Heidegger and Sartre

HEIDEGGER AND SARTRE

An Essay on Being and Place

JOSEPH P. FELL

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To
Cynthia
John
Caroline

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Since Copernicus, man has been rolling from the center toward X.

—Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*

Naturally, all these things are the most obvious of the obvious. Must one speak about them, and with so much ado? . . . Are they not constant presuppositions of scientific and, at the highest level, philosophical thinking?

—Husserl, *The Crisis*

Preface

I HAVE WRITTEN this volume in the conviction that a need exists for a confrontation between the thought of Martin Heidegger and that of Jean-Paul Sartre. Of course, there exist many studies of the thought of each. Yet no large-scale study of the relation of their positions has been written, despite the fact that they are generally classed together as 'existentialists' or as 'phenomenologists', despite the fact that Sartre's thought is known to have been heavily indebted to Heidegger, and despite the fact that each is known to have harbored serious reservations about the thought of the other.

One reason such a study has not been written, I believe, is that students of Heidegger's thought tend to regard Sartre as not worth equal time, while students of Sartre's thought tend to hold the complementary view. I myself have found it necessary to take both thinkers seriously, even—perhaps especially—when their ideas conflict most sharply. It may be thought that their orientations are so divergent as not to be comparable at all; and yet, as chapter 1 will show, they share in large part a common philosophical ancestry and a common preoccupation with a very particular ontological problem. If their respective solutions to this problem do diverge sharply, this may be taken as a sign of the importance of considering them together. They represent two fundamental directions or alternative routes that their common philosophical inheritance makes possible at the present time. To consider them together, then, is a way of assessing the present situation and prospects of ontology. In their divergent responses to their philosophical predecessors, whom both regard as presenting us with a crisis requiring a revolutionary response, they vie for our allegiance in the future reform of our philosophical inheritance. It is no exaggeration to say that the apparently abstract intricacies of their ontological investigations eventuate in the critical question of the future orientation of our civilization.

I shall place primary stress upon Heidegger and Sartre as ontologists. 'Ontology' can provisionally be defined as study of the real, fundamental, or essential nature of beings, both human and nonhuman, and of the interrelation between human and nonhuman beings. It was by interpreting the notion of 'Being' (*Sein, l'être*) in its relation to the human being that each of them sought to work out his fundamental stance as a thinker. Their respective interpretations of Being provided the criteria in terms of which they treated all other philosophical problems—metaphysical, epistemological, aesthetic, ethical, and social. To isolate the core of their thinking, then, is to isolate their interpretations of Being. And to establish the genuinely fundamental differences between their orientations is to contrast their ontologies.

This study is not limited to Heidegger's and Sartre's earlier and better known ontological investigations in *Sein und Zeit* and *L'Être et le Néant*, since one of the most significant characteristics of their ontologies is a reorientation that occurs for both thinkers in midcareer. My theme is therefore broad, for it concerns two thinkers rather than one, and it explores the development of their thought rather than one phase of it. Given its scope, the reader will be able to spot certain aspects of the topic that cry out for a detailed treatment they do not here receive. These lacunae are justified if this volume succeeds in offering an interpretation of Heidegger's and Sartre's ontologies, and their interrelation, that facilitates further study of particular aspects of their thought such as death, facticity, or art. The treatment of the two ontologies together will be justified if each can be used to shed light on the other. It will be further justified if differences between them can help us to understand better the nature and problems of contemporary European ontological investigation, which is, of course, a vital concern of Heidegger and Sartre themselves. This study therefore concludes with a chapter outlining certain principles that emerge from the work of Heidegger and Sartre, and from the confrontation between the two, as possible guidelines for future ontological inquiry insofar as that inquiry is phenomenological in orientation.

There are two widespread interpretations of the relation between Heidegger and Sartre. One, advanced by a number of introductory handbooks on existentialism, grants them joint membership in something called "the existentialist movement" or, alternatively,

"existential phenomenology." This judgment must be tested in two ways. The first is by careful consideration of the real extent of divergence between Heidegger and Sartre, to which the present volume devotes much attention, concluding that existentialism and phenomenology are not only distinct but in certain respects incompatible. The second, which is important but beyond the scope of my study, is by careful consideration of the interrelation of present continental thought and Anglo-American thought, for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not there is some global philosophic tendency shared by Heidegger and Sartre despite all their differences. This subject has begun to receive serious attention,[1] and it has even been suggested that in restrospect continental and Anglo-American philosophy may come to be regarded as two aspects of a single philosophic tendency.[2]

The other interpretation of their relation, taking its cue from Heidegger's own assessment of his relation to Sartre in *Brief über den Humanismus*,[3] finds the two thinkers to be different in all essentials, even antithetical in their thinking. But it is not clear that Sartre would subscribe to Heidegger's estimate of their relation; although Sartre has critized Heidegger,[4] he has not answered the *Brief über den Humanismus* in kind. We should not, therefore, uncritically take over Heidegger's assessment. Part of my effort will be to see each thinker through the eyes of the other in order finally to ascertain the degree to which their ontologies are compatible.

The attitudes and life-styles of Heidegger and Sartre are in important respects antithetical. Heidegger was, from early life onward, profoundly attached to theology—despite Sartre's misunderstanding of this attachment.[5] In *Les Mots*, Sartre wrote of his own lifelong struggle to sustain a consistent atheism.[6] Heidegger, aside from a brief public association with National Socialism in 1933–34, was a man detached from the immediate sociopolitical issues of the day, as symbolized by his frequent meditative withdrawals to Todtnauberg. Sartre seemed the very model of the "committed" man, as citizen of metropolitan Paris, as editor of a journal (*Les Temps Modernes*) whose tone became increasingly political, as popular playwright, as would-be founder of a new political party, as war-crimes tribunalist and editor of *La Cause du peuple*. The "soft" and seemingly mystical tones of Heidegger's later essays and lectures contrast vividly with the often mercilessly direct charges laid by Sartre

against his political adversaries.[7] Sartre demanded immediate sociopolitical change, while Heidegger appeared preoccupied with both the distant past and the distant future.[8]

Can we dismiss these differences of attitude and life-style as philosophically irrelevant? Is there more than superficial irony in the fact that the philosophy of the committed Sartre has been in an important sense a philosophy of withdrawal, while the thought of the withdrawn Heidegger has been in an essential respect a reminder of our inevitable commitment?

Such questions must be entertained, because a philosophy is not propounded in a vacuum but by a particular person in a particular historical situation. In the course of their careers, and despite their differences, both Heidegger and Sartre become increasingly sensitized to what may be called the compulsion of history. Both, in retrospect, find their early philosophical efforts insufficiently attuned to the concealed force of history that had oriented those philosophical efforts. The subtitle of this volume is intended to suggest a correlation between ontology and the environment in which it is proposed—a correlation that both thinkers are driven to make. Does this disclosure of the relativity of ontology to its circumstances demonstrate the lack of autonomy and the inefficacy of thought? Curiously, the activist Sartre came to despair of thought's making a practical difference,[9] while the disengaged Heidegger found thought to be the ultimate determinant of praxis.[10] These differences, however, will be considered here only so much as the theme of ontology requires.

In order not to force a comparison between Heidegger and Sartre by building more common ground between them than is really there, I will in most of the chapters of Parts I–III treat them alternately and on their own terms. Except for chapter 6, each of these chapters forms a more or less self-contained study of a particular aspect or phase of Heidegger's or Sartre's work that is preparatory to a final confrontation between the two in Part IV. While this technique of oscillating back and forth between Heidegger and Sartre may seem to deflect the line of the book's development, I believe the attentive reader will sense the emerging outlines of the final confrontation in the course of Parts I–III. In each chapter, the themes treated and the manner of their treatment have been selected partly in order to isolate the basic orientations of Heidegger

and Sartre and partly in order to elicit essential interrelations and points of conflict between the two orientations.

In my effort to reach what is ontologically basic in their thinking, I have intentionally overlooked much that they say in common. One could compile a long list of parallels between *Sein und Zeit* and *L'Être et le Néant*. Such an endeavor could show that Sartre is indebted to *Sein und Zeit* not only for some basic themes but also for a multitude of terms, distinctions, and analyses. But what is in question here is the extent to which Sartre takes over notions from *Sein und Zeit* in the sense in which they were intended by Heidegger. It is entirely possible for two thinkers to use the same terms but to mean quite different things; everything hangs on grasping the context or "ambience" within which a term occurs or an assertion is made. But that is what is hardest to grasp and most important to grasp, and it is what necessitates that Heidegger and Sartre be treated alternately until each of their orientations is sufficiently explored. Whether I have succeeded in articulating these orientations, the reader (whom I assume to be independently familiar with at least the early and long-available writings of Heidegger and Sartre) will have to decide.

I have quite consciously run two risks that seem potentially valuable enough to warrant taking them. First, I have attempted to write about both thinkers as simply and directly as possible, with no more recourse to highly technical terms than is absolutely necessary. For example, I have often opted for traditional philosophical terminology in characterizing Heidegger's thought. Given Heidegger's progressive abandonment of such terminology, the danger of serious distortion is obvious. But the possibility of new understanding—especially of Heidegger's relation to the modern ontological tradition—may, I hope, also be granted. The second risk, related to the first, is that at a number of points (perhaps especially in chapter 2) I have attempted to be provocative where I might have, more pedantically and more prosaically, played it safe. Chief among these provocations are: a very broad definition of the phenomenological movement, designed in part to point to a positive relation between Hegel and Heidegger; a questioning of the rather usual judgment that the later Heidegger has gone beyond phenomenological ontology; the teasing of a largely implicit theory of actuality and an implicit ethics out of *L'Être et le Néant;* an attempt to

infer a theory of language from Sartre's writings; above all, an attempt to employ the notions of 'familiarity', 'community of nature', and 'place' as primary ontological categories in interpreting the fundamental significance of Heidegger's and Sartre's ontologies. I take seriously Heidegger's notion of the value of "violence" in interpretation and translation,[11] and I have often turned this dangerous technique back upon Heidegger himself, as well as upon Sartre. At the same time, I wanted to counterbalance the dangers inherent in both these risks by massive quotation from Heidegger and Sartre. Rather than immediately fusing my interpretation and their own argument in a gray and possibly distorting paraphrase, I have purposely moved back and forth between my interpretations and their own words.

There is yet another oscillation in this study: between difficult passages and simple, quite obvious passages. The subject matter itself requires this. It is characteristic of phenomenological ontology (and of much of analytic philosophy) to test the obvious and simple by complex interpretation and to test complex interpretation by the obvious and simple. This happens because, as I shall try to establish, phenomenological ontology is interested in a certain vindication of *the familiar* that requires a complex critical interpretation of (*a*) the reasons for the relative lack of ontological commitment to the familiar in much of modern thought and (*b*) the *ground* on which the familiar could be validated. This effort at adequation of the familiar and its ground exists, to be sure, prior to phenomenology—notably in Aristotle—but it attains a new urgency in post-Copernican thought, especially in German Idealism. It is an acute problem in the later writings of Husserl,[12] which form the immediate and insistent background of the work of Heidegger and Sartre.

A brief introduction to each of the four parts of the study is provided to show how the chapters of that part fit into the overall design of the work. The design is roughly chronological. Chapter 1, which precedes Part I, presents a selective sketch of certain developments in post-Copernican ontology designed to show the sorts of ontological problems facing Heidegger and Sartre at the beginning of their careers. It attempts to show how and why phenomenological ontology arises and to formulate three ontological questions that Heidegger and Sartre face as immediate heirs of Husserl.

Part I offers interpretations of the early phenomenological ontologies of Heidegger and Sartre—their initial responses to the ontological legacy outlined in chapter 1, including Sartre's early response to Heidegger's ontology. Part II seeks to ascertain why both these ontologies require a form of supplementation or revision—for Heidegger, a "turn," for Sartre, a "conversion." This part concludes with an important episode of the mid-forties: Sartre's implication of Heidegger in existentialist humanism in *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* and Heidegger's response to this implication in *Brief über den Humanismus,* in which some basic features of Heidegger's later ontological orientation become visible. Part III shows first how Heidegger and then how Sartre reformulated their earlier ontologies in their later thought—in both cases by reconsidering the relation of Being to historical time and the relation of their ontologies to metaphysics. This part also attempts to infer a Sartrean theory of language and a Sartrean critique of the later Heidegger, both of which are essential for the confrontation but neither of which was ever fully elaborated in Sartre's publications. The concluding Part IV brings the two ontologies into more direct confrontation, primarily by asking about the ground on which each claims to be true. The ability of each to answer satisfactorily the ontological problems first posed in chapter 1—that of the beginning, of metaphysics, and of unity—is here assessed. Finally, the question whether either has accomplished the original aims of a phenomenological ontology is answered and a provisional characterization of the ontological legacy of Heidegger and Sartre is offered.

In the notes, which follow chapter 14, page numbers given in parentheses refer to the English translation of the work cited, where a translation existed at the time of writing. The translation referred to is listed in the bibliography following the entry for the German or French original. Where the translation used is my own rather than that cited in the bibliography, I have adopted the convention of italicizing the parenthesized page numbers of the published translation. In all cases where no parenthesized page numbers are given, the translation is my own. A list of abbreviations used for frequently cited works of Heidegger and Sartre is given opposite the first page of the text. In cases where the essays in the original text have not appeared in an integral translation but have rather

been separated into two or more English volumes, the bibliography shows which pages of the original text are to be found in each of the English volumes.

If I have often resorted to my own translations despite the availability of published translations, the chief reason has been terminological consistency. I have learned much from the translations made by others, even when I have not quoted them. I should warn the reader of one inconsistency: the term 'being' will sometimes be capitalized, sometimes not, following existing conventions of translation and what I take to be the intentions of Heidegger and Sartre themselves. Further explanation of my capitalization strategy can be found in the notes. My italicization strategy in quotations also calls for comment. In addition to adding italics to stress the relation of a term or phrase to my argument, I have in some cases deleted all or part of Heidegger's or Sartre's own italics, where these italics make sense only in the context of the surrounding pages that are not quoted. In each case, the addition or deletion of italics is acknowledged in the notes, following citation of the page or pages from which the quotation was taken, so that the reader can readily check my translation against Heidegger's or Sartre's original text. It should also be noted that I have in all cases transliterated Greek terms.

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Abbreviations of Heidegger's Works Most Frequently Cited

BH	Brief über den Humanismus (in *H*)
EHD	Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung
EM	Einführung in die Metaphysik
H	Holzwege
HEH	Hölderlins Erde und Himmel
ID	Identität und Differenz
KPM	Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik
N	Nietzsche I, II
SD	Zur Sache des Denkens
SG	Der Satz vom Grund
SZ	Sein und Zeit
TK	Die Technik und die Kehre
US	Unterwegs zur Sprache
VA	Vorträge und Aufsätze
W	Wegmarken
WG	Vom Wesen des Grundes
WHD	Was heisst Denken?
WM	Was ist Metaphysik?
WW	Vom Wesen der Wahrheit

Abbreviations of Sartre's Works Most Frequently Cited

AR	Aller et retour (in *S*, I)
CRD	Critique de la raison dialectique
EH	L'Existentialisme est un humanisme
EN	L'Être et le Néant
HC	L'Homme et les choses (in *S*, I)
I	L'Imaginaire
IF	L'Idiot de la famille
M	Les Mots
PH	Une Idée fondamentale de la phénoménologie de Husserl (in *S*, I)
QL	Qu'est-ce que la littérature? (in *S*, II)
QM	Question de méthode (in *CRD*)
S	Situations, I–X
SGCM	Saint Genet comédien et martyr
SM	Search for a Method (translation of *QM*)
TE	La Transcendence de l'ego

Heidegger and Sartre

1

The Problem of Phenomenological Ontology

> But if at length we are persuaded that there are no points in the universe that are really immovable, as will presently be shown to be probable, we shall conclude that there is nothing that has a permanent place except in so far as it is fixed by our thought.
>
> —Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*, II.13

I

IRIS MURDOCH, in the course of an admirable essay on Sartre, offers a succinct and just characterization of the present ontological situation:

> For many reasons, the chief of which is that science has altered our societies and our key concepts with a dreadful speed, it seems now impossible for us either to live unreflectively or to express a view of what we are in any systematic terms which will satisfy the mind. We can no longer formulate a general truth about ourselves which shall encompass us like a house. . . . But what we hold in common, whatever our solution, is a sense of a broken totality, a divided being. What we accuse each other of is 'metaphysical dualism.' All modern philosophies are philosophies of the third way.[1]

We inherit an ontological bifurcation, "a broken totality, a divided being." This bifurcation is regarded not as natural and inevitable but as a problem to be solved by means of "a third way." What, then, are the two ways that need to be superseded by a third way? Murdoch characterizes them as "total freedom or total immersion, empty reflexion or silence."[2] I conceive Heidegger and Sartre as developing in the course of their careers two versions of a third way—even though Heidegger has in effect criticized Sartre for following the way of total freedom and empty reflection, and Sartre

has criticized Heidegger for following the way of total immersion and silence.

Murdoch's analysis implies that the two unsatisfying options presently available to us are ways of impaling ourselves on either horn, subjectivist or objectivist, of a dualistic dilemma. To embrace the subjectivist horn is to gain freedom or subjective being at the cost of objective reality. To embrace the objectivist horn is to gain identity with the world, "immersion," at the cost of subjective reality. Kierkegaard is sometimes regarded as opting for the former way, Hegel as opting for the latter way. The "totality," which Murdoch claims necessitates a third way, would mean a genuine unity in which both subjective being and objective being are integrated, without loss of either, in a nondualistic ontology. But before I undertake to show how Heidegger and Sartre seek such a third way, it is necessary in this initial chapter to define the present ontological problem more specifically by sketching out its main roots in modern philosophy and science. What sorts of ontological problems do Heidegger and Sartre inherit? Why are they both attracted to the idea of an ontology that is phenomenological? Their thought will have maximum plausibility, and the conflict between them will seem genuinely important, only if we patiently trace and formulate the development of the modern ontological problem to which they address themselves.

II

The thought of Copernicus and Galileo provides a—if not the—decisive impetus to the development of an ontological problem in modern times. For direct experience, nothing could be more obviously the case than that the sun orbits a stationary earth. In advancing the heliocentric theory, Copernicus initiated a revolution that far transcends the fields of physics and astronomy. It is frequently said that the broad cultural effect of the Copernican revolution is to deprive man of his privileged geocentric and anthropocentric position—to displace him from his home at the center of the cosmos.[3]

I think one may formulate the largest effect of the Copernican revolution as follows. The world of ordinary experience progressively loses its right to serve as a reference point, a justifiable orienting

center. The familiar and the obvious are no longer self-evidently true. For if even the most obvious of all experiences—that the sun moves about a stationary earth—is questionable, the whole fabric of ordinary experience and traditional codifications of this experience become questionable. What first appears, the phenomenal, may be *mere* appearance. Truth is not a given, but a result, an achievement. Aristotle had maintained that "by starting from what is inadequately known, but familiar to us, we can learn to know what is intrinsically intelligible, using what we do know . . . to guide us."[4] It must now be maintained, on the contrary, that truth arises not from guiding or orienting oneself by the familiar and already "known" but rather from the formulation of hypotheses that challenge the familiar and overthrow it. It is one thing, for which there is ample precedent from Thales forward, to go beyond the familiar in order to know more about its constitution or origin; it is quite another to propose that the familiar does not provide the subject matter that is to be inquired into. The Copernican revolution provokes the protracted effort at *displacement* of ordinary experience and its replacement by hypothetical and theoretical truth.

There is, of course, ancient precedent for this modern displacement of the world of familiar and ordinary experience; the monistic thought of Parmenides offers an example. But while the predominant effort of Parmenides' successors was to adjust his thought so that it would accord with the familiar, with the world of qualitative diversity, the predominant thrust of post-Copernican thought has been progressively and cumulatively to challenge the claims of the familiar. The main instrument facilitating this challenge, which was not available to the ancient investigator, is a mathematical physics.

In Galileo's work the Copernican revolution explicitly becomes the key to a new conception of nature as such. Edmund Husserl, the phenomenological precursor of Heidegger and Sartre, found in Galileo an idealization of man's environment. Summarizing Husserl's treatment of Galileo in his *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Walter Biemel writes:

> The purpose of the central paragraphs concerning Galileo is to show by what process of idealization Galileo achieved a scientific conception of nature, a nature thoroughly determined by causality and capable of being calculated and reduced to formulae. Insofar as Galileo was not aware of this transformation as

> such, he was at the same time responsible for concealing this primordial world, this life-world which is necessarily presupposed by this transformation. [Husserl writes:] "Galileo . . . the consummate discoverer of physics, i.e., physical nature, is a genius who *discovers* and at the same time *conceals*."[5]

Husserl's point is that the world of ordinary experience (the life-world) is displaced by an interpretation of it that tends to conceal the very world that is being interpreted. This tendency is confirmed by the philosophy of Descartes.

Descartes is usually said to have founded modern ontological dualism. He taught that the human mind or spirit, through suspension of inherited belief and through methodic self-discipline, has the independent being requisite for it to serve as an impartial judge of—and source of—criteria of reality and truth. The independence of mind from body is guaranteed first by an original and certain intuition of the independent being of thinking (*res cogitans*),[6] second by the certain intuition of the absolute distinction in nature between mind and body,[7] and third by demonstration of the existence of such a body (*res corporea, res extensa*).[8] The mind is enabled to intuit the nature of bodily or material being truly and independently insofar as it is able to be free of reliance on bodily affects (passions, sensations).[9] This means that the true nature of body is distinct from the shifting and relative properties appearing in ordinary sense perception. Rather, body is to be understood as (*a*) pure nonrelative externality that (*b*) remains constant despite experienced change and that (*c*) is truly described by mathematical calculation rather than by the experience and terminology of ordinary sense perception. The external world is in actuality insensible particles[10] and is thus reached by methodic reflection and calculation rather than being immediately given in ordinary premethodic experience.

Descartes is specifically concerned with the question of the ground or foundation (*fundamentum*) of science. The foundation which he criticizes is that of ordinary experience, which is an undifferentiated complex of mental and sensory, active and passive elements. He seeks to separate this undifferentiated complex into its mental and sensory elements in order to reach a purely nonrelative, or "absolute" and "unshakable" foundation, which is what is immediately "present to the mind" in nonsensory intuition.[11] The

complex, undifferentiated, and relative ground is thus replaced by a purely mental ground, the ego or subject. If ordinary experience is an unreliable ground because it is a relative admixture of mental and sensory elements, the ego's intellectual or nonsensory intuition is the true and absolute ground because it is simple and irreducible, restricting itself to what is immediately present to the mind and thus certain. As a result, the true world is present to thought rather than to experience, or the true world is reached by circumventing ordinary experience. There is ontological dualism in the sense that where there had been an uncritical amalgam or union of thought and sensation, of mind and body, mind and body are now held distinct and recognized as mutually exclusive. The actual or external world is present only to the intellect, and in essentially mathematical form. The ordinary world of indiscriminately and unmethodically mixed qualities or properties is purified and simplified so as to become the world of intellectually identified physical properties.

Thus Descartes holds that physics is the "trunk" of the tree of knowledge, the other sciences the "branches" springing out of this trunk.[12] Mathematical physics specifies the true object of knowledge as the object of intellect or noumenon lying behind mere appearance or phenomenon. The thing does not show itself in ordinary experience, but is grasped behind appearances by pure intellect. Therefore, in addition to the dualism of mind and body, there is a dualism between the world of phenomenal experience and the world of intellectual intuition. It is with this latter form of dualism that we can associate Murdoch's distinction between the ways of freedom or immersion, "reflexion" or silence. For Descartes there is freedom, self-mastery, and mastery of nature in reflexive purification; the way of unreflective immersion is the way of ignorance of the true distinction between mind and body and hence loss of both self and world.

I have noted that Cartesian thought requires the circumvention of phenomena by a pure or nonsensory intellectual intuition that isolates and knows pure noumena: ego, external body, and (if Descartes's theological demonstrations are to be taken seriously) God. Such nonsensory or nonphenomenal intuition is generally called "metaphysical" knowledge. Descartes's contemporary Hobbes and his successors, most importantly Hume, elaborate a critique of the

very possibility of nonphenomenal, metaphysical knowledge. Knowledge requires the evidence of direct sensory experience, which therefore may not be circumvented. The attempt to circumvent it results, in Murdoch's phrase, in *empty* reflexion.

One might therefore suppose that the movement of British empiricism consists in a return to pre-Copernican and pre-Cartesian ordinary experience, but such is not the case. I have defined ordinary experience as an immediate union of thought and sensation, of activity and passivity. It has naíve and unreflective confidence in its ability to know the world directly and as it really is. Appearance is reality, if not all reality. The British empiricists, however, share in the post-Copernican crisis of confidence in the validity of ordinary experience: what appears is not the thing itself but at best our only evidence of the thing itself. What is experienced is not the thing but an image, idea, or impression of it. The British empiricists accept the assumption that the thing itself is to be defined by its pure unqualified externality. Sensation, as a relative process dependent upon a medium (the sense organs), cannot be said to be a neutral or transparent medium through which the thing shows itself as it is—especially since we have no way of comparing the thing *as sensed* with the thing *in and by itself* (*substantia*). The consequence is limitation of knowledge to appearances and denial of the possibility of metaphysical (i.e., metaphenomenal) knowledge. Empiricism accepts the view that "there is nothing in the intellect that was not first in sensation": all ideas, or all legitimate ideas, are derived from what happens to occur in sensation. If experience has any order and regularity, this is a brute happening for which no reason can be given. Phenomena and the order of phenomena are only signs of or surrogates for an inaccessible reality, an "I know not what" (Locke).

Kant affirms the empiricist critique of the possibility of metaphysical knowledge by pure nonsensory intuition and/or demonstration, but with a reservation that is decisive for the subsequent development of phenomenology and phenomenological ontology. Kant is unwilling to settle for the essential unintelligibility of the world of the empiricists, yet he regards the empiricist restriction of knowledge to appearances as sound. Restriction of knowledge to appearances means the inevitable relativity of the thing known to the knower. The thing can be for us only under the "conditions" of its appearances to us. But Kant sees that there are at least two possi-

ble attitudes one may take regarding these conditions. The first attitude is evident in Book I of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature:* the subjective conditions of the knowing process represent a permanent bar to neutral knowledge of the world and an invitation to skepticism and pessimism. The second attitude is implicit in the balance of Hume's *Treatise*: if one reconciles oneself to and affirms these same subjective and relative conditions, one finds that one's phenomenal world can be regarded for all practical purposes as real, orderly, and sufficient to one's needs.[13]

Kant sees that there is here, in germ, a new kind of reality: *the relative absolute.* Although the unconditioned and nonrelative entity or "thing-in-itself" is forever unknowable, and because it is unknowable, the thing as it appears may legitimately be regarded as the real. Through this revolution in attitude, Kant is able to accord the phenomenon the title "substance"—*substantia phaenomenon*[14]—which would otherwise have to be reserved for the unconditioned thing in itself.

(I pause here long enough to note the striking effect of fundamental shifts in attitude in the history of thought. Heidegger refers to them as the essential decisions of our history,[15] implying that the historical direction of thought is at critical points at least as much a function of attitude toward "facts" or "data" as it is a function of these facts themselves. Later we shall find significant mid-career shifts in attitude in the thought of both Heidegger and Sartre.)

In regarding the phenomenon as real and as substance despite the fact that it represents the thing-in-itself only in conditioned form, Kant says in effect that experience is a process analogous to the one Husserl attributes to Galileo: a discovering that is at the same time a concealing. The price of a thing's showing itself is that it also conceals itself. It appears under multiple conditions (space and time, hence perspective; categories, schemata) that at once constitute the possibility of the thing's revealing itself and the impossibility of its appearing as it would to a nonfinite being or God.[16] A considerable part of the history of philosophy and culture after Kant and to the present time has been given over to the task of either assimilating or seeking to circumvent this Kantian restriction of knowledge to relative and finite conditions. There are signs that it was unpalatable even to Kant, and the magnitude of the preoccupation with it can be taken as an index of its revolutionary and even

threatening character. The necessity to postulate nonrelative and nonphenomenal being (the free ego, God, immortality) to orient or to situate and guide human beings who are epistemologically limited to a phenomenal place is an insistent theme for Kant.

Kant's affirmation of the phenomenal world as a region of reality and truth is, of course, not an affirmation of the nonrational and fundamentally unintelligible world of empiricism. The mental categories and schemata relative to which phenomena appear are not empirically conditioned psychological habits or dispositions that simply happen to happen. They are rational or logical preconditions, of transcendental origin, for the uniformity and intelligibility of experience of phenomena. This transcendentally legislative achievement of the human mind is a central theme of both Kantian and post-Kantian idealism, including the phenomenological idealism of Husserl. It means that human thought both has and exercises the free transcendental power to constitute, delimit, and identify the "empirically real" (but it alone) through conditions that are "transcendentally ideal."[17] This means in turn that ideality and reality are not experientially distinct or antithetical: the phenomenon is what it is as an immediate unity of "idea" and "matter." Experience of the world is therefore in part experience of oneself. It is not a matter of a previously separate idea and matter coming together at some point in the course of one's experience; experientially, idea and matter are always already a union (the phenomenon), so that the effort to distinguish between pure idea and pure matter is an effort to factor into its elements a prior unity.

It might seem at first as if the problem of which Murdoch has spoken were here definitively resolved. Rather than a dualism of mind and body, or of idea and matter, phenomenal experience would seem to represent a genuine third way—a marriage of thought and its environment that is not a "broken totality" or "divided being" and that avoids the twin dangers of free but inefficacious thought on the one hand and loss of self through immersion in one's environment on the other. Such, in fact, was the conviction of German idealism, but in retrospect German idealism is generally regarded as having alternately succumbed to one or the other of these very dangers.

The attitude of post-Kantian German thought to Kant is much like the attitude of post-Parmenidean Greek thought to Parmenides.

It is an uneasy mixture of enormous indebtedness and enormous dissatisfaction. Like the thought of Parmenides, that of Kant presented itself as an inescapable fatality. That transcendental thought participates in the constitution of its objects is undeniable. That this must be the key to the occurrence and validation of an intelligible environment for man is undeniable. Yet in Fichte, in Schelling, in Hegel, and in Husserl is found the conviction that Kant was not radical enough. To understand why, one must note the *quasi-theological* power of thought in Kant's philosophy. Although the efficacy of thought for Kant is restricted to the empirical and practical spheres, within these spheres its rightful[18] legislative power is awesome. In the order of formal cause (essence, nature, definition, intelligible form) the mind has the godlike spontaneous transcendental power to form a world—though not to create it in the order of material or efficient cause, nor to design it in the order of final cause. And yet the design and even the existence of God are for Kant as unknown, and unknowable, as is the thing-in-itself. There exists then in Kant's thought a tension between the transcendental power of man and the blunt limitation of this power and of the aspirations to which it gives rise. In this sense there remains a broken totality.

Might not the quasi-theological power of human reason be a sign of human participation in the divine nature? Insofar as human thought transcends and forms its natural conditions, may that thought not be seen as approaching, approximating, and finally becoming identical with God's forming of nature? If that were the case, man's progressive discovery of his world could be seen as God's progressive forming of the world—assuming that the world was not fully actualized at the beginning but is progressively actualized in history. This view would enable one to envisage phenomenal experience as the progressive unification of mind and matter or the progressive appearing of the thing as it is in itself. The phenomenon as a revealing *and concealing* of the thing-in-itself would represent only a stage in the historical process by which the thing-in-itself becomes *fully* revealed in all its perspectives. Such a view would respect Kant's limitation of knowledge to finite spatio-temporal experience and yet see this limitation as progressively self-canceling. The Kantian phenomenon as union of idea and matter, as *substantia phaenomenon,* as revolutionary redefinition of the

being of the thing as not simply external and material but as also ideally constituted, is not only preserved but carried further. In the end the phenomenon is not simply the peculiarly limited form in which the thing can appear to a finite being. It is the appearance of the thing as it is in itself because (*a*) idea or formal cause belongs to the very nature of the thing and (*b*) the marriage of the transcendentally ideal with matter is God's self-externalizing of himself in the world through man, God's descent into the flesh in order that the world may become divine.[19]

Such, in broadest outline, is Hegel's effort to assimilate and to radicalize Kant's thought. It represents a "phenomenological ontology" in a more radical sense than does Kant's thought. The Kantian thing has an irrevocably dual being—phenomenal and noumenal. Phenomenal or spatiotemporal and categorial-schematic being, while real and substantial, is nonetheless a necessary privation of noumenal being. Hegel, on the other hand, finally takes Being altogether into space, time, and ideation, so that ultimately Being becomes entirely phenomenal or entirely reveals itself—with the proviso that the spatiotemporal ultimately coincides with the eternal, and human ideation ultimately coincides with divine ideation. The history of phenomena—"phenomenology" in Hegel's sense—is the actualization of Being as phenomenal without remainder. The "broken totality" of which Murdoch speaks is for Hegel a necessary stage, but only a stage, in a *totalization* in which all ontological dualities or oppositions serve to reveal distinct but mutually complementary aspects, elements, and perspectives of an emerging synthesis, union, or identity.

Commenting on Descartes, Hegel wrote, "This identity of Being and Thought . . . constitutes the most interesting idea of modern times."[20] The idea will play an important role throughout my study of the ontologies of Heidegger and Sartre. By way of working out its implications, I shall in some cases speak of it as "the identity of thought and beings" or "the identity of thought and being," rather than as "the identity of thought and Being." By the first two locutions, I mean to stress an identity of thought and entities themselves (entities as thought or as meant, i.e., phenomena). By the third locution, I mean to stress an identity of thought and the nature of entities. (In Heidegger's terms, the first two locutions mean the identity of thought and "the ontic," while the third locution

means the identity of thought and "the ontological.") What this identity means when applied to Heidegger or to Sartre may, of course, differ significantly from what it means when applied to Descartes, or to Hegel himself. It may imply a realism, an idealism, or neither. It may imply an identity that always exists (an original identity), an identity that exists only at the end of a historical development, or an identity that is an unachievable ideal. It represents a provocative general idea that is susceptible to a range of particular interpretations or variations. Nevertheless, all these interpretations are variations on a single theme—that thought and its referents, even its material referents, are not simply different in kind.

It seems the fate of post-Cartesian thought to work out the consequences of total acceptance, limited acceptance, or total rejection of this "most interesting idea." It is not always as happy a fate as for Hegel, for whom thought can be identified with the divine. But the notion that Being is available to man only as thought, or as qualified by thought, that the object is present only in subjective form, that there is a de facto if not de jure "identity" or fusion of Being and thought—this notion is seldom far from the center of the modern philosophical stage. If thought constitutes or forms or qualifies Being with either divine right or the right of self-evidence, i.e., with "ground" or "reason," it is a saving thought, for the resulting union of thought and Being is a phenomenon that can be called real, true, substance. If, however, thought constitutes, forms, or qualifies Being without specifiable ground or reason, the resulting union of thought and Being is a phenomenon that is called irrational, illusory, subjective, virtual, relativistic, conventional, circular, or anthropomorphic. If, in the words of William James, "the trail of the human serpent is . . . over everything,"[21] is this the condition for the appearance of Being or the condition for the obscuring of Being? I suggest provisionally that the answer given depends on the way in which *ground* is construed: what is the ground of, basis of, reason for, or justification of the phenomenon as a unity of idea and matter, subject and object, thought and Being? Is this union a marriage made in heaven or in hell?

The dominant ground in post-Cartesian philosophy has been the thought of the cogito, ego, or subject. Whatever happens or fails to happen in experience, there is thought. Thought is the universal constant. It is the orienting center or reference point relative to

which all experience is had, to which, for which, and in terms of which there is an environing world. It is the inevitable arbiter of the meaning and validity of its experience. Therefore everything hangs on the establishment of the ego's access to criteria of judgment that are universal and necessary. Otherwise human judgments may be arbitrary, psychological, and idiosyncratic. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century man has been made acutely aware of this danger by research in comparative anthropology and clinical psychology. But philosophical thought has itself contributed to a doubt that the subject as ground has or can have the ontological unity with divine reason that Hegel assigns to it. Both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche make this point in their own quite different ways.

That the subject is inevitably the arbiter of the meaning and validity of his experience is indisputable for Kierkegaard. However, this subject is not a *universal* one but an individual or "existing" subject with no access to self-evident or divinely guaranteed criteria of judgment. Rather than being a grounded ground, he is a groundless ground. That is, the criteria he employs in deciding—as he must—the meaning of his finite and phenomenal experience have only the authority that his decision accords to them. The individual plugs the abyss—the absence of ground (*Abgrund*)—with himself. The price of genuine decision, as opposed to Cartesian involuntary compulsion by the rationally self-evident, is the absence of evidence. The guarantee of one's decision is psychological or affective—the degree of one's resoluteness—rather than logical or evidential. Hegel is right that the only sufficient reason or ground for holding finite spatiotemporal phenomenal experience to be experience of truth is a divine guarantee of the identity of thought and Being; Hegel is wrong that we have such a guarantee. Hegel argued that union, unity, identity, or totality is achieved by the dialectical interplay of opposites through time. A primitive and naïve union or totality breaks apart into its elements, which first appear to be irreconcilably antithetical and ununifiable, but which prove in the course of history to require each other. The goal of history is a reflective and justified reunion in place of an originally unreflective and unjustified union, a reestablishment of identity out of its own differences. In other words, the analytical movement of explicit differentiation of the elements of which experience is composed (e.g., idea and matter) is at once the "death" of ontological unity and a

necessary "moment" in the now-legitimated reunification or synthetic movement by which ontological unity is explicitly reclaimed.

Kierkegaard stands solidly within the Hegelian orientation in committing himself to characterization of the analytic *elements* of a once-and-future ontological unity precisely in Hegelian terms: existence/essence, actuality/ideality, possibility/necessity, nonbeing/being, moment/eternal, contingent/absolute. But Kierkegaard attributes the breaking of ontological totality into these antitheses to the Fall, and he denies all possibility of their dialectical reconciliation and all possibility of the achievement of totality within finite spatiotemporal experience or history. "Contradictions" inherent in human finite experience ("existence") cannot be resolved by appeal to any allegedly knowable original or final cause:

> The contradictions of existence are explained by positing a *prae* as needed (because of an earlier state the individual has come into his present otherwise inexplicable situation); or by positing a *post* as needed (on another planet the individual is to be placed in a more favorable situation, in view of which his present state is not inexplicable).[22]

Any such variant of the Greek doctrine of recollection (including Hegel's) appeals to an unknowable "whence" and "whither" to illuminate the dark horizon that surrounds the inexplicable and contradictory present. Kierkegaard fully subscribes to Kant's rejection of the possibility of metaphysical knowledge as well as to Kant's view that this limitation makes room for faith. But the stress in Kierkegaard falls on the anxiety of groundless decision rather than on the rational constitution of a limited but intelligible finite space and time; existence and essence, or being and thought, in no way form a coherent union for Kierkegaard. One might express this by saying that for Kierkegaard there is no ontology of the phenomenal, only onticity: so far as we can know, the phenomenon is bare existence without legitimizable meaning or 'essence'. The legitimating ground is missing. But temperamentally, Kierkegaard had no stake in finitude, in time or history.

Nietzsche, temperamentally, had an absolute stake in finitude and time that expresses itself in his notion of *amor fati*. He is similar to Kierkegaard both in his acceptance of the Kantian limitation of knowledge to the region of phenomena and in his rejection of

Hegelian rational history. But he is close to Hegel (and to Spinoza) in his effort to understand the secular as sacred. For Nietzsche, as for Hegel, this can only be accomplished if the traditional distance between the secular and the sacred is abolished. For Hegel this required the dialectical recombining of what the Platonic-Christian tradition had taken as sacred on the one hand and secular on the other: transcendent being and immanent being. But Nietzsche undertakes a thoroughgoing critique of the possibility of metaphysical transcendence: the "meta-" or "over and beyond" is always for him to be understood in terms of the "under" as he pits against metaphysics what might be called "hypo-physics." This new "topology," or sense of place, has in common with Schopenhauer and Freud the search for the meaning of what is above in terms of what lies below, the light in terms of the dark, the heavens in terms of the recesses of the earth. Nietzsche sees this reorientation as a sort of recentering on the place of early Greek experience and philosophy, displaced by the Platonic-Christian centering of ontology in the meta-physical. He thus sees the preponderant part of the philosophical and theological tradition as ec-centric and tries to think through this displacement of the true center in terms of "decadence" and its consequence, "nihilism."[23]

Reorientation around the true center requires a massive assault on the false center, in which one pushes to its bitterest extreme, by insistently calling attention to it, the nihilism that inheres in a transcendentally oriented ontology. The reason why a transcendentally oriented ontology in the end disvalues everything is that, out of lack of strength (decadence) to face mundane experience on its own terms, it posits a metaphysical Being as compensatory inversion of everything that experience is felt to lack. The transcendental Being of philosophy and theology provides a metaphysical solace to which even Nietzsche, as a self-admitted decadent, feels himself drawn and must struggle against. This Being compensates finite beings whose finite, or phenomenal, experience and fate are not affirmable on their own terms. It erects a Being as eternal ground of the spatio-temporal and phenomenal—a transcendental origin, meaning, and goal (*prae* and *post*, "whence" and "whither") by reference to which all the vicissitudes and liabilities of mortal existence are either justified or rectified. But the greater this Being, the greater the devaluation of finite and phenomenal experience by comparison. The

less the phenomenal world is experienced as self-centering, the greater and higher must be the transcendental metaphysical center, but the greater the transcendental center, the lesser the phenomenal world—and so on, until the phenomenal world of itself is entirely valueless and meaningless.

Nietzsche's task is that of a great cultural deconditioning. The precondition for the rehabilitation of the phenomenal world as self-centering or self-grounding is a critical destruction of metaphysical Being that leaves, as remainder, Nothing—the *nihil*, absolute nihilism. This is only a matter of calling attention to a historical development already far advanced, which Nietzsche sometimes characterizes as the killing of God. Man has "killed God"—that is, the act of divorcing the sacred from the secular, Being from Time, has as its inevitable consequence the banishment of Being to a region to which there is no human access. There is no access because this region is defined precisely as lacking all those phenomenal predicates in terms of which alone it could have any evidential meaning or practical effectiveness for us.[24] Pure Being, as Hegel saw, is pure nothingness. What Nietzsche sees as necessary is an inversion of the original inversion: if Being becomes nothingness, then nothingness becomes Being; if the metaphysical region by reference to which the phenomenal world is reduced to nothingness is itself reduced to nothingness, only the phenomenal world then remains as a possible site of Being.

In fact, it then becomes possible to see that the mundane world was really the source of Being all along: Nietzsche argues that the real source of meaning and value has always been man, "the esteemer,"[25] but this source has dissimulated itself in order to make the source of meaning and value appear absolute rather than relative. Man must own up to the inevitable circularity of meaning and valuing. There is meaning and value insofar as man means and values. But man *is* the meaner and valuer. Thus in the act of owning up to what he is ("Become who you are!"),[26] he affirms the phenomenal world as the true world, the relative-absolute that is the objective embodiment of the meaning and value with which man endows it. Even nothingness is a human meaning, but when one affirms both meaner and meant, when one affirms oneself as valuer and hence one's world as valuable, then becoming has been given the stamp of Being.[27] This is love of fate: to love the phenomenal

world is to find it lovable. Nietzsche is a phenomenological ontologist in the broad but important sense that he accords Being to the phenomenon and regards the phenomenon as the disclosure of Being itself. The "true" world is the "apparent" world.[28] The relative is absolute.

For my subsequent study, it is worth bearing in mind that Nietzsche explicitly correlates ontology and attitude: the phenomenon is ontological—Being is in time—only in the attitude of mortal love, the affirmation of one's finite destiny. What destroys Being and brings on nihilism is hatred of time, of mortality, of the earth.

The history of our culture, then, is for Nietzsche the history of the deontologizing of the phenomenon. The near and familiar is no longer ground and center. Being is displaced and misplaced: "we are losing the center of gravity by virtue of which we lived; we are lost for a while." "Since Copernicus man has been rolling from the center toward X." Why? "The development of science resolves the 'familiar' more and more into the unfamiliar. . . ."[29] Perhaps Nietzsche, who often enough speaks of himself as a scientist, himself participates in this resolving of the familiar into the unfamiliar insofar as he posits a will to power underneath the familiar. This hypophysics—or antimetaphysical metaphysics—represents the residual pull on Nietzsche of nihilism, which, however, "represents a pathological transitional stage."[30] The biology of will to power and the teaching of eternal recurrence can be regarded as transitional notions—aspects of the effort at inversion of the inversion—rather than as final truths, just as Zarathustra is not yet the overman. After characterizing the sort of individual who would be strong enough to live without finalities, Nietzsche adds: "How would such a human being even think of the eternal recurrence?"[31] But when Nietzsche traces the phenomenal world to an underlying ground construed according to the biological and energy-quantum models of his time, he is in imperfect accord with his own judgment that "the 'in itself' is even an absurd conception: a 'constitution-in-itself' is nonsense; we possess the concept 'being,' 'thing,' only as a relational concept." "That things possess a constitution in themselves quite apart from interpretation and subjectivity, is a quite idle hypothesis: it presupposes that interpretation and subjectivity are not essential, that a thing freed from relationships would still be a thing." "All unity is unity only as organization and co-operation.

. . ."[32] Nietzsche points to a relational and relative ontology in which there is a union of thought and Being—that is, a rehabilitation of the reality of the phenomenon. And he sees that the price of regarding the phenomenon as reality is giving up all claim of access to a nonrelative absolute or ground:

> The "other," the "unknown" world—very good! But to say "true world" means "to *know* something of it"—that is the *opposite* of the assumption of an "*x*" world—
>
> *In summa:* the world "*x*" could be in every sense more tedious, less human, and less worthy than this world.[33]

Thus in Nietzsche the restriction to an ontology of phenomena that Kant invoked is pushed still further, in that Kant's appeal to noumena as orienting postulates is disallowed as a de facto devaluation of the phenomenal realm itself. But among the noumena disallowed by Nietzsche is Kant's transcendental ego as spontaneous source of universal and necessary rational categories. The categories had made restriction to the phenomenal world bearable, so to speak: if knowledge or a science of phenomena is to be possible, the mind of man must constitute and experience a regular phenomenal order. The world must be relative to universal mind, not to each individual and idiosyncratic mind.

Edmund Husserl argued that if the latter is the case, both philosophy and science are in danger of "psychologism." Psychologism is the tendency to regard laws of thought as no more than general descriptions of the ways in which human beings happen to think. But thought has no authority insofar as it is merely what happens to happen. Nothing prevents it from being arbitrary, situation-relative, or culture-specific. The legislation of thought to objects, like any legislation, is a mode of violence unless it has true grounds or an established right to legislate. Psychologism leaves open the possibility that the order of thought is simply a consequence of environmental conditioning, whether that environment be biological, geographical, or cultural.

Husserl sees that the first step to be taken in challenging psychologism must be to suspend "the natural attitude" by phenomenological reduction. This consists in the explicit disregarding of whatever simply happens contingently, whether it be external events or psychological events. Thought now focuses in intuition

on its own formative activity insofar as it is a formal and logical activity. What it isolates is general or abstract forms and formal relations that may be called "essences." The transcendental or nonempirical origination of these essences is indicated not merely by their general or universal nature (as opposed to the individuality or particularity of entities observed in the natural attitude) but by their self-evidence ("apodicticity"). Sometimes Husserl speaks of this immediate intuitive self-evidence as "seeing."[34] That is self-evident to intuition which I see must be the case. It is constitutive for a whole range of individual experiences, all of which presuppose and exemplify it. Thus, for example, the notions 'three', 'both', 'each', 'natural', 'artifactual', 'ideational', 'present', 'absent', 'same', 'real', 'unreal', 'past', 'future'—to select only a few from a vast multiplicity of essences—are a priori conditions for the possibility of encountering and identifying as what it is (in its own mode of being) any particular case of threeness, artifactuality, presence, pastness, etc. These essences are thus ideal and yet constitutive of the real. Husserl confirms Kant's judgment that the empirically real conforms to conditions that are transcendentally ideal, while claiming that the "seeing" of phenomenological intuition succeeds in actually "disclosing" essences that Kant failed to disclose in their true self-evident givenness because he was dependent on a "constructively inferring" method.[35]

Thus the lawfulness of the phenomenal world is guaranteed by the apodicticity of the thought that constitutes the phenomenal order according to self-evident modes of Being (kinds of Being, levels of Being, kinds of relations between beings). Among these constitutive acts or "achievements" is the crucial act of constituting the ego as "absolute here," the ultimate reference-point relative to which all experience is had. Husserl in this notion confirms Descartes's notion of ego as absolute center and arbiter of its world and Kant's notion of the transcendental unity of apperception—all expressions of the modern notion of the ego as ground of its world. In final confirmation of this absolute ground, Husserl seeks to isolate apodictically the transcendental ego itself as spontaneous origin of the constitutive essences isolated by the eidetic reduction.[36] Thus "transcendental subjectivity" is absolute ground or absolute being, to which the being of things is strictly relative.[37]

The question of the validity of this last step into unqualified ide-

alism is one that has separated strict Husserlian phenomenologists from revisionary phenomenologists. It implies that the phenomenon as experienced is not a relative *absolute* but only relative to an absolute that transcends it. "An absolute reality is as valid as a round square."[38] To those who reject this thoroughgoing idealism, the real source of Husserl's mistake is generally seen to lie in the method of reduction: it is no accident that the world appears as entirely relative to consciousness precisely when its independent natural being is reduced or bracketed. But Husserl can answer that the world appears as independent being *only when it is constituted as such* by thought. When a thing appears "in bodily presence" as "evidence," it appears as what it is only if it is actively constituted as such by the essences body, presence, externality, etc. One is therefore confronted by the paradox that the condition of an independent being appearing as such is that it be a dependent being.

Another way of characterizing this radical idealism would be to say that Husserl's phenomenology, which first seemed like a description solely of mental activity and ideas, turns out to be a universal ontology of Being as such. Husserl writes that phenomenology is "the systematic unfolding of the universal logos of all conceivable being. In other words: as developed systematically and fully, transcendental phenomenology would be ipso facto the true and genuine universal ontology. . . ."[39] "True being . . . has significance only as a particular correlate of my own intentionality. . . ."[40]

What, then, is added to the external-object-insofar-as-intended when we return to the unbracketed natural attitude and actually see the particular object? It seems that what is added can only be the *existence* of the intentional entity. Its essence has a transcendental (mental) origin, so that the only factor which distinguishes the observed entity from the thought entity is the embodiment of this entity. This existence would seem to be pure unqualified matter, "X," since the form of the entity is ideal, of transcendental origin. If that is the case, then there seem to be two possibilities: either (1) the external world apart from human thought is void of all forms, distinctions, determinations; or (2) the external world, in and of itself, possesses all the rational formal determinations that the mind concurrently intends it as having. If (1) is true, then essence and existence are in danger of falling apart into a broken totality, or dual-

ism, in which form is mental being and matter is natural being. There would seem no reason not to conclude that the world we think we see is just the projection of ourselves onto a neutral material matrix, a mere circular reflex of ourselves. If (2) rather than (1) is to be true, recourse to God is necessary in order to prove the actual presence of rational distinctions in nature—but this would represent a metaphysical appeal to a ground that is not self-evident, undercutting the notion that the ego is absolute and apodictic ground.

Husserl is no doubt aware of these two problematic consequences, the first of which approximates the idealism of Fichte, the second the metaphysical theology of Descartes's *Meditations*. Husserl himself explicitly formulates the condition for resolving a dualism between two kinds of being as follows: "Can the unity of a whole be unified other than through the essence proper to its parts, and which must accordingly have some *community of essence* instead of essential heterogeneity?"[41] But it seems impossible for Husserl to speak of a real community of essence *between* idea and object precisely because essence belongs solely or originally to idea. Putting the problem differently: if the ego is the absolute constitutive and legislative ground, it is not in a position to be one half of a reciprocal community of equals, the other half of which is nature. And even if it were, why the ego and nature had essences in common would remain wholly unclear.

I am exploring this problem in some detail because I believe it forms the crucial ontological problem inherited by Heidegger and Sartre from Husserl and, through Husserl, from the modern ontological tradition. It can be characterized as the problem of community of natures (or essences) between subject and object. I shall argue that it is the modern form of a long-standing ontological problem of which Aristotle was already aware, and I shall want to ask whether its resolution is possible so long as the modern assertion of the ego as absolute ground prevails.

There remains, however, another aspect of Husserl's thought that has importance for my topic. In his late thought, in which he seeks to come to terms with the *Lebensphilosophie* of Dilthey and perhaps with the earliest work of Heidegger, the notion of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) comes to prominence. In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Husserl argues that the ground

of the sciences is the world as lived. Merleau-Ponty has clearly summarized why this is the case:

> All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression. Science has not and never will have, by its nature, the same significance *qua* form of being as the world which we perceive, for the simple reason that it is a rationale or explanation of that world. . . . To return to things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always *speaks*, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is.[42]

In Husserl's terms, the various sciences are "regional ontologies" that explore aspects of the world as lived. The original and final subject of the sciences is the familiar world relative to which the most abstract science does and must situate its results. This is what Galilean-Cartesian science has overlooked, so as to conceal its own foundation. Merleau-Ponty pushes the notion of the centrality of the life-world for phenomenology when he writes that "all its [phenomenology's] efforts are concentrated upon reachieving a direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing that contact with a philosophical status."[43] But this seems to suggest that the absolute ground is the life-world rather than the transcendental ego. Can the two be reconciled? The life-world is experienced outside the transcendental reduction, in "the natural attitude"; constitutive acts of consciousness are apprehended only subsequent to a reduction that places out of account all of the "validities" of the natural attitude. How are the two brought together?

It is for Husserl a question of "the *proper* return to the naiveté of life."[44] If the reduction takes the world-ground from us,[45] it does so

in order finally to justify it. From within the reduction, thought intuits itself in the act of constituting the essential self-evident forms of the life-world itself, the "invariant structures" of the only "apparently incomprehensible 'Heraclitean flux.' "[46] In radical contrast to Descartes and Kant, who regard transcendental thought as establishing the world of knowledge and science (of *epistēmē*) as the real world, phenomenology rehabilitates "the disparaged *doxa*, which now suddenly claims the dignity of a foundation for science, *epistēmē*." This requires treating the life-world "in its neglected relativity."[47] What this means is that the life-world can be justified as the real and necessary ground of the sciences only if it is shown to be *a grounded ground*—grounded in transcendental subjectivity. If the life-world is grounded in the ego, "having arrived at the ego, one becomes aware of standing within a sphere of self-evidence of such a nature that any attempt to inquire behind it would be absurd." The ego is "the last conceivable ground" or "primal source" and its sphere is the sphere of "primordiality."[48] We here encounter the self-evident forms that constitute the life-world as intelligible and as a progressive "teleological" realization of rationality in the course of human history, first initiated by "the Greek primal establishment." Phenomenology must accomplish the "reestablishment" on secure grounds of the Greek "teleological beginning" of the "European spirit."[49]

Husserl's term for "establishment" is *Stiftung*, which connotes founding in the sense of donating or giving. Transcendental phenomenology discloses that the transcendental subject gives itself a world within which things can appear as what they are: "the world that exists for us, that is, our world in its being and being-such, takes its ontic meaning entirely from our intentional life through a priori types of accomplishments. . . ."[50] The life-world is formed essentially by a self-giving that is ordinarily unaware of itself as giving. Analysis of the outward, "projective," or object-centered thrust of intentional thought shows that one is naïvely and unreflectively aware of the object as if it were simply there of its own accord, and only under special conditions (reduction) is one aware of the act of "meaning-endowing" or intending that first gives the object its formal identity and world-setting. The whole tendency of unreflective thought is to dissimulate its own primal grounding activity. It is a self-effacing gift. If in reduction phenomenology shifts

focus from the gift to the giver (and hence to the "pure" phenomenon—the gift *as* gift or *noema,* the object-solely-as-intended) this shift is designed to complete the circle by returning one to the securely "reestablished" (re-given) life-world. Thus the expression "the given" no longer means simply "what happens to be there" but more primordially "the gift." It is the gift of a giving that seems to offer the "sufficient reason" (*Grund*) for the fact of the Being of beings called for by Leibniz: " 'Why is there something rather than nothing?' For nothing is simpler and easier than something. Further, assuming that things must exist, it must be possible to give a reason why they should exist as they do and not otherwise."[51]

There is a world because the universal transcendental ego (not the individual and idiosyncratic psyche) gives a world by perpetual movement beyond itself into matter. The activity by which it gives itself a temporal flow is the same activity that endows the phenomenal world with time. The activity by which it situates itself relative to space is the same activity that intends the phenomenal world as spatial.[52] The activity by which it spontaneously generates essential forms is the same activity by which the world is essentially formed. We note again the quasi-theological power of this universal ego in Husserl's reappropriation of German idealism. Phenomenological idealism "achieves the possibility of creating a ground for itself through its own powers."[53] Husserl regards phenomenology as realizing the intent of idealism through the reforming doctrines of reduction, intuitive self-evidence, and intentionality rather than through speculative metaphysics; these doctrines appear to establish the real truth of Hegel's assertion that Substance is Subject[54] and to confirm the "identity of Being and Thought," this "most interesting idea of modern times."

III

The foregoing must serve as an approximation of the situation in ontology inherited by Heidegger and subsequently, with the addition of Heidegger's early work, by Sartre.[55] I can now formulate the major ontological tendencies that confront Heidegger and Sartre:

1. There exists in modern thought a dualism between two kinds of Being: the Being of the subject and the Being of the object. This dualism is problematic insofar as subject and object are antithet-

ically defined and cannot enter into real relations with each other.

2. There exists in post-Lockean thought a dualism between two modes of Being of the thing—the thing-in-itself (pure externality) and the thing-for-us (phenomenon). Only the latter is held to be knowable. This dualism is problematic insofar as man has a legitimate desire for access to reality in either ordinary experience, the sciences, or both.

3. There exists in post-Copernican thought a tendency to regard the conclusions of the sciences as replacing naïve and familiar ordinary experience. This tendency is problematic insofar as (*a*) the sciences can no longer be regarded as disclosing the thing-in-itself hidden from ordinary experience, or (*b*) the sciences unground themselves by progressively replacing the very world they wish to analyze with theoretical entities and theoretical relations.

4. There exists in post-Hegelian thought a tendency to regard ontology as necessarily temporal or historical, so that beings and the relations between beings appear different in nature in successive epochs. This tendency is problematic insofar as no rational principle governing these changing appearances can be isolated with certainty. In this condition, Being (where 'Being' is defined as the ongoing substantial or substantive self-identity of beings) seems no longer specifiable.

5. There exists in post-Kierkegaardian and post-Nietzschean thought the claim that both the essence and the value of existence (where 'existence' may refer to either the object or the subject or both) are cognitively absent and must therefore be supplied without ground by faith or will. This tendency, often referred to as "existentialism," is problematic insofar as there exists a legitimate human desire to preserve and strengthen a coherent social order by reference to self-evidently or demonstrably universal meanings and values. Existentialism raises in acute form the question of the extent to which ontology is a function of attitude and decision.

Given these major ontological tendencies and problems, and given the fact of the early attraction of both Heidegger and Sartre to Husserl's phenomenology, a chief challenge confronting them is that of determining the extent to which phenomenological idealism can resolve these problems. The critical questions to be raised are listed below; they will be with us throughout. In Part IV I shall attempt to assess the relative importance of Heidegger's and Sartre's

responses to them in the course of the development of their thought (Parts I, II, III). It will readily be seen that the three questions are intimately interrelated, and that the way I have divided them is somewhat arbitrary. In Parts I–III I shall allow them to arise together, in the particular interrelation that they possess for Heidegger and for Sartre, respectively. I wish, in other words, to let these questions emerge in their characteristic Heideggerian and Sartrean ways rather than risk distorting them by lifting them abruptly out of the contexts in which they occur.

1. *The Question of the Beginning. Where does and can one begin in order to arrive properly at an ontology?* Husserl's method of reaching a "universal ontology" requires a shift in level—from unreflective engagement to reflective disengagement, from natural attitude to reduction—in order that one may reorient oneself ontologically. Yet, especially in light of Husserl's later work, there are *two* beginnings. There is the life-world in which one "factically" begins and to which one must return; there is the reduced world of pure ego-originated phenomena in which philosophy begins. The two beginnings are held together because "the primal Greek establishment" forms *both* our modern life-world and the transcendental region of philosophy. Can one legitimately invoke a philosophy of history in order to insure the coherence of the factical life-world and the world of transcendental universality? To reformulate the question: does phenomenological reduction "repeat" or "reestablish" a transcendental beginning that has already occurred, unnoticed, in the life-world? Or does transcendental philosophy rupture the ontological unity of the life-world, in which case Husserl's "reestablishment" of the Greek beginning would be the reestablishment of a rupture in the life-world rather than a justification of the life-world. To reformulate the question once again: to what has one's beginning in the life-world committed one? Does it secretly orient the very philosophical attitude that seeks to bracket it? Put in its most general terms, the question asks: *on what level* does and can one situate oneself in order to define reality? Is the ground (reference point, basis, criterion) of Being the life-world, the transcendental ego, or both? This question inevitably leads to the next.

2. *The Question of Metaphysics. Can ontology avoid recourse to metaphysics?* We have called attention to the quasi-theological power of man as a recurrent phenomenon in modern thought. In

the modern period, man has been called upon to serve as ground of Being in lieu of God. Man serves as God-surrogate or de facto ground through the exercise of reason, will, or faith. (Sartre argues that man does not escape this grounding function even in faith, since faith is a mode of human choice and the object of faith has only the force which that choice gives it.)[56] Man is needed as ground of Being in lieu of an unknown and indemonstrable God in order to guarantee, since man is restricted to phenomena, that phenomena are a disclosure of Being. That is, man himself must guarantee that phenomena exhibit intelligibility, self-identity, essence, formal order. Otherwise the phenomenon masks Being and there is "nothingness" or "meaninglessness." But Husserl's position betrays all too clearly a problem inherent in the notion of ego as ground: if the ego is the true origin of form, how can the world be anything more than the material reflex of the ego? If that is the case, one has not found reality but only the ego itself. One *finds* meaning only by forgetting that one has put it there. This amounts to the mapping of a metaphysical essence upon a neutral material receptacle rather than real disclosure of environing beings as they are in themselves. Time becomes the moving image of eternity (permanent universal form) rather than itself the locus of reality. Is there any way to *find* (rather than metaphysically *create*) a Being *in* time and history? Or is Being simply a material reflex of a metaphysics of reason, will, or faith? And if the natural base of the phenomenon of the life-world is a matter *X* for transcendental phenomenology, is not recourse to speculative metaphysics necessary if one is to regard that *X* as possessing in itself a formal structure which would guarantee that formal structure is more than mental? This question inevitably leads to the next and last.

3. *The Question of Unity. Can the phenomenon be a genuine unity of thought and Being?* This is tantamount to the question: can phenomenological ontology be saved? Is it possible to show that the phenomenon is relative to thought and is at the same time a disclosure of Being? In other words, is the phenomenon a real union of mental and natural being? Can it be shown that the phenomenon is the fundamental reality rather than an unstable and merely virtual conjunction of ontologically inherently discrete beings (i.e., form and matter, mind and nature)? This would seem to require (*a*) that mind not be regarded as the true ground, or nature will be essentially a

reflex of mind; (*b*) that nature not be regarded as the true ground, or the inevitable inherence of thought in experience and knowledge will mask or distort nature; (*c*) that mind and nature require each other in their very being, that they be internally and originally rather than externally and derivatively related. This last requirement would seem to be necessary if the sense of a "broken totality" is to be overcome. Would it mean a reversion to Hegelian metaphysics and its notion of the synthesis of opposites by recognition of their mutual dependence upon each other and upon a "third" that incorporates them in an identity without loss of their difference?

Taking these three questions together, they ask: what must the ground of the phenomenon be if the phenomenon is to be a disclosure of Being? This question, which sounds abstract, is not entertained simply out of idle curiosity or a purely theoretical interest. It asks, when expressed more concretely, whether it is possible for contemporary and future man to find his environment intelligible and affirmable. This is the "existential" import of the problem of phenomenological ontology, the point where the strictly ontological and the moral-practical concerns of Heidegger or of Sartre converge.

I

The Quest for the Nature of Being

IN 1943 Sartre published a study of "phenomenological ontology" that apparently seeks to rework Heidegger's 1927 study of phenomenological ontology. These volumes have generally been subsumed under two common rubrics: they are both "existentialist" and they are both contributions to "the phenomenological movement." But it is well known that Heidegger in 1946 explicitly dissociated himself from existentialism and argued that his thought was essentially different from that of Sartre. Some critics have argued that Heidegger was less than candid—that *SZ* was indeed existentialist, and that Heidegger unfairly criticizes Sartre for not understanding the book in the way Heidegger himself only understood it many years later, after his thought had changed. It will become clear that Sartre never intended *EN* as simply a restatement of the content of *SZ* or as an updated revision of it. Certain differences between the two works are essential, not marginal, and they stem from Sartre's quite intentional and radical splitting of the unity of Dasein through the introduction of a negating consciousness. Thereby the meaning of Being, man's relation to Being, and the phenomenological program are all modified.

For reasons that will only fully emerge as I proceed, my analyses of the two works will center on the relation of Heidegger's *Dasein* and Sartre's *pour-soi* to their temporal and spatial ground. Whatever their differences in other respects, Heidegger and Sartre both attempt to characterize the Being of man in relational rather than in substantive or entitative terms. In what follows, I shall examine two ways of understanding the Being of man as a relation to a ground. In both cases one is expected to approach an understanding of Being by understanding the Being of man as a certain relation to

Being. In both cases the problem of "the beginning," which I have identified as a critical feature of their philosophical inheritance, is directly responded to: one can properly arrive at an ontology only by beginning with a consideration of the nature or Being of man. The particular ways in which Heidegger and Sartre accomplish this beginning will determine, as subsequent chapters will show, the kind of response they can make to the two remaining critical questions I have raised: can ontology avoid recourse to metaphysics, and can the phenomenon be a genuine unity of thought and Being?

A word should be said about the way *SZ* is interpreted in chapter 2. Heidegger claimed that comprehension of the goal of *SZ* was "rendered difficult" by the fact that "the third division of the first part, 'Zeit und Sein,' was held back." This third division was to exhibit a "reversal" or "turn" (*Kehre*) that was to express "the location of the dimension from which *SZ* is experienced, and indeed experienced from the ground-experience of the forgottenness of Being."[1] This dimension, Heidegger argued, was neither "existentialist" nor "subjectivistic" nor "humanistic." The interpretation of *SZ* in chapter 2 will take Heidegger at his word and will therefore try to show what this dimension might have been. The interpretation offered in chapter 2 should therefore be regarded as a provisional attempt, subject to reexamination and modification in subsequent chapters,[2] to push a nonexistentialist conception of *SZ* as far as it can be pushed.

There are two reasons for beginning with this nonexistentialist interpretation, in addition to the effort to take seriously Heidegger's expressed intention. The first is to achieve at the very start the maximum possible differentiation of Heidegger's thought from that of Sartre; this hermeneutic device will enable us to conduct what Germans call an *Auseinandersetzung* (roughly, a "confrontation") between Heidegger and Sartre, by which I shall seek to establish their genuine relation to each other. The second reason for this interpretation is that it will enable us to judge the validity of Heidegger's claim that *SZ* has been misinterpreted by Sartre as "existentialism."[3] It would be more difficult to assess the validity of this claim if I were to adopt the existentialist interpretation of *SZ* at the outset.

2

Dasein, Ground, and Time in Sein und Zeit

'Dasein' names that which should first be experienced, and then properly thought of, as Place—that is, the locale of the truth of Being.

—Heidegger, *Wegmarken*, p. 202

THIS CHAPTER interprets Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* as an attempt to heal a broken ontological totality that he inherits from his philosophical predecessors. It considers only those aspects of *SZ* that bear more or less directly on this effort to overcome a divided being; the success of that effort is considered in chapter 4. For the problem of ontological totality, the critical question is the place of man vis-à-vis his environment, and it is the response of Heidegger's and Sartre's early ontological works to this question that the chapters of Part I attempt to elucidate. The question is a *relational* one: is the relation of man to environment such that it can be regarded as an ontological unity? Chapter 1 has argued that this question is inseparable from the question of ground or beginning and from the question of metaphysics. The present chapter moves from the general themes of unity and origin to the specific themes of everydayness, falling, and authenticity as clues to Heidegger's understanding of the ontological relation of man and environment. The questions of ground and metaphysics raised by these themes will occupy us throughout this volume.

I

It is important to establish at the outset that, in Heidegger's understanding of the term, *Dasein* is not 'man'. It is not out of perversity or a penchant for terminological obscurantism that Heidegger speaks of *Dasein;* yet many of his interpreters have felt they could substitute *Mensch* or *la réalité humaine* without loss or change of

meaning. One cannot remind oneself too often that 'man' is a term that carries a heavy historical accretion of meanings. For many of us—and not only philosophers—man is a 'subject' in a world of 'objects', where 'subject' and 'object' refer to kinds of beings that are in principle definable without reference to each other because each 'exists' independently of the other. Or it is maintained, alternatively, that 'subject' and 'object' are indeed to be defined relative to each other, but nevertheless in such a way that their relation is that of mutual exclusion: 'subject' is nonobject, and 'object' is nonsubject. But Heidegger warns that "subject and object do not coincide with Dasein and the world."[1] Nor is 'ego' or 'I', common ways of characterizing man as individual, equivalent to Dasein: "Proximally Dasein is 'they', and for the most part it remains so."[2]

Dasein is "man's Being" (*das Sein des Menschen*)[3] or man's essence (*Wesen*) in the verbal sense—man's essential, though long forgotten and hence nonapparent, *way* of being. In the *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger presupposes this distinction when he speaks of the "*Dasein* which man endures in existing."[4] This means the way of being that any particular man, as a "mode" of this way of being, must stand within in existing. Here we can assume that 'man' means any of the particular ways of being that the essential way of Being (Dasein) *makes possible*. Not that Dasein exists without some particular way of being (without 'man'), but rather that any particular way is essentially one and the same way. 'Way' here means 'path' or 'route'; hence one can say that man walks the temporal path of Dasein, which is the path of *Sein* (Being) insofar as it is *da* (there—that is, situated). Thus Dasein is 'man' insofar as man is temporally (*zeitlich*) situated with respect to Being.

We assume for the moment that Heidegger understands Being as one, as a unity. If this is so, to say that Dasein is man's Being is to say that Dasein *is* Being, though this does not necessarily mean that Da-Sein is all that *Sein* is. If true, this indicates that the commonly heard claim that *SZ* deals only with man and fails to reach Being is doubly wrong. *SZ* deals primarily with Da-Sein and hence with *Sein* insofar as it is *da*.

To be sure, more argument is required in order to buttress the case we are making. This case can be strengthened by means of an analysis of the interrelation of Dasein and phenomenology in *SZ*.

Heidegger, as a student in Freiburg, had asked himself, "If