner, *Against Modern Humanism,* 238.

63. Ibid., 238–39.

With respect to our relationship to other human beings, Bergner's starting point is the importance of the social context we inherit in our Being in the world. We cooperate with, struggle with, exchange language and meaning with, and build social and political institutions with other human beings. We seek to understand how things are with each other and through our institutions we seek an understanding of what justice is. Bergner takes on directly Hume's naturalist fallacy (i.e., that "ought" cannot be derived from "is") by identifying many ways in which the notion of "ought" is imbedded in our cognition, our language, and our everyday expectations of one another. In this regard, Bergner offers the example of a table. When we characterize a table we communicate that the relevant entity has certain characteristics that it *ought* to have in order to truly constitute a table. Bergner proposes that it is most appropriate to root the idea of justice in a proper description of a human being because, in so doing, we avoid the obstacles that mainstream philosophy puts in the path of the determination of justice. We thereby avoid the naturalist fallacy, altruistic ethics, or the need to conjure up a world of moral sentiments that, somehow, exists in an obligatory way alongside fact-based science. In order to do that, we first need to understand the difference between "facts" and "values" and how they appear in cognition. Bergner tells us that the notion of contemporary egoism that Ego creates science and scientific things in order to serve its intentions is completely erroneous:

> For surely in the world of day-to-day activity—from a mother and a child to the struggles of people to find justice in a political order—the reality is everywhere exactly the opposite. What one calls something, how one conceives of it and describes it, is everywhere and always pointing toward how one should orient oneself toward it (that is, its meaning). How one thinks of the nature or origin of anything always points in the first instance to some conclusion about it—that is, what is its importance, its significance, its meaning.[64]

Bergner offers two emotionally charged examples of what he asserts is the character of human beings to learn from one another and to contend with one another in the search to understand the objects, institutions, and practices appropriate to justice. Bergner's purpose is not to take sides on the issues he presents but rather to show that the political contentiousness is attributable to a disagreement as to how to understand and characterize issues. The first example offered by Bergner is the issue of abortion. Bergner argues that the agreement with respect to the fact that abortion entails termination of a fetus is trivial and that the real controversy surrounds whether abortion constitutes the exercise of a right to choose or the murder of a human being—in other words, the question at issue is how to describe what an abortion *is*. The second example offered by Bergner is that of terrorism. Bergner frames the question as being whether terrorism is the taking of innocent lives for political purposes or the taking of guilty lives in furtherance of some moral end. Bergner's point is that these debates do not arise from disagreement as to "moral sentiments," but instead arise from the meanings imbedded in how we describe events. Underlying Bergner's analysis is the notion that human beings bring meaning to that which is presented to them as a unified cognitive act and

64. Ibid., 246.

do not, as the contemporary mainstream would assert, attribute meaning to objective entities and events on a basis that is secondary to cognition. What is to be said about the meaning that human beings contribute to cognition? Meaning is neither dispassionate nor merely instrumental to our ends but is rooted in our efforts to orient ourselves to the world, and justice is, concomitantly, the outcome of our efforts to understand how we ought to comport ourselves in the fullness of our humanity in the social and political context of our personal circumstances. But justice acquires an objective content in that understanding and requires us to accept ourselves "as members of our social context and not as a potentiality-bearing ego." Bergner tells us that society is not an arbitrary limitation upon our Being nor a hindrance to realizing our humanity but an important part of what it means to be human. Bergner admonishes:

> If you are a father, act like a father. If you are a husband, act like a husband. If you are a citizen of America, act like one. These are not roles—they are each a genuine portion of your human [B]eing. These features of your [B]eing are not to be cast off at will. Act according to the manifold fullness of the human [B]eing which you are. Do not do so because there is a reward which will maximize your potential to be or to do something else. What after all would be the point of being able to be something else?[65]

Living according to a principle of realizing the fullness of our humanity has at least three other implications. One is that one ought to live a full life, not one that is governed by obsession with one or two aspects (such as our work) of the manifold of our human experience. The second implication is that just as it is the case with respect to our relationship to Nature that Nature does not determine our conduct, neither should our social context preclude us from exercising our own free judgment where we determine justice requires. The final implication is that it is unlikely that we will ever identify a perfect justice that will inform each and every aspect of our lives and should therefore measure our lives in their entirety against the dictates of justice.

With respect to the gods, Bergner's fundamental notion is that "we should seek from the standpoint that there may be a god or gods and a fully human life requires us to seek to know their [B]eing and their will."[66] Although Bergner's religious thinking extends all the way to openness regarding the possibility that superior or supreme beings who are generally beyond our reach may appear or communicate in some form at their discretion, Bergner's openness to the possible existence of God (or gods) is subject to several major qualifications that, broadly speaking, are injunctions against dogmatism. Bergner's argument is that it is philosophically unacceptable to rationalize our own personal or social desires through the medium of religion, or to anthropomorphize the gods, either explicitly or through conception of God having characteristics that are analogous to human willing and human capacity for action, or to speculate concerning the existence of an afterlife the existence of which nowise follows from the existence of God. As to the last, Bergner argues instead that openness and fullness of Being require focus upon life in this world.

65. Ibid., 250.

66. Ibid., 253.

With respect to interior life, Bergner starts from the standpoint that we are all that we are in the broadest sense, including our body, time and place, social relations, and the ways that forces outside of us act upon us. It follows that any attempt to find ourselves by looking "inside" for a pure and essential ego disregards our fundamental Being. And, indeed, openness (i.e., being open to that which presents itself) requires that we allow others to act upon us. Bergner contrasts his view of the nature of the human being with the pure Ego of modern humanism by noting that the latter "is a mythological private 'place' which cannot be acted upon, which cannot be shaken, and which is pure freedom itself" and "if the pure freedom of ego were shaped by what is outside, it would no longer be free."[67]

It follows that our uniqueness derives from our world—not from the separateness of our ego but from our relationships with entities and others and with the gods. Bergner observes that we recognize our uniqueness and persistence in the finitude of our relationships and that in such recognition we are able to recognize the uniqueness of others and thereby transcend ourselves. Thinking is how we transcend our limits, space and time, our relationships and circumstances. Ironically, thinking is our most selfish activity yet it is the means by which we transcend our selfishness. We can transcend our situation by seeing it as our situation. We live a gift not a self-creation.

THE MEANING OF BEING

It is a simple task to find reasons to laud the work of Brentano, Husserl, Heidegger, and Bergner. Indeed, with respect to the work of Heidegger, which will receive most of our attention from here on out, a case can be made that it ranks with Plato, Leibniz, and Kant as the deepest and most profound in all of philosophy, although in my opinion, Plato remains, after more than 2,500 years, without equal. In evaluating Heidegger, especially as he is generally received among contemporary philosophers, it seems almost obligatory to mention that his work carries the regrettable baggage of his political affiliation with the National Socialist movement in World War II–era Germany and his questionable professional distancing from his mentor, Husserl, who was born Jewish and upon whose shoulders Heidegger's work undeniably stands. Notwithstanding that Hitler and his followers bear most of the responsibility for the mind-boggling carnage that occurred during that epoch, it is to be hoped that Heidegger's work will receive broader and fairer consideration on its own merits with the passage of time. Those who allow their personal views about Heidegger to preclude thoughtful consideration of his work only deny themselves the important philosophical experience of his phenomenological ontology.

Having acknowledged the rank of this phenomenological line of philosophy, it must also be stated that the work of Brentano, Husserl, and Heidegger is deeply flawed in ways that will illuminate the path to be followed in our own pursuit of the meaning of Being. Brentano presents a clear and well-thought-out structure of the psychology of thought, which is quite different from the mainstream idea that meaningful mental activity is reducible to logic and logically deduced reality and, in that structure, Brentano has planted the seeds of the phenomenological philosophy that was to follow closely

67. Ibid., 260–61.

upon its heels; nevertheless, in Brentano's adoption of Aristotle's intentionality and his focus on its objects, Brentano presents a one-sided psychology that is far too narrow to achieve philosophical greatness in its own right. Husserl was quick to address this shortcoming in Brentano's work. Husserl's accomplishments include not only the broadening of the domain of his science of consciousness to include that phenomenon together with its objects, but also the development in full of forceful phenomenological methods and articulating the important task of providing a presuppositionless philosophy. However, Husserl's shortcomings are precisely those which are identified by Heidegger in his immanent critique, namely, Husserl's adoption of transcendental subjectivism and his unrecognized presupposition of Being in his critique of consciousness.

Heidegger's greatest accomplishments include: his identification of the meaning of Being as the most originary question and, as such, the one that is implicit in all other questions and assertions; his opening up of the question by means of the interrogation of *Dasein* by phenomenological means; his etymological analysis of the pre-Socratics; and his hermeneutic analysis of Leibniz's principle of reason through which he recasts what was originally intended to be a logical principal into a principle of Being *qua* ground. The interrogation of *Dasein* yields the being who is concerned with its own Being, the being who discloses itself and the World to itself from within itself, the *there* of Being-at-the-point of the opening up of the world, the being who is the totality of its possibilities, the being who is always ahead-of-itself in its care, and the being that temporalizes itself in its self-understanding. One need not embrace this characterization of the human being in its entirety to appreciate that it is a breathtaking portrayal and one that represents a much needed broadening out of Kant's observation that man brings to cognition certain *a priori* concepts that govern his cognition of reality. As we have seen, Heidegger, motivated by his ever-growing concern for the development of historical *Dasein* and his profound discomfort with the linguistically ambiguous terminology bequeathed to philosophy by modern philosophy, abandoned the phenomenological methodology of *Being and Time* for the historical etymological hermeneutics of his subsequent work. The change in methodology does not, however, appear to have impacted Heidegger's results—the result of his analysis of Being in general and of the ground of Being, which is that Being is *phusis*, the emerging abiding sway, and that Being grounds all beings but is itself ungrounded, follows consistently from his phenomenological exposition of *Dasein*.

But Heidegger goes awry in several outcome-determinative respects. Taking Heidegger's errors in chronological order, the first occurs in *Being and Time* where he dismisses the substance of factical morality in his ontological analysis of the phenomenology of *Dasein* with the result that his notion of conscience is functional (as the alarm which awakens *Dasein* from fallenness) but contentless (in its silence). Heidegger's second mistake is seen most clearly in *Introduction to Metaphysics*, where he explicitly treats the possible solutions to the question of the relative priority of Being and logic as though they are binary instead of tertiary (i.e., logic is secondary to Being, Being is secondary to logic, and Being and logic are, to employ Heidegger's terminology, equiprimordial). As a result of this error, Heidegger fails to see that Being and logic must be treated as the unified, ontologically primordial phenomenon, in which Being is understood as the emerging-abiding sway that discloses itself from within itself *in a fundamentally and*

essentially logical way. The third major error that Heidegger makes is his misattribution of the reason for scientific philosophy gaining priority over ontology of Being to the ascendance to supremacy of *logos* over *phusis*, which he asserts was rigidified with the advent of Christianity at which time *logos* was translated into Latin as meaning "word" instead of "gathering gatheredness." Although this mistake does not undercut the validity or value of Heidegger's etymological hermeneutic of the pre-Socratics, it causes Heidegger to misdirect his attack against logic and to misplace the historical tipping point, which we have argued from the outset occurs with the Cartesian decapitation of the soul from the body. The final error that Heidegger makes is a consequence of the second one, namely, the failure to recognize that the principle of reason has three (not two) intonations, with the last such intonation, *Nihil est sine ratione*, being read to mean that *Nothingness* is *irrational*, from which we must conclude that Being is necessary and therefore its own ground.

Bergner's *Against Modern Humanism* is a scathing and penetrating indictment of German idealism and the secular materialism that surreptitiously adopts the Egoism of the former and Bergner's *Credo* provides a celebratory ethics that is an objective antidote to relativism. As such, Bergner's *Credo* represents a welcome and deeply thought out filling-in of the gaping ethical hole in the philosophy of Heidegger and his phenomenological predecessors. Heidegger's notion of Being-towards-its-ownmost-potentiality and Bergner's notion that a human being *ought* to live a fully human life seem to draw heavily on Aristotle's teleology, which asserts the natural movement of beings (in their becoming) towards their *telos* or completeness (perfection). If one begins with the premise, as Bergner does, that it is dogmatic to assert that God exists, then it is impossible to find fault with the substance of his *Credo*, all of which follows from his ontological characterization of human beings as revealers of Being, and I would even go so far as to assert that Bergner comes as close to overcoming Hume's naturalist fallacy as is philosophically possible on a non-theological basis. Indeed, if we all heeded Bergner's *Credo*, the world would doubtless be much more human and humane and a morally better place. Certainly, just as stones must be stones and dogs must be dogs, humans must be human beings, and, if part of being human is acting according to a moral principle, then we ought to do that, even if the principle itself is grounded in our own humanity. So, in that sense we can say with confidence along with Bergner that one ought to live openly and with gratitude, that one ought to take Nature and others into account and welcome interaction with them, and that one ought to live fully in the world in which one finds himself thrown. But if one rejects the premise that the existence of God is not demonstrable, then, without rejecting the substance of Bergner's *Credo* (except insofar as it is predicated on his own, uniquely open agnosticism), we can go much further in our characterization of Being and the Being-towards of the human Being—all the way to *Being-towards-God*.

With that, we have finally arrived at the point where, from these words onward, we can focus on providing the philosophical basis for the existence of God, the manner in which he can only be understood within the human capacity to understand, and the moral implications of his existence and our understanding of it. Heidegger tells us that questioning is a process in which the questioner has at the outset some idea about what he seeks. We have just articulated whither we are heading. In the remainder of this chapter,

our vehicle will be a critical examination of Heidegger's great work as summarized in the previous pages. We have already identified our main points of difference. After correcting for Heidegger's errors, we will recharacterize *Dasein* (which is a nomenclature we will shortly abandon to avoid any confusion between the *Dasein* of Heidegger and our own view of the human being) as the being who is fundamentally moral in nature and who is guided in his moral journey through his possibilities for Being by a Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility that is fundamentally and definitionally good.

We will consider our criticisms of Heidegger not in the chronological order in which they are presented above, but in the order that is most suited to a cohesive exposition. The question of the relative priority of Being and logic is the most important question of all and the ontological subordination of logic along with the Cartesian error of dividing man into body and soul represent the two most disastrous errors of modern philosophy. The first demotion of logic occurred with Kant in his privileging of the categories of empirical understanding over the logic that he deemed to be abstracted from it. In the instant case, by placing Being over and above logic, Heidegger makes substantially the same error as Kant and, in Heidegger's resulting acceptance of Nothing as a delimiter of Being, Heidegger pays a comparably heavy price. Heidegger's motivation, which is to purge historical *Dasein* of the scientific metaphysics that led to modern nihilism, is noble enough. However, the problem with modern metaphysics is not that it holds logic, which we have asserted is embedded in the ontology of all objects, in too high esteem, but rather the problem that Heidegger identifies at the outset of his philosophy, namely, that scientific philosophy, in its exclusive focus on *beings*, presupposes an understanding of *Being* that it does not have the tools to investigate and therefore never offers.

This brings us to a point that was mentioned in chapter 1, "Introduction," that requires addressing prior to continuing with our critique of Heidegger's ontology. It was there asserted that the traditional scientific approach to metaphysics, with its emphasis on beings and its presupposition of their Being, remains a valid methodology as long as one understands what is presupposed by that approach. In our initial cut at metaphysics we asserted that in order for there to be objective knowledge there must exist a self-conscious thinker, objective rules of thought, and an orderly world comprising only objects that are, or inherit from, logical objects. Heidegger might fairly object that this approach presupposes the Being of the objects we reduced by thought experiment to logical objects and the world in which all such objects and we as their thinker exist. From the strict standpoint of Heidegger's ontology, although we are certain that the present-at-hand world exists independently of the mind of man, it must forever remain unintelligible to us. But under our initial approach, there is nothing to preclude us from acknowledging all of our presuppositions and accepting, provisionally, that the empirical and theoretical are as they are commonly understood to be and again, provisionally, to bring them before our reason to see how they are constituted. And the result of that examination, which must still be regarded as provisional, is that logical objects are the originary beings of all cognition. The fact that the analysis presupposes Being does not render it invalid; instead, it merely requires additional examination of our presuppositions to see whether they are necessary or may be eliminated or whether they are inconsistent with our provisional conclusions. In other words, that we assess logical objects to equate with

the very Being we are presupposing does not, without more, negate the notion that the human being, is fundamentally a revealer of Being and that cognition is part of a unified act involving a cognizing "I" and an object of cognition.

The examination commences by seeking, as does Heidegger, an understanding of Being through the interrogation of *Dasein* and proceeds with the subsequent elucidation of the Being of beings. For present purposes, we can adopt all of Heidegger's relevant interpretation in *Being and Time* and in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (other than the privileging of Being over logic) all the way to the characterization of Being as *phusis*, which is the emerging abiding sway, which is identity through change. We ask: How do we experience and understand *phusis*? And also: Is there a more primordial way of understanding the essence of the emerging abiding sway? The answer to the first question is that the emerging abiding sway is everywhere and always experienced as the manifestation of *the unity among manifolds,* which is temporalized in the case of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand objects and which is experienced all at once in the case of theoretical objects. To answer the second question, we must see whether we can identify a further ontological reduction of the unity among manifolds. Indeed we can: to be intelligible, the emergence of the emerging abiding sway cannot be haphazard, but instead occurs in an orderly fashion and, as a result, *the unity of* phusis *is always and everywhere reducible to the unity of logical objects*. Our provisional understanding remains intact after this second cut of analysis—it seems correct that we cannot understand unity among manifolds, identity through change, or the emerging abiding sway, except through the ontology of logical objects.

We have one more step to complete before we can conclude that the phenomenological understanding of *phusis* implies its logicality, which is to turn our inquiry back to the interrogation of *Dasein* itself to see whether the elements of its ontology (as given by Heidegger) may themselves be understood in terms of the logical unity among manifolds. At the various levels of his interpretation, Heidegger characterizes *Dasein* as temporality, care, and Being-in-the-World, as the totality of its potiential-for-Being, and as various versions of what Bergner appropriately calls the revealer of Being. It will be remembered that the temporality of *Dasein* arises as a result of its having the character of "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-World) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-World)," which we have already characterized in turn as a *unity that is always in the figurative motion of becoming itself* and never in the stasis of having achieved its potentiality for Being. At root, temporality is, therefore, a manifestation of orderable unity among manifolds, is undeniably logical in its structure, and underlies the intelligibility of *Dasein*. Considered as care, *Dasein* is thrown projection plus fallenness/anxiety. Again, *Dasein* is understood as an orderable unity of relation among the individual elements of care (i.e., thrownness, projection, and fallenness or anxiety). As the totality of its potential-for-Being, *Dasein* is yet again an orderable unity among manifolds. The unity is the individual *Dasein* considered as a totality and the manifold is the individual *Dasein*'s potentiality which is orderable in many different ways including the ways in which at each moment *Dasein*'s potentiality depends upon its thrownness which in turn depends in part upon the decisions that *Dasein* has already made with respect to its potentiality-for-Being. In other words, *Dasein*'s potentiality-for-Being is anything but

random, its order relates to its thrownness, and its thrownness is temporally ordered. Heidegger tells us that *Dasein*'s character as Being-in-the-World depends upon *Dasein*'s having an understanding of "something like Being" and "something like a World," but, yet again, we can go deeper ontologically. All that *Dasein* must bring to rational experience in order to understand something like Being and something like the world of its re-presentation is *an intuition of orderable unity among manifolds*. With such an understanding, both Being and World may readily be assembled by *Dasein* in its intuitional interpretation of that which is presented to it. We have already seen that Being as *phusis* is orderable unity among manifolds, and World, as the totality of *Dasein*'s engagements, is the (temporally) orderable unity among the manifold of such engagements.

We conclude that cognition, whether scientifically or phenomenologically understood, whether of objects considered as mind-independent or as re-presented to a cognizing "I," occurs with respect to objects which are or which inherit from logical objects and are in that sense and to that extent fundamentally logical. Cognition is not illusory or random. Cognition is structured in a sequential, countable, and magnitudinal way. And, indeed, Leibniz's mighty principle—the *principium reddendae rationis* which is the principle of cognition accepted by Heidegger and which says that *cognition must render to cognition the reason for what is encountered*—tells us precisely that. Cognition can only occur if it is logical and logicality cannot ensue except under the ontology of logical objects. Logic is the logic of logical objects, not something independent of them, and the Being of all such objects is their intelligibility. *Logic is the articulation of Being.*

Characterizing Being (or anything else for that matter) as being pre-logical is, accordingly, incoherent and renders ontology mere gibberish. If it were otherwise, the question would immediately arise how it is possible that *Dasein* can utilize a pre-logical sense of Being to experience (constitute) itself or the entities that disclose themselves to it as an entity that is a logical unity among manifolds. In other words, if *Dasein* has pre-knowledge access to an unformed and ambiguous sense of Being from which it may so constitute itself and the other entities in the world, then there is no other explanation for the ontical structure of such entities other than that it must correspond to that sense of Being in all important respects of their presencing, including, most importantly, the logical structure of objects of thought and the spatio-temporal characteristics of extended objects. Such an unformed and ambiguous sense of Being would remain irretrievably mired in its own unintelligibility. We must ask: How is it possible to assemble logic from objects whose cognition is given solely through the intuition of the pre-logical? The answer is that it is not.

Another way of making the same point against Heidegger in his own terms is that if logic is not fundamental to Being, reason under the principle of principles must be treated as part of the peculiar ontology of *Dasein* and not part of an orderly Reality. In other words, if logic is not codeterminate with and of Being, then it must be something that *Dasein* itself brings with it in its Being in relation to the World. In such event, the ontical fact of reason would have profound ontological importance for *Dasein,* which would have to be understood as the being whose mode of Being includes the logical interpretation of a disorderly world. But what would ground such interpretation? The temporality that temporalizes experience is subject to a prior logical structure (thrownness

as past, projection as future, and Being-alongside as present) that it does not create. And so must be Reality, else, not only would Silesius's rose be without a why but it would also be without a because and no human reason would be able to make sense of it. It is indeed odd that Heidegger, who made so much of the identity of Being and ground and of Being and intelligibility, could find it possible to place one above the other.

At this point it is worth reverting briefly to our earlier, traditional analysis of the logical structure of space and time to consider whether it withstands our new understanding of Being as it relates to the question of the reality of the world independent of the human mind. Two questions must be asked. How does our position on the logical structure of objects relate to the question of the existence of reality independently of the human mind? Does the existence of a mind-independent reality, the logic of which is not sourced in the human intellect, negate the notion of the human being as the revealer of being? The answer to the first question is precisely the same as earlier given. Man does not create reality, but rather interprets reality and his ability to interpret it objectively depends upon the mind-independent existence of objects which inherit from logical objects—in other words, reality must be ordered logically independently of any human overlay upon it. The answer to the second question is, decidedly not. Logical order is the only constraint which necessarily must be placed upon mind-independent reality. The manner in which that order is interpreted by the human being in the process of cognition is *decidedly human*. The human being may bring either or both of temporality and spatiality to the cognition of objects because both are logically structured. Naïve realism is not necessarily implied by the logical structure of reality and indeed, for reasons earlier expounded upon, it is probably not the better view. And, *Dasein*, as the being concerned with its own Being and with Being in general is *the only entity that can attribute Being as such to reality. Dasein* remains the revealer of Being, even in a logically structured world.

We have observed on more than one occasion that Heidegger's position on this issue is another manifestation of the sort of error committed by Kant in limiting logic to the transcendental and prioritizing the categories of understanding over it. The difficulty of so doing remains the same in each case. Objective knowledge cannot be subjectively sourced. To the contrary, as we have seen, objective knowledge depends upon mind-independent, self-justifying *a priori* rules of thought, an empirical reality that is orderly in a manner that may be understood under the aegis of general logic, and consciousness of self as a persistent, rational entity. To be sure, *Dasein* plays an important role in that trilogy but its role does not place it above the orderly universe in which it dwells in its *Being-in-the-World*. *Dasein* cannot impose the conditions of objective knowledge upon a chaotic world in which it also exists; chaos cannot produce order from chaos. *Dasein* can only reveal the world in its objectivity. In this regard, it is particularly telling that Heidegger characterizes Being as ground. But we must immediately ask: as ground of what? The answer startles: Because ground is always *the ground of something* it cannot be thought to occur in the absence of the predication that it grounds. Being is not ground but *grounded predication*. And, as we know from Leibniz, imbedded in the very notion of grounded predication is what we call reason or logic. If Being were ungrounded, then all that it grounds would also be ungrounded; the very notion calls to mind the ancient conception of the world as sitting

on the back of an elephant which stands on the back of a turtle. Even worse, if Being were ungrounded, then it would be unintelligible and therefore unthinkable.

This brings us nicely to perhaps the most important consequence of Heidegger's mistaken privileging of Being over logic. Heidegger correctly recognizes that the principle of reason in its first intonation is the first and highest principle of thought and that in its second intonation it is not merely a principle of reason but also one of Being. *Nihil est sine ratione* (the first intonation) means that there is a sufficient reason for everything. *Nihil est sine ratione* (the second intonation) means that every being has a ground which is Being itself. But Heidegger, in his zeal to make the case against scientific metaphysics, is blind to the obvious connection between the two intonations, which gives rise to a third and ontologically highest intonation. *Nihil est sine ratione* means that *Nothing(ness) is irrational* (and incoherent) and that, therefore, Being is necessary and, therefore, Being is *its own ground*. Indeed, conversely paralleling Heidegger's grammatical strictness in his assertion that, to avoid the redundancy of the copula when Being is the subject of a sentence, it is necessary that it merely be directly related to its predicate (where he pronounces "Being and ground: the same"), we should avoid connecting Nothingness with something via the copula and state "Nothing(ness): irrational," or to emphasize the third intonation, "*Nihil: sine ratione*."

It will be recalled that Heidegger takes great care to avoid the apparent circularity of attempting to prove the existence of God as the uncaused cause through employment of the principle of reason, which Heidegger asserts along with the modern mainstream depends upon the existence of God in the first place, and that his solution is not to discard the principle but rather to restrict its applicability to beings and not to reason itself. Although Heidegger's avoidance of this difficulty does not preclude him from advancing wonderfully far in the remainder of his investigations, it does prevent him from reaching the end that is implicit in his starting point. Heidegger's conclusion is that Being and ground are the same but that Being itself is the ungrounded (*abgrund* or abyss). This conclusion follows from his restriction of the principle of reason and his placement of Being above logic. But observe what happens when one corrects for the latter error. If, as we have seen, Nothingness becomes irrational, then Being becomes (if you will) *necessary*. And, as the ontologically most originary concept, it cannot be grounded by anything else but it also cannot, due to its necessity, be itself ungrounded. *Instead, Being must be its own ground*. So when we say "Being and ground: the same," we mean it literally and fully. Being, as grounded predication, is both subject and predicate. It is the ground that grounds itself, the ground of grounds.

This idea strikes us as odd at first blush because, considered in this way, Being is, of course, unlike any ordinary being, but it shows itself as quite familiar upon only a little examination. The idea is nowise circular. We have seen that all beings in their grounded predication inherit the logicality of logical objects. Being, as the grounded predication of beings, is that which renders beings intelligible. Being is that which empowers the mighty principle and makes possible the rendering to reason of reasons. Being is intelligibility itself. And, as such, Being must render itself as intelligible—nothing else can do that. *Being is therefore the intelligibility of all that is intelligible, including intelligibility itself.* Being is intelligibility turned upon itself. It is the light that illuminates all that may

be illuminated and seen, including the illuminating light itself. Being is the *ultimo ratio Rerum,* the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility and also itself. Its familiarity can be seen simply by considering the following: we not only think logically about the world but we also think about logic itself and when we do so we turn our reason upon itself. And it is here that we reach what is truly called *direct intuition*. Direct intuition is reason's self-justification. Reason rests comfortably with itself because there is no other place for reason to go. Reason does not rest at axioms or principles. The logicality of Being is known by the direct perception of the irreducible; Being, intelligibility, and logical predication are what the mind sees when it thinks, which is to say *when it represents the irreducible to itself and looks to see what is there.* Our familiarity with Being as its own ground can also be seen in the ancient self-identification of God to Moses: "I AM THAT I AM," which is thought to have been written in the book of Exodus sometime during the sixth and fifth centuries BC about an event that is thought to have transpired nearly one thousand years earlier, which it is interesting to note is also approximately one thousand years before Thales, the first of the known pre-Socratics.

We can and must go further than merely equating Being and intelligibility. In idle conversation (and idle philosophy) we far too often jumble together words that in themselves have meaning but when placed together are contradictory and incoherent. This happens, as we have just seen, when we speak of Nothingness, which is inconceivable and unthinkable and yet appears to be meaningful only because we are very familiar with the absence of individual entities. This also happens when we attribute to God powers that are beyond our ability to conceive, which is indeed tempting for trivially obvious reasons. But what powers could we think that we are speaking of when we say that they are unintelligible or beyond conception? *For similar reasons, we must be clear that intelligibility is not a limit but that which encompasses all that there can be said to be.* To say that there can be something else is to muddle together the concept of Being with something other than Being, which is, of course, a self-contradiction.

We can now move on to consideration of Heidegger's first-described error, which is his failure to give proper ontological weight to substantive factical morality. We must first consider with some specificity which of the ontological characteristics of *Dasein* we are prepared to accept. As we did in the discussion of unity among manifolds, we can survey *Dasein* from the top down, starting with temporality. In that regard, Heidegger's work can fairly be viewed as a neo-Kantian working out of time as an *a priori* condition of the possibility of empirical experience. We have previously agreed with Kant that time is not an empirical, mind-independent entity but rather a reflection of the way in which the human being organizes what it presented in sensory experience. Heidegger's reduction of ordinary time to a series of temporally structured occurrences in which *Dasein* presses forward into and repetitively reinterprets its potentialities in its Being-towards-Death has the advantages of internalizing the empirical sensation of ordinary time in a manner that is logical and fully consistent with our own notion of intelligibility. However, it is ontologically dependent upon the structure of care from which it is deduced. That structure includes thrownness, projection, and fallenness or anxiety. To be sure, these elements of *Dasein*'s ways-of-Being are for the most part unique to the human being and seem to be important in a categorial way. With respect to thrownness,

it is beyond dispute that how we comport ourselves in the world is fundamentally, but not exclusively, dependent upon our historical, cultural, and social circumstances. With respect to projection and fallenness, it is also safe to say that when we are absorbed in the world (Being-alongside and Being-with) we are largely if not completely free from the anxiety that accompanies our awareness of our finitude and when we are so aware we are unable to stay consciously in the moment and always seem to be oriented to the future. Whether the significance of projection also accompanies fallenness seems less than clear. With respect to anxiety, there can be no doubt that the human being seems uniquely ill-at-ease in the world, even to the extent of devising many strategies and preoccupying itself with many diversions for the purpose of quelling its characteristic *angst*. Whether Heidegger is correct in attributing anxiety to *Dasein*'s Being-towards-Death or his concern for his own Being-moral we will discuss in a moment. But first we can summarize thusly: Heidegger's characterization of *Dasein* as the being for whom its own Being is an issue is a wonderful and almost unfathomably pithy reduction of the essential human Being.

It is striking that Heidegger, who is so astute at identifying that which is factical in *Dasein* and which has existential importance, completely misses the mark on the fact of morality. This is the case all the more so because Kant, in making the fact of morality the centerpiece of his moral philosophy, puts all subsequent ethical philosophers in the posture of having to address it. Nevertheless, the closest that Heidegger comes to acknowledging the fundamental importance of moral behavior is in his exposition of conscience, which, supporting as it does his foundational concept of anticipatory resoluteness, cannot accommodate such an important mistake without undercutting his entire philosophy. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger gives morality only cursory mention (treating common morality as presumptively representing error) and instead asserts that the importance of conscience lies in that fact that it calls *Dasein* from inauthentic fleeing of Being to authentic care for its ownmost finitude in Being-towards-Death. But Heidegger's concept of conscience is utterly an empty one which disregards the substantive facticity of morality, and the factical nature of moral behavior means that *Dasein's* care does not blindly project in Being-towards-the-end but, in selecting among its potentiality-for-Being, that *it acts under a moral principle* (which it often disregards) the urgency of which is imbedded in the finitude of *Dasein* and which *gives Dasein an ontologically moral character*.

From a phenomenological perspective, we are fully justified in accepting the facticity of *Dasein's* morality (as what Heidegger would call an *existentiell*), but we need to connect it on an existential basis with *Dasein's* fundamental concern for its own Being. In other words, we need to show that there is a basis in the Being of *Dasein* for morality. Morality, as experienced by *Dasein*, consists of two elements. The first is an understanding of good and bad, right and wrong. The second is an understanding that the idea of goodness is obligatory for *Dasein*. In order to have an understanding of good (and its absence, not-good), *Dasein* must have an understanding, not just of Being (as Heidegger asserts) but of perfection, (i.e., *perfect Being*). It should go without saying that such an understanding cannot come from *Dasein's* factical existence. Instead, it can only come from *Dasein's* pre-ontological understanding of beings as logical objects and *the logical necessity of Being.* And *Dasein's* understanding of the obligatory nature of morality,

(i.e., what Heidegger refers to as the "Ought"), derives also from the logical necessity of Being, in particular from the fact that Being is its own ground. Although these two ideas will be worked out in detail in the following chapters we can observe here that we have already identified the source of the moral obligation under which *Dasein* operates, namely, the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility.

Moral facticity requires recharacterization of Heidegger's concept of conscience to accord more closely with the common understanding and his concept of anticipatory resoluteness as an authentic potentiality-for-Being-*moral* in *Dasein's* Being-towards-Death. Heidegger's understanding of the movement of *Dasein* calls upon Aristotle for its inspiration. Aristotle understood perfection as the possession by a thing of its *telos.* For Aristotle, an entity is perfect only when it achieves the Being of what it is to be in its own essence, that is, its ownmost Being. For Aristotle, all real entities participate in their *telos* and continually strive, without success, towards its possession. In Heidegger's philosophy, *Dasein*, as the being for whom its own Being is an issue, is always striving not for possession of an essential *telos* as such but for its ownmost potentiality for Being, which it alone is free (within the context of its own thrownness) to determine. Seen in this way, Heidegger's *Dasein* is another example of modern egoism. Bergner seeks, quite effectively, to reign *Dasein*, the revealer of being, back into moral objectivity, which, by adopting an implicitly Aristotelian view of Being, Bergner successfully accomplishes to the extent that it can be done without taking a view on the existence of God as the source of morality. For Bergner, because man's essence is openness and wonderment, he should strive always to its possession and should comport himself in the world accordingly.

Bergner's innovation may guide us further. Under our recharacterization of *Dasein*, authentic, ownmost potentiality for Being requires action in accordance with a moral principle whose source is external to him. Unlike all other beings, man, for whom Being is an issue, is not limited merely to possession of a *telos* that is limited and measured by his capabilities. Man, unlike all other Beings, knows of perfection and therefore can and does *consciously* strive for a *telos* which he can never possess. It is true that most men are anxious about their death when confronted with it but I do not believe this to be the source of anxiety that is ontologically significant, and I would note that of the too many *natural* deaths I have personally witnessed *not a single one* was faced by the dying with fear—indeed it seems that what is feared most often is not death in and of itself but *untimely* death. Man is the only being who understands his own imperfection and who also knows that in his finitude he can never achieve perfection. We have accepted broadly the character of self as described generally by Heidegger in *Being and Time* as *Dasein* insofar as is meant that man is the being who is peculiarly concerned about his Being and who, at each moment, acts under a compulsion to lead his life in a manner in which he must choose between the being he will be from among all the other possibilities that exist and to which he is open. But man cannot and does not choose among his potential ways-of-Being without regard for the Ought because he cannot ignore it even if he tries. In Being-towards-the-end, man is not mere Being-towards-Death but instead he is Being-towards-perfection, which is to say, that he is Being-towards-God and his anxiety is attributable to the impossibility of his ever achieving success. Man may orient himself toward God but he can never achieve perfect godliness. And the call of

conscience is exactly as it is commonly understood, which is a call to an authentic way of Being-towards-God.

Interpreting *Dasein* as Being-towards-God may require an additional and important amendment to Heidegger's characterization. It will be recalled that, for Heidegger, *Dasein* is neither Cartesian "I"-substance nor Kantian "subject," but is instead potentiality-for-Being-one's-Self (as care). This means that *Dasein* is always and everywhere in relation to an empirical World as the point at which the World opens up. *Dasein's* World as defined by Heidegger is limited to the ready-to-hand, the present-at-hand, Others, and *Dasein's* own care. But when one considers the World to which *Dasein* is in relation to include transcendent reality, including, especially, God, it is no longer clear that *Dasein's* Being is coterminous with its own, self-interpreted physicality. This has two implications. The first is that *Dasein* may indeed be the soul that we have argued from the outset is disclosed to itself from within itself as a persistent, morally obligated and substantive entity. The second is that if *Dasein's* ownmost potentiality-for-Being includes relation with God, *Dasein's* care may include on a teleological basis the self-overcoming of its ownmost temporality.

Of the issues we have identified with the work of Heidegger, there remains to be addressed only Heidegger's historical misplacement of the irretrievability of the obliteration of Being at the hands of those who translated the Gospel according to St. John the Evangelist into Latin. As we have thematically emphasized, Being and logic go hand in hand and, therefore, although the ontology of Being must embrace logic and its relations, a scientific-based metaphysics is subject to too many inherent difficulties, which we have already elucidated, for it to supersede ontology. However, although it cannot be denied that the term "*logos*," from which the English word "logic" was translated into the term "word," Heidegger's argument that the definitive historical development in this regard was the advent of Christianity and the identification in the Gospel of St. John the Evangelist of Jesus as being the *Logos*, that is, the Word, is uncharacteristically superficial and demonstrably incorrect.

Heidegger bases his argument for the completion of the ascendance to primacy of logic over Being on the idea that insofar as Jesus is the Word, Jesus is the mediator between God and man who conveys the commandments of God (the Father) to humanity. The case in rebuttal begins with the gospel itself:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.[68]

It is especially striking that in this very passage, where Jesus is identified as the Word, the full depiction of Jesus has nothing to do with commandments but instead emphasizes Being and disclosure and it does so to a large degree in terms that are precisely those upon which Heidegger's etymological exposition relies! It is of course true that Jesus is characterized as the Word. But it is also true in the same passage that he is

68. John 1:1–5 (NAB).

characterized as God, the maker of all things, and the light of men. Elsewhere in the same gospel as well as in the synoptic gospels, Jesus self-characterizes as the Good Shepherd, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega, the Truth, the Life, and the Way (to God, the Father). These characterizations are not in any way superseded by Jesus's characterization as the Word, but are rather embellishments on its meaning. Ironically, they too reflect virtually all of the ways in which Heidegger characterizes *phusis* (emerging sway) or its synonyms including *phainesthai* (lighting-up, self-showing, appearing), *logos* (gathering gatheredness and circle[69]), and *aletheia* (truth). Jesus is the appearance of God as a man and is explicitly characterized as light and truth and, as the Good Shepherd, what else is he other than the One *who gathers his flock* (not randomly, but according to a principle of those who listen to the truth (i.e., hear his voice). Moreover, even at the end of the Scholastic period (let alone at the advent of Christ), that the *Word* is clearly understood in a special way that belies Heidegger's position is evidenced by the hermeneutics of St. Thomas Aquinas: (1) the Word cannot be a human or angelic word because it precedes humans and angels and because it was not made since all things were made by it, and so Jesus can only be the Word of God; (2) the Word differs from human words because it is expressive of all that is in God and not of imperfect human understandings; (3) the term Word is chosen to convey the idea of Jesus as having come *to manifest* the Father; (4) the term Word is chosen over the term notion (*ratio*) to reflect that although the Son exists in the Father he has the operative world-creative power; (5) the prefatory phrase "in the beginning (*arche*, which means principle, beginning, and origin, among other things)" conveys that Jesus is the *principium* (principle), in the sense in which life is said to be "in" God and, as a principle, is honored as determining all and, by reference to other passages in the Old and New Testaments, the Word connotes Wisdom and Truth; and (6) that the Son is said to be "in" the Father because he has the same essence (consubstantiality) as Father.[70]

It would seem, then, that the characterization of Jesus as the Word is intended to connote that he, along with God the Father, *is the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility* who, together (as One) are the source of all meaning that human beings bring with them to the world and without whom all meaning would be closed off from us. Consider, in this regard, what Heidegger has to say about the special meaning-giving meaning of the word Being:

> Suppose that there were no indeterminate meaning of Being, and that we did not understand what this meaning signifies. Then what? Would there just be one noun and one verb less in our language? No. *Then there would be no language at all.* Beings as such would no longer open themselves up in words at all; they could no longer be addressed and discussed. For saying beings as such involves understanding beings as beings—that is, their Being-in advance. Presuming that we did not understand Being at all, presuming that the word "Being" did not even have that evanescent meaning, then there would not be any single word at all. We ourselves could never be those who say. We would never be able to be

69. Heidegger himself makes especial note of Fragment 10e of Heraclitus in which it is written: "Gathered in itself, the same is the beginning and the end in the circumference of the circle."

70. See, Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, Part I, Chapter 1.

> those who we are. For to be human means to be a sayer. Human beings are yes- and no-sayers only because they are, in the ground of their essence, sayers, the sayers. That is their distinction and also their predicament. It distinguishes them from stone, plant, and animal, but also from the gods. Even if we had a thousand eyes and a thousand ears, a thousand hands and many other senses and organs, if our essence did not stand within the power of language, then all beings would remain closed off to us—the beings that we ourselves are, no less than the beings that we are not.[71]

If this book were a work of apologetics, we would, of course, make much, much more of St. Thomas's hermeneutics of the Gospel of St. John the Evangelist. However, to be clear, the point of the foregoing biblical hermeneutics is *not* apologetics but rather to show that the translation of "*Logos*" to "Word" does not pave the way for a scientific metaphysics that excludes ontology and instead, taken in full context, shows that Christianity has always considered the Son and the Father as representing the same, perfect, and ontologically supreme Being and not mere logic. In fairness, it should be mentioned that during the Scholastic period, which immediately preceded the advent of modern philosophy, theology became unabashedly Aristotelian and, indeed, this was the era of the formulization of the various Aristotelian logical arguments for the existence of God. However, two additional points preclude attributing the ascendance of scientific metaphysics to the Latin scholarship of the church during this (or any other) period. The first is that the early and medieval church first resisted philosophy and then embraced it only in the context of *faith seeking understanding* and not *vice versa*. The second is that *the church also resisted science* and, as we have repeatedly asserted, modern philosophy is fairly understood in the context of an unabated, centuries-long rebellion against the church. Accordingly, we continue to maintain that the usurpation by modern science of philosophical territory over which it can never have authority begins with Descartes.

There is one final point to be made in connection with Heidegger's misplacement of the rigidification of scientific philosophy at the advent of Christianity which has been saved for last because it has much broader implications. In the preceding pages, we have discussed various views of the nature of man, including the reductionist views of scientific philosophy, Descartes's dualism, Leibniz's monads, and the Ancient Greek conception of man as soul. In considering and rejecting each of these, we have adopted yet another conception, which is the psychosomatic unity bequeathed to us by Christianity. Although Heidegger does not adopt this or any of the other views in his characterization of *Dasein*, there is an undeniable compatibility between *Dasein* and the view of man as a psychosomatic unity. The compatibility exists on two grounds. The first and most obvious one is in Heidegger's emphasis of the unity among manifolds (*phusis*) that characterizes Being. The second is a bit more subtle and it arises out of *Dasein's* Being-in-the-World. In its Being-in and its Being-with, *Dasein* is, along with Others, disclosed to itself from within itself as part of the (physical) World. But *Dasein*, as Being-there, is more than a mere physicality (which would render it present-at-hand)—it is the unified point of relationship with the World at which the world, including its own being as *self-interpreted physicality,* is opened up to it. Seen in this light, the distinction between

71. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 62–63.

Dasein and the view of man as a psychosomatic unity, if there is one, pales. The points to be made as a result are twofold. First, since the view of man as a psychosomatic unity is compatible with *Dasein*, it is difficult to maintain that scientific philosophy was predestined by the advent of Christianity and, instead, that misfortune should, as we have been asserting all along, be laid at the feet of Descartes. Second, we may accept *Dasein,* recharacterized as the revealer of Being who is Being-towards-God, without abandoning our view of man as a psychosomatic unity.

So, where do we stand in our conception of the Being of the human being? We do not need to accept phenomenology as a philosophy or phenomenological ontology as the correct interpretation of human rational experience to recognize the important contributions of Brentano, Husserl, and Heidegger, and of Bergner's ethical interpretation of the last. Aided by their work, we see more clearly that natural science is nowise philosophy, that man is both a philosophical and a moral being, and that man brings with him in the act of cognition a pre-ontological understanding of something like Being and something like a world, but that he does so under the rubric of a prior understanding of the necessary logicality of things (i.e., logical objects). With our understanding of the formal meaning of Being as self-grounding intelligibility, a great lamplight has been lit to show the path we must follow to understand the meaning of Being in its other, normative sense. As we have seen, if Being formally is intelligibility, then Nothing (not-Being) is incoherent and therefore impossible and the grounds of Being must be self-contained. This is the foundation upon which understanding of the Supreme Principle of Being and Intelligibility as transcendently real must be predicated. And, as we will begin to see immediately, understanding that principle does not come without its own, formidable demands and the moral freedom to perform them.

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(Includes Adjectival References)