USE OF THESES

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HEIDEGGER: BEYOND NIHILISM?
by
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Except where otherwise acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents my original research.

Kieran Donaghue
"Nach unserer menschlichen Erfahrung und Geschichte, soweit ich jedenfalls orientiert bin, weiss ich, dass alles Wesentliche und Grosse nur daraus entstanden ist, dass der Mensch eine Heimat hatte und in einer Überlieferung verwurzelt war..."

Martin Heidegger.
CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE  THE METAPHYSICS OF NIHILISM  1

CHAPTER TWO  METAPHYSICS AS NIHILISM  68

CHAPTER THREE  EK-SISTENCE  102

CHAPTER FOUR  BEYOND NIHILISM?  163

BIBLIOGRAPHY  225
CHAPTER ONE

THE METAPHYSICS OF NIHLISM
We begin with a quotation from Hans Jonas:

The disruption between man and total reality is at the bottom of nihilism...: the stare at isolated self-hood, to which it condemns man, may wish to exchange itself for a monistic naturalism which, along with the rupture, would abolish the idea of man as man. Between that Scylla and her twin Charybdis, the modern mind hovers. Whether a third road is open to it - one by which the dualistic rift can be avoided and yet enough of the dualistic insight saved to uphold the humanity of man - philosophy must find out.

The principal task of this thesis will be to investigate whether Heidegger's thought, in either its earlier or its later form, serves to take us along the third road of which Jonas speaks. As the first step of this task, I will look closely at the characterisation of the ground of nihilism which Jonas gives, to see whether it cannot be developed and given more content.

In the first section of this first chapter, I will seek to show that various forms of nihilism can be understood in terms of subsidiary dualisms which have given rise to, and thus find expression in, the fundamental dualism of man and world to which Jonas refers.

A contemporary author, Stanley Rosen, writes the following of nihilism:

... although the danger of nihilism is a permanent human possibility, the actual pervasive presence of nihilism today is due to a series of specific philosophical decisions in the past. The net effect of these decisions has been to produce a radical deterioration in our conception of what it means to be reasonable. More specifically still, the conception of "reason" has been detached from its traditional affiliation with the conception of "good".

It has become a virtually unanimous article of faith, among the ostensible friends as well as the avowed enemies of reason, that one may speak reasonably about logical patterns of inference or "empirically verifiable facts" (...) but not about what is good.

Rosen claims that, as a result of this severance of reason from good, reason is now unable to justify itself, since it cannot assert its own goodness. And, given that it is now impossible even for the friends of reason to assert the goodness of reason, Rosen tells us that "... it is all the more easy for the enemies of reason to assert the evil of reason". He writes that:

Reason (we are told) objectifies, reifies, alienates; it debases or destroys the genuinely human. It obscures the significance of human existence by superimposing the rigid, inhuman, and, in the last instance, man-made categories of a mathematized ontology.

So, Rosen is in effect claiming that the severance of the bond between reason and the good, a bond which was decisively present, he claims, in classical Greek thought, has led to that pervasive fact-value dichotomy, the offspring of the Humean distinction between what is and what ought to be, which still plagues us today. (It is not Rosen's contention that before the severance of the bond between reason and the good there was no distinction between facts and values: rather his claim is that such 'things' as facts and values only appear after the severance of this bond). For Rosen, the radicalisation of this dichotomy has led to the belief that the question as to how a human life ought to be lived, i.e. the question as to the nature of the good life, is not given even the hint of an answer by the study of reality, of nature or of Being. Rosen contrasts this modern picture with that view which, he claims, underlies the classical Greek world. He comes to this by way of a discussion.

1. ibid. Preface. xv.
2. ibid.
of the dichotomisation of facts and values in terms of the
theory/practice distinction. He writes: ¹

Modern confusion about the relative status of facts and
values results from a misunderstanding or exaggeration of
the classical distinction between theory and practice.
One finds very clearly in Aristotle, and more ambiguously
in Plato, recognition of the difference between an attempt
to see mentally "how things are" (theory) and an attempt
to ascertain the relative degrees of excellence of the
various modes of human conduct (practice). For both
thinkers, however, these two kinds of mental activity
are related precisely by what one could call "the logical
structure of the world". Of course, "logical" here means
something quite different from the meaning attached to
the term by its contemporary admirers. The Greek word
logos means both speech and reason. To the Socratic
philosophers, the world is "logical" or "reasonable"
because it provides us with a basis for speaking
meaningfully about the relative merits of the various
human activities.

This is a significant passage, and its importance will become
more evident as we proceed. At this point it is interesting for
us to note that an essentially similar point is made by Hans
Jonas, when he writes: ²

Ontology as the ground of ethics was the original tenet
of philosophy. Their divorce, which is the divorce of
the "objective" and "subjective" realms, is the modern
destiny.

It is Rosen's contention that the ground of the separation
between reason and the good was prepared for by Christian
thought (which thought, says Rosen, claims in effect that the
good, seated in God, lies beyond the domain of rational
appraisal³) and that this separation was brought to completion
by the mathematization of reason which occurred with the
beginnings of modern rationalism. We might suspect that this
"mathematization of reason" - based on a Newtonian conception
of mathematics which shows little of that 'mysticism' of its
Pythagorean forebear, which had so much influence on Plato -
and the concomitant denudation of the natural world to a

¹. ibid. p.59
quality-less region whose essence is bare extension, were in part a result of the rejection of the Aristotelian world of teleology - such a rejection is what is really involved in Descartes' claim that the purposes of God are inscrutable\(^1\) - and thus the rejection of explanation in terms of final causes. This had the effect of leaving man alone as a being directed towards ends, and such ends now had a much weakened ontological basis. Ends now became purposes, at first given support by the pervasive presence of the teleological will of God, until, with the weakening of this presence, they became grounded in the will of man himself.

It is not surprising to find that what we now term the natural sciences, grounded as they were in the Cartesian conception of the natural world, implicitly drew and operated with a radical dichotomy between fact and value. We then find that the social sciences, striving for respectability by modelling themselves on their forebears, also began with this dichotomy as one of their tools. But in this area the tensions inherent in the dichotomy began to surface.

This point leads us to a discussion of nihilism given by another contemporary author, Maurice Natanson.

Natanson addresses his attention to what he calls "conceptual nihilism", which he defines as "a root denial of the validity of reason".\(^2\) This "root denial" amounts to the claim that "... reason is itself damaged, faulted, and ... nothing can be built

6. Natanson discusses this "conceptual nihilism" in connection with what he terms the "value neutrality" of the thought of the sociologist, Max Weber. Natanson takes as his task the defense of Weber's "value neutrality", which comes down to the strict separation of the realms of fact and value, against a charge of nihilism levelled against it by Leo Strauss. The crux of Strauss' charge is expressed by the following:

...Weber's thesis necessarily leads to nihilism or to the view that every preference, however evil, base, or insane, has to be judged before the court of reason to be as legitimate as any other preference.

Clearly, Strauss' accusation is that Weber's philosophy, when thought through, supports the conclusion given by the renowned phrase of Ivan Karamazov - "all is permitted". And here it is pertinent to note Camus' claim that "with this 'all is permitted' the history of contemporary nihilism really begins".

Natanson's defence of Weber centres on a distinction he draws between the following two claims: firstly, "that reason is inherently faulted", and secondly, "that there are limits to reason". Natanson uses this distinction in the following passage, which says:

Weber, I suggest, is arguing the latter case. If we grant, for the sake of analysis, that he is right, it does not follow that the individual cannot argue effectively for certain positions.

But this argument is weak: for it is not clear, given Natanson's exposition of Weber's "value neutrality", how the point about the relative, as against total, inadequacy of reason could concern the realm of value or of morality at all.

1. ibid.
3. quoted in Natanson's "On Conceptual Nihilism", loc.cit. p.296
5. loc.cit. p.298
6. ibid.
However we find that Natanson introduces a new angle into his argument. This appears in the following passage:

Weber insists on holding firm to two qualitatively different realms and sources: knowledge and will. If reason has limits and cannot ground itself, so too is will bound to the integral life of the individual.

Natanson is here saying something important, but on closer examination we find that this "something" involves a rejection of Weber's "value neutrality". For Natanson is in effect suggesting that it is not the circumscribed reason which is the subject of knowledge, nor just a hermetically sealed off will which determines value: in both cases the subject is "... the integral person, the individual in his full voluntative as well as cognitive reality", and for such a subject, there cannot be a radical distinction between facts and values, between what is and what ought to be. This point leads Natanson to re-think the conception of reason, to draw a distinction between "reason as a vast network of abstract principles, an ultimate algebra of the spirit" and "reason as a living, historically continuous matrix within which the individual is able to confront and analyse, doubt and defend, consider and reconsider, the meaning and implications of the central terms of his existence". This latter conception of the nature of reason would please Rosen, although he may well be a little unhappy with the emphasis Natanson places on its historical nature - nonetheless, clearly Natanson has seen that, for nihilism to be avoided, one must guard against a strict dichotomisation of the realms of reason and value, significance and meaning; for, he claims,

1. ibid.
2. ibid.
3. ibid. p.299
such a dichotomisation leads to reason becoming frozen. He writes that:

What keeps reason from being frozen is the tension with which it is bound to will. Reason unqualified by commitment to value is subject to a deterioration of outlook - ... Pushed to its extreme, such deterioration is subject to an internal collapse it would not be unfair to call nihilism.

But this passage surrenders some of the ground gained, for it necessitates the asking of the following question: can the commitment to value with which Natanson suggests reason must be qualified to avoid nihilism, itself be reasonable? If not, then there is no reason to avoid nihilism. From within Weber's thought, at least as this is presented by Natanson, the answer to this question is "No". This becomes clear from the following passage, which Natanson quotes from Weber. This says:

The ultimately possible attitudes towards life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion. Thus it is necessary to make a decisive choice.

As Natanson sees, this passage is a prefigurement of a key theme of existentialist thought, which advocates the ultimacy of choice - a choice which supposedly cannot find support in anything but its own activity, and is thus essentially without support. Natanson concedes that "existential thought (in Sartre, for example) has been charged with being nihilistic, of not offering reliable and warranted standards, and of leading to moral anarchy", but he declines from examining this charge. (I will take this up later in this chapter).

In concluding this discussion of Natanson's defense of Weber, it is worth our while to look at the characterisation of nihilism.

1. ibid. p.300
2. ibid. p.300
3. ibid. p.301
which Natanson himself arrives at near the end of his article. He writes there: 1

Essentially, then, nihilism is not a logical consequence of the methodological separation of fact and value, and then says: 2

Rather, I suggest, nihilism is the lure to deny the paradoxical tension between what we can know and what we can value.

I think that Natanson's use of the word "methodological" in the former of these sentences is misleading, for it is clear that his discussion so far has concerned the distinction between facts and values insofar as this is taken to be an ontological distinction. The discussion has concerned the methodology of Weberian social science only to the extent that this methodology answers to a particular ontological conception.

Now Natanson writes, as the penultimate sentence of his article, that "the unstable but redeeming tension between reason and value constitutes the most fundamental and creative opposition to nihilism". 3 This brings us to ask: how could there be a tension between fact and value if the realms of fact and value are taken to be radically distinct from each other? Surely the existence of such a tension points to the inadequacy of the sort of separation suggested by Weber? Again, I think that Natanson is saying something of essential importance in the characterisation of nihilism he gives at the end of his paper, but he appears not to see that, in the terms of this characterisation, Weber's 'value neutrality' is nihilistic.

One point of interest with regard to Natanson's characterisation of nihilism is its formal symmetry to that account of the ground of nihilism given by Jonas in the passage

1. ibid. p.300
2. ibid.
3. ibid. p.305
quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Both writers suggest that it is the middle path, the path which leads between radical dualism and monism, between the radical separation of fact and value and their total identification, which promises hope of leading us beyond nihilism.

Before leaving Natanson's discussion of nihilism, we should note that he gives some prominence to an attitude to time which he sees as characterising nihilistic doctrines. He points out that both Russian nihilism and Nazism, though fundamentally opposed in their conceptions and valuations of reason, "signify a denial of the present" with "the future taking an overriding dramatic power". But Natanson also sees the seeds of nihilism in the modern counter-culture movement, of which he takes Theodore Roszak to be the spokesman, for Natanson claims that this movement seeks to overcome the alienation which it lays at the feet of a supposedly objectifying, reifying, value-free rationality by subjugating reason to man's affectivity, thus hoping to 'humanise' knowledge. A central objection Natanson has to this thought is that it "... lends itself easily to a disconnection with the past for the supposed sake of recreating a vivid present". But Natanson adds: "Unfortunately it is we who need the past; it is we who are stranded in a despairing present".

These remarks by Natanson about differing conceptions of time in relation to nihilism, although brief, are of special interest to us, for we find in the writings of another author, Helmut

1. ibid. p.299
2. The author of, among other works, The Making of a Counter Culture (London, Faber and Faber, 1970)
3. loc.cit. p.304
4. ibid.
Thielicke, a discussion of attitudes towards time figuring centrally in a discussion of nihilism. This discussion arises in connection with an account Thielicke gives of meaning, and the relation of this notion to that of purpose, or goal. Thielicke distinguishes between what he terms "reflective" nihilism, where the question of the meaning of life "... is faced in full and unflinching consciousness" and then "answered in despair with the words 'there is no meaning'"\(^1\), and "naive" nihilism, which is "... an attitude in which the question of the meaning of life is simply no longer allowed to appear"\(^2\).

For Thielicke, such naive nihilism involves an "... unquestioning surrender to the moment, to the immediate activity, the immediate duty, the immediate pleasure"\(^3\), it "... signifies the refusal to see one's life in the light of its final purpose, in the light of its meaning"\(^4\).

So we find that, for Thielicke, the clearest symptom of naive nihilism is a total absorption in the present. He talks of "the paralysis which spread throughout broad areas after the German catastrophe of 1945...", a time when "all national life seemed hopelessly leached out", where because of lack of belief in a viable future "... meaninglessness became an overwhelming force". In such situations as this, Thielicke suggests, "... time ceases to be an extension directed toward a goal: it becomes a sum of discontinuous moments which must be endured here and now." The hand to mouth existence which results is, he suggests, "... no longer life at all..." for "it is of the very essence of human

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2. ibid. p.148
3. ibid.
4. ibid.
life to ask the questions Why? and Whither? Only the animal
is imprisoned in the present moment.1

Thielicke has surely said something right here. It is a
common belief that the life lived completely within the borders
of the here and now lacks a distinctively human quality, the
capacity to stand back from itself and assess the direction in
which it is going, together with the capacity to learn from the
past, to enrich itself through the absorption of a deep
tradition.

But, on the other hand, we find that a life lived fully in
the present is held to be an achievement which only great
discipline can provide: it is said to be a joy given to mystics
and holy men to live fully in the present, not 'scattered'
throughout time on the wings of memory, hope, or fear.

A writer on Zen Buddhism writes of samadhi, the point of
enlightenment:2

Moment after moment, only the present comes and goes
during the period of samadhi, a continuous stream of
the present. Only in the present can we be said to
exist... the present moment is absolutely independent
and is our true existence.

Here we might also call to mind the sentence from Wittgenstein's
Tractatus which runs:3

... If by eternity is understood not endless temporal
duration but timelessness, then he lives eternally who
lives in the present...

But whereas the "present" of which Thielicke speaks is a
moment severed from connections to what is outside itself -
thus being a mark of a radical discontinuity of life - the

1. ibid. pp.31, 32
2. Katsuki Sekida, Zen Training, Methods and Philosophy (New
13. "present" of the mystic takes in, incorporates, what is normally conceived as external to the moment, as past or future. Such a "present" is a moment of unity, not of fragmentation.

This discussion of nihilism in terms of absorption in the present leads us now to take up one of the many quasi-definitions of nihilism which Rosen gives, which in effect claims that nihilism results, not from absorption in the present, but from a denudation of the present. He writes: 1

Nihilism is fundamentally an attempt to overcome or to repudiate the past on behalf of an unknown and unknowable yet hoped-for future. The danger implicit in such an attempt is that it seems necessarily to entail a negation of the present, or to remove the ground on which a man must stand in order to carry out or even merely to witness the process of historical transformation.

And in the Preface of Rosen's book we find the sentence: "A good life, let the reader remember, can be lived only in the present." 2

What, then, do these points concerning the nihilistic implications of certain attitudes to time tell us? Well, what has in effect been said is that nihilism finds soil for growth both where man loses touch with the present as a dimension of time, and constantly looks back to his past and forward to his future, without having a secure footing to enable him to focus his vision, and where man confines himself to an animal-like absorption in the present, where the future is "not yet" and the past is "gone", and where what is real and thus worthy of concern is what is "here to hand".

Thus it seems that, again in this region of attitudes to time, the path beyond nihilism must traverse the middle ground, in

1. op.cit. p.140
2. ibid. p.xviii
this way keeping in balance the inherent tensions between the various 'dimensions' of time. A way must be found of establishing an inhabitable present - a 'moment' with a good deal of temporal 'width' - within the movement of dynamic time, even though this will give rise to the problem of deciding where the present ends and the future begins.

This provides us with a convenient point at which to relate the existentialism of Heidegger's *Being and Time* to our discussion of nihilism. We will do this by means of an examination of Jonas' discussion of the account of temporality which Heidegger gives in this work. (Jonas refers to *Being and Time* as "that profound and still most important manifesto of existentialist philosophy". 1 Despite Heidegger's later claims that *Being and Time* has been pervasively misinterpreted - we will discuss these claims at a later state - I am in agreement with Jonas concerning the fundamentally existentialist nature of this work.)

It is Jonas' contention that, when we examine the structural aspects of care, the basic state of Dasein, 2 - these aspects are existence, facticity (thrownness), and falling - in terms of the temporal 'dimensions' appropriate to each of these aspects we find that the temporal 'dimension' of the present corresponds to Dasein's falling: that Dasein's authenticity is characterised in terms which exclude a habitable present.

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Jonas writes, of Being and Time, that:

... a great deal is said about the existential "present", but not as an independent dimension in its own right. For the existentially "genuine" present is the present of the "situation", which is wholly defined in terms of the self's relation to its "future" and "past". It flashes up, as it were, in the light of decision, when the projected "future" reacts upon the given "past" (Geworfenheit) and in this meeting constitutes what Heidegger calls the "moment" (Augenblick): moment, not duration, is the temporal mode of this "present" - a creature of the other two horizons of time, a function of their ceaseless dynamics, and no independent dimension to dwell in.

An examination of the account Heidegger gives in Being and Time of the authentic present, what he calls "the moment of vision" (Augenblick), supports the points made by Jonas. For "the moment of vision is a phenomenon which in principle can not be clarified in terms of the 'now' (dem Jetzt)." Further "the moment of vision ... temporalizes itself ... in terms of the authentic future", so, as a result, "in the moment of vision nothing can occur". Clearly this bears out Jonas' claim that Heidegger's authentic present does not provide "an independent dimension to dwell in".

It must be said that Heidegger, in his discussion of authentic temporality in Being and Time, lays stress on the importance of Dasein's relation to its past for the possibility of its authentic existence. He uses the term "repetition" (Wiederholung) to designate the authentic "Being-as-having-been" of Dasein. But how, we may ask, is this term to be understood? Heidegger continually stresses that Dasein, as a being which exists - i.e.

2. Macquarrie and Robinson give their reasons for translating "das Augenblick" as "moment of vision", instead of simply as "moment", in footnote 2, H.328
as a being which is always "ahead-of-itself" — is always confronted with a set of definite, restricted possibilities which it can actualise. It is, Heidegger emphasises, the past of a particular Dasein, both as an isolated individual and as a member of a wider social and national community, which determines the range and nature of the possibilities open to it at any time. In repetition Dasein takes over its past, i.e. it relates itself authentically to its past, by projecting itself upon certain of those possibilities which this past has made truly possible. But we should notice that lacking from this notion of repetition is any ethical dimension — there is no indication that, through the process of repetition, Dasein comes to see which among the possibilities presented to it by its past it ought to take up and actualise. Similarly the notion of wisdom, the ability to discern which courses of action are the more appropriate, are more in keeping with the proper goals of human life, seems to be lacking from repetition. So the past remains for Heidegger's authentic individual essentially a spring-board for its self-projection into the future.

We will take up the notion of repetition again when we discuss in greater detail Heidegger's notion of authenticity later in this chapter. But for the present, let us return to the discussion of the dimensions of temporality and their relation to nihilism.

We find that Jonas suggests two ways in which a present with a degree of temporal 'width' can be inserted into the dynamic temporality of human existence. He first talks of a "presence of things" and asks: "Does not the co-presence with them afford a 'present' of a different kind?", different from "the inhospitable zero point of mere formal resolution". But, as he

1. H.192
2. "Gnosticism, Existentialism, and Nihilism", loc.cit. p.231
recognises, for the thought of Being and Time, things are
either ready-to-hand (Zuhanden) and thus bound up with the
self-projective existence, and thus the future-past dynamic,
of Dasein, or present-at-hand (Vorhanden), and thus included
in Dasein's world, but as an essentially foreign element.

But Jonas goes on to suggest that a truly inhabitable present
is granted to human existence only by a 'vision' of the eternal,
the trans-temporal. He writes that:¹

... it is eternity, not time, that grants a present and
gives it a status of its own in the flux of time; and it
is the loss of eternity which accounts for the loss of a
genuine present.

He adds to this that "such a loss is the disappearance of the
world of ideas and ideals in which Heidegger sees the true
meaning of Nietzsche's 'God is dead'", and concludes:²

Therefore the same cause which is at the root of nihilism
is also at the root of the radical temporality of
Heidegger's scheme of existence, in which the present is
nothing but the moment of crisis between past and future.

Jonas is here in effect arguing that the program undertaken
by Heidegger in Being and Time, this being the attempt to present
an account of human existence without recourse to the trans-
temporal, must lead to nihilism, or a situation where the present
is conceived to be no more than "the moment of crisis between
past and future", "the razor's edge of decision".³

¹. ibid. p.232
². ibid. We find a similar point made by Rosen. He claims that,
although both the Plato of the Republic, and contemporary
nihilists, are concerned to turn men around, "to make them
face in a different direction from that of tradition", nonetheless there is an essential difference between them:
for, "... whereas nihilism points us toward the historical
future...the Platonic peripiteia is directed upward. Plato
wishes us to take our bearings in time by a vision that
remains free of the transience of temporality. If such a
vision is possible, then and only then has one acquired a
'steadfast' ground for the present". op.cit. p.141.
³. ibid. p.231
However, before we can feel confident in supporting Jonas' charge against Heidegger, we must broaden our investigations of the thought of Being and Time somewhat to take in the key notion of authenticity, which we have already used but without clarifying its meaning. As a way of leading into this, it will be useful to discuss the role of the notion of will in Being and Time, and also the place of this notion in the context of existentialist philosophy in general.

Earlier we saw Natanson claim that "... what keeps reason from being frozen is the tension with which it is bound to will", and suggest on the strength of this tension that "nihilism is not a logical consequence of the methodological separation of fact and value". Now I think that it can be fairly claimed of much of modern existential philosophy that it works with such a strict dichotomy between reason and will that it induces the dissolution of the tension of which Natanson speaks. Existential philosophers tend to picture the will as a psychic function which is hermetically sealed off from all other aspects of the individual, both psychical and physical. Iris Murdoch presents the following picture as her view of the schematised man who is the subject of modern ethical thought - thought which is, she suggests, existentialist both in its Continental and in its Anglo-Saxon varieties. Assuming its voice she says that "our personal being is the movement of our overtly choosing will", and continues, in her own voice: "Immense care is taken to picture the will as isolated. It is isolated from belief, from reason, from feeling, and is yet the essential centre of the self. 'I identify myself with my will'".

1. loc. cit. p. 300
This conception of the centrality to selfhood of the will translates itself in existentialist philosophy into an emphasis on decision, on the nature of an act of choice as against its content, the course chosen. We find this present in Kierkegaard, who writes: ¹

"... even if a man were to choose the wrong, he will nevertheless discover, precisely by reason of the energy with which he chose, that he had chosen the wrong. For the choice being made with the whole inwardness of his personality, his nature is purified and he himself brought into immediate relation to the eternal Power whose omnipresence penetrates the whole of existence."

And for Kierkegaard, the highest choice for an individual is the choice of his own self - indeed the Kierkegaardian individual becomes himself in choosing himself. The self comes into existence by means of the choice, although paradoxically it must have existed before, because it was it that chose. Thus, for Kierkegaard, "... I am born of the principle of contradiction, or born by the fact that I chose myself". ⁵

Now let us turn to Heidegger and *Being and Time*. In this work we find Dasein's authenticity characterised in terms of the notions of resolution and projection, and it is with the latter of these notions that the concept of choice enters. Projection (Entwurff) is a throwing (werfen) of oneself upon one's possibilities, i.e. choosing. For authentic Dasein this projection (choice) is an expression of will - for inauthentic Dasein, however, "... Being towards possibilities shows itself for the most part as mere wishing", in which "... no positive new possibilities are willed, but that which is at one's disposal becomes 'tactically' altered in such a way that there is a semblance of something happening".¹

In *Being and Time* Heidegger makes little explicit use of the notion of will, principally because he wants to sharply differentiate his thought from that of the various proponents of Lebensphilosophie who had, Heidegger felt, taken over the basic tenet of the various metaphysical doctrines of will which flourished in the nineteenth century.² These doctrines conceived the will, understood in terms of life-energy, of power for action, as the fundament of existence, and thus willing as the human activity most expressive of reality.³ In contrast, Heidegger claims that willing can itself only be understood in terms of the phenomenon of care, with its structural components of existence, facticity, and falling. Given Heidegger's claim that the dimensions (ecstases) of temporality⁴ are embodied in these structural components, we

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¹. H.195  
². see H.210, 211  
³. For instance in Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. We will discuss Nietzsche's thought in this regard later in this chapter.  
⁴. see H.329
He should not be surprised to find him characterising the activity of willing in terms of the present/future/past matrix of time. He depicts the will as always "out for something", as continually moving into the future, yet as directing itself only upon a definite, restricted range of possibilities which have been "handed-down" by the past. For Heidegger, it is wishing, mere "tranquillized 'willing'", which corresponds to the temporal dimension of the present. Though apparently future-directed, wishing, Heidegger tells us, is in fact a surreptitious mode of falling into the world of present concern, turning away from concrete possibilities to toy with disguised actualities. He writes:

When the world has been primarily projected as a wish-world, Being-in-the-world has lost itself inertly in what is at its disposal; but it has done so in such a way that, in the light of what is wished for, that which is at its disposal (and this is all that is ready-to-hand) is never enough.

Heidegger distinguishes willing not only from wishing, but also from those phenomena with which it has often been identified, such as drive, urge, and addiction, supposedly clear manifestations of life-force. Heidegger claims that, when under the sway of drive, urge, or addiction, "Dasein has become blind..." or "... care has not yet become free..."\(^2\), which suggests that in authentic willing Dasein has at least a degree of both sight and freedom.

These distinctions which Heidegger draws give clear support to the claim, made rather bluntly above, that the notion of will is bound closely to the key notion of authenticity. And to add to this, the fact that the temporal dimension of the

1. H.195.
2. H.195, 196.
present corresponds to only a "tranquillized" form of willing lends support to Jonas' claim that the authentic Dasein depicted in Being and Time is denied a present in which to dwell.

But to further develop our understanding of the notion of authenticity, we need to examine the concept of resoluteness as this is used by Heidegger.

In Being and Time Dasein is depicted as being resolute if it answers to the call of conscience, which recalls it from its lostness in the "everyday, tranquillized world" of "the They" (das Man), the impersonal, public 'self' which shields the individual from its own authentic selfhood. In such a self-recalling, Dasein takes over its past, meaning that it fully recognises and accepts its particular, concrete situation, with the set of restricted and definite possibilities that this situation determines. But further, in resolutely taking over its past, Dasein must assume its own fundamental guilt, a guilt which is depicted as arising from the fact that Dasein must assume responsibility for its own Being-in-the-world, yet as thrown Being-in-the world it can never be so responsible. Dasein can never go back behind its own beginning and, as it were, re-constitute itself from the ground up.

But now the question arises: can such a resolute appropriation of its past provide Dasein with a law, an authority for its authentic existence, or must Dasein's authenticity be its own authority? At one point in Being and Time Heidegger talks of "... the repeatable possibilities of existence..." as "... the sole authority which a free existing can have..."\(^1\). But we have claimed that the notion of repetition, rather than providing a law for Dasein's existence, really serves to make clear which of an array of apparent possibilities are real possibilities, i.e. 1. H. 391.
possibilities which stem from the reality of Dasein's situation. But then for Heidegger repetition embraces not only the past of an individual, but the past of others; it thus enables each individual to uncover new possibilities which are hidden in the actuality of past lives. It might enable Dasein to "choose its hero", in whose footsteps it may loyally follow. (Heidegger stresses that this does not mean simply aping a past life, but rather taking up anew possibilities brought to light by this past life).

But as one commentator, Karsten Harries, writes:

In what sense and how is the hero chosen? Is the choice, like the choice of what Sartre terms the fundamental project, the ground of further justification and as such groundless?

However, a point that needs to be stressed about the Heideggerian notion of repetition, a point which displays clearly a difference between Heidegger and the early Sartre, is that the past, the source of Dasein's repeatable possibilities, is the past not so much of Dasein as an isolated individual, but rather as a member of a historical community, with a determinate tradition. It is on this basis that Heidegger introduces the notions of fate and destiny into the thought of Being and Time, and writes; "Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its 'generation' goes to make up the full authentic historicizing of Dasein". We may now ask; could not the notions of fate, destiny, and history provide in some measure an authority for Dasein's authentic existence?

As an aside, we can note that the use of these notions in Being and Time, notions which apply both to individuals and to nations, leads easily into Heidegger's designation, in his "Bekenntnis zur Adolf Hitler und dem nationalsozialistischen Staat", written in 1933, not of an individual Dasein but of

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1. See H.385,386.
3. H.384,385
the Dasein of "the whole people" (das ganze Volk) as the subject of the possibility of authentic existence.¹ But, and this bears on the question asked above, there seems to be a tension between this account of the subject of authenticity and the account given in Being and Time, where the authenticity of an individual Dasein is set in the sharpest of contrasts to the inauthenticity of a Dasein immersed in the world of the 'they', the mores of which world it takes unquestioningly to be its authority.

But now let us turn our attention fully to the question; could not the notions of fate, destiny and history provide the source of an authority for the individual Dasein's authentic existence?

I believe that we must give a negative answer to this question, for the following reason. We find in Being and Time that Dasein's authentic relation to what is external to itself, to that which thereby might provide a law for its existence, is grounded in Dasein's own self-projection, and thus can never be an authority for this projection. Even history falls into this class, for Heidegger sees it as becoming meaningful only in terms of Dasein's own choice of its own future. Heidegger writes that "... history has its essential importance neither in what is past nor in the 'today' and its 'connection' with what is past, but in that authentic historizing of existence which arises from Dasein's future".² Calvin Schrag takes up this point and writes: "My past becomes meaningful in light of my projection and anticipation of future possibilities. My resolutely chosen

¹. in Guido Schneeberger's Nachlese zu Heidegger, (Bern, 1962), pp. 148-150.
². H.386
goals and purposes define what my past shall mean". Indeed Heidegger takes this emphasis on the future as the source of the meaning of the past to such an extreme as to say that "authentic Being-towards-death — ... — is the hidden basis of Dasein's historicality", adding: "Dasein does not first become historical in repetition; but because it is historical as temporal, it can take itself over in its history by repeating".

Similarly Dasein's Being-with-others, as depicted by Heidegger, can never provide the ground for a law for Dasein's authenticity, for such Being-with-others is an internal aspect of Dasein's Being-Itself. It seems, then, that authentic Dasein must itself provide the law for its existence. But the question arises: does not this mean that authentic Dasein is essentially lawless? for it is difficult to see how Dasein's essence, characterised as it is in terms of existence, which is in turn characterised in terms of possibility, of what is "not-yet" (Dasein has "Being-ahead-of-itself" as a structural component of its being)¹, could provide the grounding for such a law.

Karsten Harries compares Heidegger's picture of authentic Dasein with the picture of the autonomous man sketched by Kant's moral philosophy. Harries points out that"... autonomy requires obedience to a law which the individual draws from his own essence and thus gives himself", and continues:

But in what sense does Heidegger's understanding of the essence of man enable us to give content to such a law? Kant could appeal to the authority of pure reason. But if Heidegger's analysis is accepted, that authority is no longer available. To give some content to the notion of autonomy Heidegger draws on history; to understand what his own essence commands, the individual has to understand also the origin of that essence and the destiny which ties him to others, to his people.

2. H.386
3. H.192
4. loc.cit. p.652
But, if we are right in our claim that history and destiny only become meaningful on the basis of an individual Dasein's choice of its own specific future, then they cannot provide a law for this choice. So the question now arises with greater force: is the notion of authenticity developed in Being and Time subject to a charge (similar to that brought against Sartre) of being nihilistic, on the grounds that "... it does not offer reliable and warranted standards, and thus leads to moral anarchy".¹ Can it be said, with Adorno (whose criticisms are directed primarily at Heidegger) that "... in the name of contemporary authenticity even a torturer could put in all sorts of claims for compensation, to the extent that he was simply a true torturer".² Is Adorno correct when he says that "since it is denied any objective determination, authenticity is determined by the arbitrariness of the subject, which is authentic to itself".³ Is then authenticity as presented in Being and Time so bound up with one's own self-relation that "a murderer may become authentic, just as a slave may become free, simply by changing his attitude towards himself"?⁴

An examination of certain aspects of Sartre's early existentialist thought will help us to answer this question, for there the point of objection is more clearly visible than in Heidegger.

Sartre's essay "Existentialism is a Humanism" is in large part an attempt to defend his grounding of all values in the

¹ quoted by Natanson in "On Conceptual Nihilism", loc. cit. p.301
³ ibid. p.126
freedom of human subjectivity from the charge that it leads to a situation where "... everyone can do what he likes, and will be incapable, from such a point of view, of condemning either the point of view, or the action, of anyone else." Sartre argues that, although man "... is what he wills to be", is "... nothing else but that which he makes of himself", nonetheless that "... in choosing for himself he chooses for all men". Sartre's argument for this rather Kantian-flavoured conclusion is simply this: when a man makes any choice, then he is in choosing a particular course of action creating an image of how he thinks man ought to be. It is in this way, Sartre believes, that the free self-constituting self places itself under the aegis of a law which is both immanent and transcendent - a law which it itself creates, but to which it is henceforth a subject - a law in terms of which freedom becomes responsible. Now Sartre quite readily admits that "... many people think that in what they are doing they commit no-one but themselves to anything; and if you ask them, 'what would happen if everyone did so?' they shrug their shoulders and reply, 'everyone does not do so.'" Sartre's reply to this is: "But in truth, one ought always to ask oneself what would happen if everyone did as one is doing..."

But the question immediately arises: given Sartre's grounding of values in the freedom of human subjectivity, whence comes the (clearly categorical) "ought" of this sentence? Sartre's conclusion here rests in part on an earlier sleight of hand. He writes that "... to choose between this or that is at the same

2. ibid. p.291.
3. ibid.
4. ibid. p.292
5. ibid. (My underlining)
28. time to affirm the value of what is chosen...¹ This suggests that value is external to choice; but, in fact, given the rest of Sartre's position, it is clear that he sees values being constituted by each act of choice. For Sartre, things are not chosen because they are valuable; rather they become valuable in being chosen.² Thus in choosing a particular course of action, I am not affirming its value, but bestowing value upon it. Given this, it becomes difficult to see why such a bestowal of value should have anything more than purely personal significance.

But we have not here uncovered the main support for the use of the "ought" in the sentence in question. Sartre concludes this sentence by saying that "... nor can one escape from that disturbing thought except by a kind of self-deception".³

This conclusion suggests that Sartre in fact does recognise a value which precedes and transcends all acts of choice - this value being truth, in terms of which such a thing as self-deception becomes possible. But the truth of human existence, as depicted by Sartre, is that the values of this existence stem from the choices which are its most decisive expression. Such a truth cannot provide a law for existence, for as a law it says; there is no law. As a value it says; there are no values. Truth so conceived is thus in a very real sense purely formal. By this I mean that whether one lives one's life in the light of truth or in self-deception, rests upon the way in which one makes the choices which constitute one's life, i.e.

¹ ibid. pp. 291,292
² see ibid. p.294
³ ibid. p.292
in full recognition of the fact that there is no external warrant for choosing this rather than that), rather than the content of the particular course of action embarked upon. And with Sartre, in distinction to Kierkegaard, there is not present the idea (nor could there be present such an idea) that if one chooses in the right manner, then any errors in one's choices will make themselves plain.

Such a truth constitutes, for the early Sartre, the absoluteness of human freedom - freedom for freedom's sake. But, as Karsten Harries rightly points out, "... when pushed so far that it frees itself from all measure and authority, freedom subverts itself". For freedom to be distinguishable from mere arbitrariness (where one has just as much, or better just as little, reason for doing X as for not doing X) and thus from slavery, "... it must remain tied to an authority on which a decision can be based".

Sartre does suggest such an authority, this being the freedom of others - "... I am obliged to will the liberty of others at the same time as my own" - but Sartre's doctrine of Being-towards-others cannot accommodate this claim, for it excludes all traces of mutuality. As depicted by Sartre in Being and Nothingness, the Other can either be a subject for whom I am an object (masochism), an object for whom I am the subject (sadism), or I and the Other can be completely indifferent to each other. The possibility of I and an Other existing in mutual

2. loc. cit. p.648
3. loc. cit. p.308
freedom, in inter-subjectivity, is excluded.¹

So, my argument is that Sartre's attempt to ground values in absolute freedom excludes the possibility of there being a law, an authority for this freedom, and this renders it a form of slavery - for to have no grounds on which to base a choice is indistinguishable from having no choice at all. Although, as pointed out above, Sartre does in fact maintain a value which transcends freedom - this value being truth - we have found that truth as a value can provide freedom with only a purely formal law, a law which concerns the nature of one's acts of choice, (one must choose in all clearness and sincerity²), but not the content of such choices. Truth tells nothing of what one ought to do, but only how one ought to do what one chooses to do.

We now need to ask; what relation does this bear to Ivan Karamazov's "all is permitted", and thus to nihilism? Sartre himself provides us with the answer, for he writes:³

Dostoyevsky once wrote "if God did not exist, then everything would be permitted"; and that, for existentialism, is the starting point. Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn, for he cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself. He discovers forthwith, that he is without excuse.

Yet the "Existentialism is a Humanism" essay is an attempt to hide the fact that there has been no movement away from this starting point beneath a mantle of exhortations to courageous honesty with oneself and to one's situation, plus a version of Kant's categorical imperative. Certainly as presented in this essay, Sartrean existentialism consists in the elaboration of a particular response to Ivan Karamazov's "all is permitted",

². "Existentialism is a Humanism", loc. cit. p.306.
³. ibid. pp. 294-295
31. a response which involves a refusal either to rejoice in or to be incapacitated by this belief, but to maintain oneself on the hither side of these responses - which, it is recognised, are in the last analysis equally debilitating.

What, then, of the Heideggerian doctrine of authenticity, which exerted such an influence on Sartre's early thought? Is it, too, simply the elaboration of a courageous response to a fundamentally nihilistic view of existence? Again is Adorno correct when he writes that, in this thought, "commitments are offered not for their own truth but as medicine against nihilism"?1

In answer we can say this: Heidegger's doctrine of authenticity does not rest on a belief that "all is permitted"; not, however, because it recognises a law which discriminates between the morally permissible and the morally impermissible, but rather because it recognises that only a restricted segment of the "all" is truly possible. Authenticity recognises only a formal law, a law which indicates to Dasein the manner in which it should project itself upon possibilities - to be truly authentic, Dasein must recognise the possible nature of its possibilities, and concomitantly realise that between these possibilities and their actualisation stands the 'gap' which can be filled only by Dasein's own choice - but again not the proper content of its projects. This formal nature of authenticity is clearly evidenced in Heidegger's account of the call of conscience, wherein Dasein is called back from the world of the 'they' to be its authentic self.2

1. op. cit. p.70
2. see H.268-271
anything; it is not called to any duty which awaits it in public life, or to do some good it ought to accomplish or some ideal it ought to attain ... The self is called to its own self...¹

As presented by Heidegger, the call of conscience is silent; it says nothing of good or evil. "Conscience discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent."² Conscience calls from Dasein's self to itself - "In conscience Dasein calls itself"³

A similar self-relation lies at the heart of the notion of authenticity. Indeed, we might say that authenticity is a mark of Dasein's relation to itself. Authentic Dasein is its own law - "the sole authority which a free existing can have", an authority deriving from the "repeatable possibilities of existence", is itself grounded in Dasein's self-projection, its choices, for it is only on the basis of these choices that the repeatable possibilities of existence become worth repeating. (This is, of course, very reminiscent of Sartre's early view, expressed in "Existentialism is a Humanism", that values are created by acts of choice.)

I think now that it can fairly be said that the doctrine of authenticity presented in Being and Time is an attempt to answer an unstated fear that, God supposedly being dead, all is indeed permitted, by generating a mood conducive to a stance of resolution, courage, and sincerity, and elevating this mood and this stance to a law unto itself. It is a call for men to be true to themselves in an alien world, to be inconspicuous

². H. 273
³. H. 275
heroes. As one commentator notes:¹

The word "hero" occurs but twice in Being and Time. Yet it seems to me that in the concept of human existence overcoming chaos, living dynamically, necessarily projecting itself, through its choice of possibilities, through its decision-making into the future, and in full awareness, revealed in dread, of its abandonment, solitariness and of its own ultimate nothingness in the face of nothingness - in all this, it seems, as I say, that we have elements which suggest an heroic stance as being the proper mode of human existence.

This suggests that it is really only a difference of mood which separates authentic Dasein, as depicted in Being and Time, from an Ivan Karamazov who, no longer believing in, or more importantly no longer accepting, God and immortality, reaches the debilitating conclusion that "all is permitted".

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We have seen that the notion of authenticity developed in Being and Time presents the future as the meaning of the present. This has the result of rendering the present uninhabitable for the authentic individual. But the future itself is, of its very nature, also uninhabitable, for it is always "not yet", "still outstanding", until the individual is no longer. Thus death becomes the meaning of life, but a meaning which cannot be appropriated since an individual can never actually be dead. So we have the situation, sketched by Jonas, of "... existence ... committed to constant futurity, with death as the goal"; and, as Jonas rightly points out, "... a merely formal resolution to be, without a nomos for that resolution, becomes a project from nothingness into nothingness."²

So we see that the lack of temporal 'width' of the authentic present is a result of the purely formal nature of the notion of authenticity. I think we can now say with confidence that

¹. R.G. Finch, in Heroes in Germany - Ancient and Modern, (Belfast, The Queen's University Press, 1972) p.5.
². loc. cit. p.232
the nihilistic implications which, as Jonas suggests, inhere in the loss of a true present, are grounded in the nihilism of the notion of authenticity itself.

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Let us now retrace our steps. The first move in the argument leading to the conclusion that the Heideggerian notion of authenticity, as presented in Being and Time, is nihilistic, is the introduction of Rosen's claim that the various forms of modern nihilism stem from a sundering of the relation between reason and the good, a relation Rosen takes to be the characteristic mark of ancient (Western) thought. The next step is a discussion, leading off from the work of Natanson, of the distinction between facts and values — a distinction which appears as a transmutation of the distinction between reason and the good — and in turn the sharp dichotomization of reason and will that appears in modern thought. I then claim that this dichotomization shows a dominant presence in existentialist thought through the emphasis given there to the nature of an individual's acts of choice, coupled with the neglect given to questions concerning the proper content of these choices. We then also saw that this dichotomy appears in another form, this being an emphasis on the future as the meaning of the present, and thus the denial to the present of an inhabitable temporal 'width'.

However, we also made note of the view, clearly expressed by Thielicke, that an attempt to restrict life completely to present concerns is itself symptomatic of nihilism.

Thus our first task is complete: we have succeeded in uncovering and delineating a number of subsidiary dualisms which
attend the fundamental dualism of man and total reality which Jonas locates at the ground of nihilism. And, in doing this, we have shown that Heidegger's thought, as presented in Being and Time, is itself nihilistic and thus not a candidate for the "third road" of which Jonas speaks.

II.

In the quotation from Hans Jonas with which we begin this chapter, we find expressed the fear that, in response to the dualism which he (Jonas) sees underlying nihilism, monistic doctrines will appear which will attempt to unify man and world, but in doing so "... abolish the idea of man as man". We find a similar fear expressed by another writer on nihilism, Aron Gurwitsch. In a paper entitled "On Contemporary Nihilism" Gurwitsch writes:¹

Ever since the second half of the nineteenth century there has been an ever-increasing scepticism in regard to all dualism, and even in regard to duality. The attempt was made to elaborate a conception of man in which all his activities would be reduced to a purely vital plane.

Gurwitsch claims that thinkers elaborating such doctrines dismantled the classical conception of man as animal rationale by severing the connection between the rationale and the universe of atemporal Ideas, thus clearing the way for the characterisation of the rationale aspect of man simply as one among other manifestations of the animal.² Such a vitalistic, reductive view of man Gurwitsch takes to be an expression of a nihilism - traces of which he admits to having noticed even in himself - which arises from "... the substitution of 'concrete' things [biological advantages, satisfaction of desires and needs, utility etc.] for 'abstractions' ['truth', 'justice']".³

1. in Review of Politics, Vol. 7, 1945, p.176
2. ibid. p.177
3. ibid. p.174
36.

Gurwitsch claims that a result of "the substitution of 'concrete' things for 'abstractions'" is the disappearance of any distinction between belief or opinion and knowledge, and thus the severance of the essential bond between knowledge and truth. Such a severance marks the disappearance of man as the animal rationale.

If we now think again of Thielicke's account of what he terms "naive" nihilism, we see that a symptom of such nihilism is that thought which seeks to picture man as a purely vital being, and thus as a being who need not view his life in terms of its overall purpose. And returning to Rosen, we find him depicting, as the kernel of what he calls "rationalist nihilism", the view that "... all psychic or mental phenomena may be reduced to biochemical processes and thereby to mathematically computable energy distributions". Then Ernst Jünger, a survivor of the trenches of the First World War and, for many years following, an advocate of violence as the key to the truth of human existence, writes in a later work: "the nihilistic world is in its essence a reduced, indeed a self-reducing world... The reigning basic feeling in it is that of reduction and becoming reduced".

This view is echoed by Victor Frankl, a survivor of the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Dachau, who draws a close bond between nihilism - "... a nihilist is a man who considers Being, and above all his own existence, meaningless" - and

1. see trans. cit. pp. 148, 149
2. op. cit. p.70. The fact that Rosen calls the doctrine based on this belief "rationalist nihilism" points to his view that the modern conception of reason is but a misshapen offspring of the classical Greek idea of rationale.
the reduced, distorted image of man as "... 'nothing but' a being that is 'driven' or just satisfies the conflicting claims of id and superego by compromise"\(^1\), further claiming that it is "... a straight path from that homunculist image of man to the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek".\(^2\)

An interesting point to note is that, while such writers as Gurwitsch and Rosen see man's reason as the principle target of reductionist attacks, for Frankl it is far more man's freedom to choose. For Frankl, man's distinctiveness lies in the fact that he "... is free to rise above the plane of the somatic and psychic determinants of his existence".\(^3\) This emphasis is of course not surprising, given the existentialist framework of Frankl's thought.

What we have presented in these last pages is support, indeed a strengthening of, Jonas' claim that the monistic reactions to the dualistic rift between man and total reality are over-reactions; that far from leading beyond the nihilism said to result from this rift, they are themselves fundamentally nihilistic.

* * * * *

To this point, our discussion of nihilism has dealt only with those doctrines, attitudes, and beliefs which have been accused of being nihilistic; we have not looked at the views espoused by professed nihilists. We will now turn to this task, beginning with some remarks about the history of the word "nihilism".

It seems that this word was first used in a philosophical

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1. ibid. p.122  
2. ibid. p.119  
3. ibid. p.15
context by Frederick H. Jacobi (1743-1819), who accused Spinoza's philosophy, along with all forms of idealism, of being atheistic and nihilistic. But it was only with the publication of Turgenev's novel Fathers and Sons in the middle of the nineteenth century that the word "nihilism" came into popular currency. The central character of Fathers and Sons, Evgeny Vassilyich Bazarov, is a self-confessed nihilist; he is an advocate of the destruction of all the traditional structures of the social world, all political, economic, and religious institutions, so as to present the future with "a radically cleansed world." Bazarov is a student of the natural sciences, and is convinced that the rationality, tested against experience, exemplified in these sciences provides the only hope of there ever being a just and equitable human society, grounded in truth rather than superstition. But for Bazarov, the society of the future is a hope with little positive content; the nature of this society must be left to the future to decide; what must come first, as a preparation, is a complete destruction of the past.

Many Russian radicals and anarchists, among them the so-called "men of the 60's", whose chief spokesman was Pisarev, saw in the character of Bazarov an admirable embodiment of their views - views first voiced by Bakunin in the 1840's when he wrote; "Let us ... trust the eternal Spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unfathomable and eternally creative source of life. The passion for destruction is a creative passion too." Indeed I think it can be said that the

2. from Natanson, loc.cit. p.289
belief that creation is a dialectical process in which destruction figures centrally is the central tenet of Russian anarchistic nihilism. Pisarev voices it in the following passage:

Only phantoms disappear before the tempering force of sober analysis... What can be broken should be broken; what will stand the blow is fit to live; what breaks into smithereens is rubbish; in any case, strike right and left, it will not and cannot do any harm.

We might well feel that there is something conceptually amiss with the characterisation of such a view as nihilistic, for it seems to contain a strongly affirmative, indeed an optimistic kernel built on a healthy scepticism. It expresses none of the lethargy often associated with nihilism, indeed it is the expression of an abundance of energy.

But when we look closely at this attitude expressed by Bakunin and Pisarev, we find that the energy to which it points derives from an intoxication of freedom - identified with lawlessness - stemming from a belief that "all is permitted". It is not a healthy scepticism which leads them to call for the destruction of what is weak and rotten, but sheer delight in the activity of destruction itself. But Ivan Karamazov, the first to speak the renowned phrase "all is permitted", reacted to it not with a flood of primal energy, but with a feeling of apathy. He concluded that freedom without law is indistinguishable from slavery, that if "all is permitted", then "nothing is worthwhile". And we must agree with Camus that a belief that "all is permitted" is nihilistic, whether it initiates a reign of energetic destructiveness or of apathetic inactivity, or as in the atheistic existentialists, induces a response of heroic self-responsibility.

By claiming that a belief that "all is permitted" lies at the heart of the Russian anarchism/nihilism of the latter part of

1. quoted in Kline, loc. cit. p.185
the nineteenth century, I have implicitly suggested that this phenomenon, while most visible in political and social regions, had deep ethical roots. I now want further to claim that these ethical roots themselves have a deep metaphysical underpinning, in fact a view of a total dislocation between man and world.

Pisarev, in his review of Fathers and Sons, praised Bazarov's attitude, of which he presented the following clarified definition. "I am a stranger to the order of existing things, I have nothing to do with it." Pisarev's 'clarified definition' is borne out by words from Bazarov himself, who talks of the futility, the monstrous nature of the fact that "... here, in this atom which is myself, in this mathematical point, the brain operates and aspires to something too..." This concludes Bazarov's lament that "... the tiny bit of space I occupy is so minute in comparison with the rest of the universe, where I am not and which is not concerned with me; and the point of time in which it is my lot to live is so infinitesimal compared with the eternity in which I have not been and shall not be..."

If Pisarev and his confreres share this view of the fundamental placelessness of human beings in the scheme of things, then perhaps we should see their energetic destructiveness more as an expression of bravado than as an attempt to create the conditions for a radically new and better society. It suggests that the undoubted respect they have for reason is a respect simply for the power it displays as a manipulative tool, rather than its capacity to create a humane society.

Bazarov's expression of the futility of human aspiration

1. quoted by Camus in The Rebel, trans. cit. p.123
3. ibid.
within the universe captures succinctly the view which comes later to be much discussed under the title of the "absurdity" of existence. For many of the existentialist philosophers, an experience of the absurdity of existence serves as the fundamental datum for their reflection. Camus, in whom this notion is most systematically thematised, emphasises that the claim that human existence is absurd cannot be identified with the view that the universe is irrational or chaotic, i.e. not subject to law. It is not the universe in itself which is seen to be absurd, but the relation between human beings and the universe; "the absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world." So to say that human existence is absurd is to say that man is in a state of chronic alienation, or what we might call metaphysical alienation. We can thus say that the thought which takes the experience of absurdity as its basic datum claims in effect that those experiences of estrangement which are conceptualised in socio-political, psychopathological, and theological thought as man's alienation - as alienation of man from his own labour and its products, and thus from his fellow men; as alienation from his own emotions and thoughts, from his own body and thus from himself; as alienation from God - are grounded in a more embracing metaphysical alienation, which is taken to be a constitutive part of the human condition.

2. ibid. pp.31,32. For some pertinent remarks about the etymology of the word "absurd", see Paul G. Kuntz's "Making Sense of the Absurd", p.202 in James M.Edie (ed.) New Essays in Phenomenology. For an analysis of the difference between Camus' and Kierkegaard's understanding of the absurd, see Thomas Hanna's "Existence and the Absurd", also in Edie, New Essays in Phenomenology.
F.H. Heinemann expresses this view when he writes, of alienation:¹

... Is it at all possible to get rid of this affliction? Will not an element of it always remain because of its having, so to say, metaphysical roots? Is it perhaps our permanent fate to remain foreigners on this earth, in spite of our being at home on it? Is this not even more true of man within the universe? Though a creature of this world, he nevertheless remains foreign in it.

It is such a view of the ineradicable character of man's alienation which provides a sore point of contention between existentialist and Marxist thinkers, with the latter claiming that this is simply an obfuscation which attempts to draw attention away from the real source of man's alienation and thus prevent the overcoming of this alienation.² We cannot enter into this argument here. What we can say is that the experience of human existence as a foreign element within the universe has become widespread since the latter part of the nineteenth century (I do not mean to imply that such an experience is something essentially new) and is thus contemporaneous with the spread of various forms of nihilism. Indeed, an intense feeling of that "disruption between man and total reality", which Jonas locates at the ground of nihilism, is exactly that which, certainly according to Camus, is the characteristic mark of the experience of the absurdity of existence. So we can surmise that a belief in the absurdity of existence is in essence a nihilistic belief.

III.

In the third section of this chapter we will look at the diagnosis of nihilism given by Nietzsche, principally in the first book of The Will to Power, and together with this assess

the program he sketches for its overcoming. But before turning
to Nietzsche's explicit discussion of nihilism, it is worth our
while to note a passage from his early writings which expresses
powerfully a view of the aberrant nature of the human intellect
within the natural world. Nietzsche writes:¹

In some remote corner of the universe, effused into
innumerable solar-systems there was once a star on which
clever animals invented cognition. It was the haughtiest,
most mendacious moment in the history of this world, but
yet only a moment. After Nature had taken breath awhile the
star congealed and the clever animals had to die - Someone
might write a fable after this style, and yet he would not
have illustrated sufficiently, how wretched, shadow-like,
transitory, purposeless and fanciful the human intellect
appears in Nature.

To the extent then that intelligence is an integral part
of human existence then this existence, Nietzsche is here telling us
in his own striking fashion, is absurd. (The word "appears" in the
last sentence of this passage is not meant to contrast with "is".)

Part of what I want to show in what follows is that Nietzsche
attempts to lead men into a non-absurd existence by jettisoning
intelligence from its position as the central aspect of this
existence. This will, I hope, become clear in our discussion of
Nietzsche's diagnosis of, and proposed solution to, nihilism.

One of the early entries in The Will to Power presents us with
a succinct account of nihilism. It says: "What does nihilism mean?
That the highest values devalue themselves. The aim is lacking;
'why?' finds no answer."² And the next entry begins:³

1. "On Truth and Falsity in Their Extra-moral Sense", in Walter
Kaufmann (ed.) The Portable Nietzsche. (New York, Viking Press,
1967), p.42
2. trans. by Walter Kaufmann and R.J.Hollingdale (New York,
aware that there is some controversy concerning the weight
that should be given to The Will to Power, which is after all
only a collection of notes unpublished by Nietzsche, nor
intended by him for publication, certainly not in the form in
which they now appear. However I am using the discussion of
nihilism which appears here because it is this which influenced
Heidegger in his own discussions of nihilism, discussions which
we will take up in later chapters.
3. ibid. para. 3
Radical nihilism is the conviction of the absolute untenability of existence when it comes to the highest values one recognises; plus the realisation that we lack the least right to posit a beyond or an it-itself of things that might be "divine" or morality incarnate...

I think it can be seen that the nihilism of which these passages speak is the reverse side of the nihilism of "all is permitted" - it rests on Ivan Karamazov's implicit conclusion that if "all is permitted" then "nothing is worthwhile". For Nietzsche the symptoms of this nihilism, which he saw spreading through the European elite, are a creeping lethargy, a weakness of will, a world-weariness. He names it "passive nihilism", which is "... the weary nihilism that no longer attacks; its most famous form, Buddhism; a passive nihilism, a sign of weakness". He sees that "... there may even exist puritanical fanatics of conscience who would rather lie down and die on a sure nothing than on an uncertain something..." and concludes: "But this is nihilism and the sight of a despairing, mortally weary soul, however brave the bearing of such a virtue may appear".

Nietzsche claims that such nihilism, as it appears in Europe, is a result, indeed a necessary result, of what he calls the "Christian-moral world view". (We should note that the Christianity of which Nietzsche speaks is a very Platonised Christianity; this shows itself most clearly in the fact that Nietzsche pays little attention to the meaning within Christian thought of the Incarnation.) Nietzsche's criticism of the Christian-moral world view is that, in its attempt to bestow a meaning and value on the everyday world of experience, it has

1. ibid. para. 23 (Note: Whether this is a proper characterisation of Buddhism is a question that need not concern us here.)
actually devalued this world, rendering men blind to the true value of their life and their world. For, says Nietzsche, the two-worlds doctrine of (Platonised) Christianity says in effect that this world, the finite, opaque, thoroughly temporal world of living men, is in itself without value; that any value it may have is derived from its participation in some other-worldly intelligibility or value, or from its progress towards some transcendent end.

Nietzsche claims that such a view must of necessity end in nihilism - the belief that this world is without value - because Christianity itself espouses the moral virtue of honesty, which Nietzsche believes, if adhered to, must lead men to recognise "... the falseness and mendaciousness of all Christian interpretations of the world and of history".¹

What then is Nietzsche's answer to this passive nihilism? The answer is simple: active nihilism; at least this is to provide the first step. Whereas passive nihilism is a sign of "... decline and recession of the power of the spirit", active nihilism is "... a sign of increased power of the spirit".² Both these forms of nihilism share the same vision, this showing that belief in the previous values and goals of human existence, such as meaning, unity, truth, is now untenable.³ But whereas passive nihilism, as seen by Nietzsche, responds to this vision by attempting to diffuse the desire or need for values, indeed to remove the desire for desire, to will a state of will-lessness, the nihilistic vision need not elicit such a response. For Nietzsche, "... nihilism ... can be a sign of strength: the

² The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.1, para.22.
³ Ibid. para. 12(A)
spirit may have grown so strong that previous goals ('convictions', articles of faith) have become incommensurate... It reaches its maximum of relative strength as a violent force of destruction as active nihilism.\(^1\)

But, as is suggested by the use of the words "relative strength" in the last sentence of the quoted passage, Nietzsche sees this active devaluation (Entwertung) and destruction of prevailing values (which clearly resembles the Russian anarchistic nihilism\(^2\)) to be only a transitional stage. It is to prepare the way for a counter-movement, a revaluation (Umwertung) of all values, "a movement that in some future will take the place of this perfect nihilism - but presupposes it, logically and psychologically, and certainly can come only after and out of it".\(^3\) For Nietzsche, the heart of this revaluation is the replacement of those values which stem from a judgmental attitude - epitomised most clearly in what Nietzsche calls "slave morality"\(^4\) - with values which stem from an attitude of affirmation, from "... the vast and boundless declaration of Yes and Amen".\(^5\) Active nihilism, by clearing away the debris of past values, prepares the way for this fundamental change in attitude toward the world. And it is through such active nihilism, I now want to claim, that Nietzsche seeks to bring about a drastic change in the conception of the locus of truth.

At one point Nietzsche asks; "What is a belief? How does

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1. ibid. para 23
2. There is some evidence to suggest that Nietzsche knew the work of the Russian Alexander Herzen, a forerunner of the "men of the 60's". See G.L.Kline, loc.cit. pp.181 & 183.
3. The Will to Power, Preface, para. 4.
it originate?", and answers: "Every belief is a considering something true". He then goes on to say:

The most extreme form of nihilism would be the view that every belief, every considering something true, is necessarily false because there is simply no true world ... That it is the measure of strength to what extent we can admit to ourselves, without perishing, the merely apparent character, the necessity of lies. To this extent, nihilism, as the denial of a truthful world of being, might be a divine way of thinking.

In passing we should note that one commentator, Arthur Danto, taking his cue from his reading of Nietzsche, writes of nihilism:

Nihilism, as I shall understand it here, asserts that the maximum state of cognitive entropy is our very state. It claims that, in the most ultimate sense, reality is absolutely indifferent to the content of all our beliefs ... By the criterion of being true or false, it does not matter what we believe ...

Danto claims that Nietzsche is an advocate of such a nihilism, and he further claims that it is Nietzsche's conception of the relation between language and reality which supports the weight of this nihilistic view. According to Danto, Nietzsche denies that there is a structural isomorphism between language and reality, that the subject-predicate form of language does not answer to the form of reality, which, according to Nietzsche, is not a conglomerate of things and their properties, but an undifferentiated flux. Danto's paper concludes that "... the arguments from the structure of language cannot be enlisted in support of the view that the world has just the structure we give it, and none of its own", and in this way attempts to point to the limits of the nihilistic view that "everything is false".

But Danto's argument touches neither the heart of the nihilism diagnosed by Nietzsche - many of whose victims certainly

1. The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.I, para.15
3. loc.cit. p.174
considered that a number of their beliefs about the world were true, but considered this truth to be without value - nor the reasons behind Nietzsche's advocacy of active nihilism. We must agree with Danto that a belief that "everything is false" is a nihilistic belief, but point out that nihilism cannot be overcome simply by showing the untenability of such a belief, or the weakness of certain arguments used to support it.

Let us now turn our attention to the last quoted passage from Nietzsche. An important point to note about this passage is that for the most part its mood is conditional. It says; "the most extreme form of nihilism would be the view that every belief ... is necessarily false..." (my underlining). This suggests that the nihilism Nietzsche is here depicting, rather than being a doctrine that he is, rather paradoxically, claiming to be true, is more a tool with which he hopes to clear the way for the revaluation of all values, itself grounded, I have suggested, in a markedly changed conception of the place of truth.

The most obvious way in which this "most extreme form of nihilism" would prepare the way for Nietzsche's revaluation of all values would be its destruction of all belief in a world of being, in any immutable, eternal, true world beyond the world of sensuous experience. But further to this, the view that all beliefs are of necessity false clears away the idea that it is the human intellect which is the locus of truth. It leaves the way open for the recognition that truth is not a mark of human judgments, but the character of the world itself - not a true, i.e. supra-sensible, unchanging world, a remodelled world of Platonic Ideas, but the world of becoming, of life, of passion.
49.

As Camus sees; "Nietzsche cries out to man that his only truth is the world - to which he must be faithful and on which he must live and find his salvation".\(^1\) On this reading, Nietzsche does believe that there is truth, but to this truth he gives the character of all that which had hitherto been considered to be false. For Nietzsche, humans can partake of this truth, not through intellection, but through innocence of instinct, of passion, through the energy of will.

Together with bringing about this change in the locus of truth, Nietzsche sees active nihilism preparing the way for the acceptance of this world, this life, as constituting their own value - for "judgments, value judgments concerning life, for or against, can in the last resort never be true ... One must reach out and try to grasp this astonishing finesse, that the value of life cannot be estimated".\(^2\) Nietzsche is here not saying that life has no value, but rather that its value is such that it cannot be approached by human evaluation. For "one would have to be situated outside life, and on the other hand to know it as thoroughly as any, as many, as all who have experienced it, to be permitted to touch on the problem of the value of life at all".\(^3\) Nietzsche wishes to sever the notion of value from the notions of goal, aim, purpose; he stresses that the moment of becoming cannot, indeed must not be weighed in terms of its place in a goal-directed span of time; rather "... becoming must appear justified at every moment (or incapable of being evaluated; which amounts to the same thing)..."\(^4\) Each moment

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1. The Rebel, trans. cit. p.63
3. ibid. "Morality as Anti-Nature", para.5
4. The Will to Power, Bk.III, Sec.II, para.708
is simply what it is; indeed, it is all there is. There is nothing against which it can be measured - thus it cannot be held accountable. And "... this alone is the great liberation - thus alone is the innocence of becoming restored..."\(^1\) Camus summarises Nietzsche's thought as follows:\(^2\)

From the moment that it is admitted that the world pursues no end, Nietzsche proposes to concede it its innocence, to affirm that it accepts no judgment since it cannot be judged on any intention and consequently to replace all judgments based on values by absolute assent, a complete and exalted allegiance to this world.

The desire that life be granted its innocence, that it be left unaccountable, lies behind Nietzsche's elaboration of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same. (Though Nietzsche does present arguments for this doctrine,\(^3\) it functions principally in his thought as an exhortation.) As one commentator notes, this 'doctrine' calls for an "eternalization of the moment", where one "... create(s) for oneself as many moments as possible that one would be willing to live again and again..."\(^4\)

The 'test of strength' which the Eternal Recurrence of the Same incorporates involves the complete rejection of the comforting idea that life has a purpose external to itself. The Eternal Recurrence makes mockery of the idea that life and time are progressing toward some destination, in terms of which time's movement gains both justification and meaning. The Eternal Recurrence of the Same involves a rejection of linear time, and thus a rejection of history. It is an exhortation to live fully in the present. It returns history to nature, and thus is quite

\(^{1}\) Twilight of the Idols, "The Four Great Errors", para.8.
\(^{2}\) The Rebel, trans.cit. p.63
\(^{3}\) see The Will to Power, Bk.IV, Sec.III, para.1062
at odds with existentialism: thought, for which the world is the historical world, in which nature is incorporated as a fundamentally foreign element.

But the desire that life be spared the burden of rendering an account of itself also leads Nietzsche to attack the doctrine of the freedom of the will. He writes that:

We no longer have any sympathy today with the concept of 'free will': we know only too well what it is - the most infamous of all the arts of the theologian for making mankind 'accountable' ... Everywhere accountability is sought, it is usually the instinct for punishing and judging which seeks it. One has deprived becoming of its innocence if being in this or that state is traced back to will, to intentions, to accountable acts: the doctrine of will has been invented especially for the purpose of punishment, that is of finding guilty.

Nietzsche seeks to translate the will - the faculty or capacity in man which is taken, certainly in Christian-influenced thought, to most clearly betoken a non-coincidence of the human and natural worlds - into nature; for he presents the will as fundamentally an expression of man's instinctual, i.e. natural life. He often runs together the notions of impulse, drive, and will, and in one place he writes, speaking of the phrase "weakness of the will"; "this is a metaphor that can prove misleading. For there is no will, and consequently neither a strong nor a weak will. The multitude and disgregation of impulses and the lack of any systematic order among them result in a 'weak will'; their coordination under a single predominant impulse results in a 'strong will'. Thus the will, rather than serving to separate man from the natural world, is simply the clearest expression in man of the basic being of the natural world - this being, for Nietzsche, will-to-power.

1. Twilight of the Idols, "The Four Great Errors", para.?
2. see e.g. The Genealogy of Morals, trans.cit. p.45.
3. The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.I, para.46
But we also find Nietzsche working with a more traditional conception of will, where it is set over against drive and impulse. He talks of "Schopenhauer's basic misunderstanding of the will..." and adds: "(as if craving, instinct, drive were the essence of will)..." Such a view is, he writes, a "great symptom of the exhaustion or the weakness of the will: for the will is precisely that which treats cravings as their master and appoints them their way and measure".¹ And we also find Nietzsche using the idea of linear time, as against the cyclical time of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same.²

Working with these more familiar conceptions of will and time, Nietzsche presents his own account of the freedom of the will, which in effect involves a translation of the will, not into nature but into history. This will become clear in what follows.

Nietzsche sees as the most acute expression of a judgmental attitude towards the world what he terms revenge (die Rache), which is "...the will's antipathy towards time and time's 'It was'",³ the will's impotence before the passing-away of all things and the irretrievability of the past, which leads to a judgment that the essence of life is punishment and suffering. The spirit of revenge says; "everything passes away, therefore everything deserves to pass away!"⁴ The creative will says, of all 'It was', which had until this moment been "... a fragment,

¹. ibid. Bk.I, Sec.II, para.84
². The Übermensch is the "man of the future". (My underlining). See The Genealogy of Morals, trans.cit. p.96
³. Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans.cit. "Of Redemption".
⁴. ibid.
53.
a riddle, a dreadful chance"; "but I willed it thus!" Thus it redeems itself, for "to redeem the past and to transform every 'It was' into an 'I wanted it thus;' - that alone do I call redemption!" Although Nietzsche, speaking through Zarathustra, calls such a willing creative, it can be better designated as re-creative. It does not seek to create a future in which the past would be transmuted into a higher reality - it simply re-creates the past so that this may be affirmed, both in its suffering and evil and its nobility and goodness. It is precisely "the tragic artist... who affirms all that is questionable and terrible in existence." 3

The central current of Nietzsche's thought is characterised clearly by Karl Löwith. Löwith sees that "[Nietzsche] wanted to extricate himself from nihilism and to regain the natural truth of the universe as cosmos and physis", and he further sees that it is the free will, as traditionally conceived, which most decisively excludes man from this "natural truth". Speaking for Nietzsche, Löwith concludes that: 4

To overcome nihilism, the boundless freedom of emancipated willing must ultimately be overcome. Man must learn to will "backwards", that is, to accept all that is already there, without his purposeful will; man must be willing to conform to the cosmic law of the world, which is "innocent" because it has no aim, no purpose, and no meaning.

He then says that "what at first seems to be extreme nihilism, a human existence without purpose and meaning, is thus reversed to the highest positivity..." 5

1. ibid. (My underlining)
2. ibid.
5. ibid.
But we now need to look at the nature of this "positivity". We have claimed that the kernel of Nietzsche's program for a revaluation of all values is the change from a judgmental to an affirmative attitude to the world, to life. Now Nietzsche believes that, since both good and evil, as moral values, are grounded in a judgmental attitude, then the affirmation for which he calls will be "beyond good and evil". But he does not seem to realise that the affirmation itself contains an inherent judgmental core, this judging in effect that life, the world, is good, but in doing so affirming evil as an essential component of this goodness.\footnote{1} Camus succinctly makes this point in saying; "to say yes to everything supposes that one says yes to murder".\footnote{2} Camus precedes this sentence with the question; "is there nothing in his [Nietzsche's] work which can be used in support of definitive murder? Cannot the killers, provided that they deny the spirit for the letter ... find their pretext in Nietzsche?" He concludes: "the answer must be yes".\footnote{3}

Camus is thus claiming that Nietzsche's affirmation, because it lacks any element of discrimination, because it recognises no limits, itself remains within the sphere of nihilism, for in the end it proves indistinguishable from total negation, such as that advocated by Stirner.\footnote{4} Camus writes that "the absolute negative had driven Stirner to defy crime simultaneously with the individual. But the absolute affirmation leads to universalizing murder and mankind simultaneously".\footnote{5} An

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\item In this regard, it is worth noting the following passage from The Will to Power. "Overcoming of Philosophers through the destruction of the world of being: intermediary period of nihilism: before there is yet present the strength to reverse values and to deify becoming and the apparent world as the only world and to call them good." (My underlining) Bk.III,Sec.I, para.585(A).
\item The Rebel, trans.cit. p.68.
\item Ibid.
\item Author of The Ego and its Own. trans. by S.T. Byington (New York, Libertarian Book Club, 1963).
\item The Rebel, p.71
\end{enumerate}
undercurrent of what is here being said is the view that not to be held accountable is no longer to be fully human.

What then of the innocence which Nietzsche seeks to 're-capture' for life as a whole, and also for the individual human life? What is the nature of the guilt with which, according to Nietzsche, man has burdened himself?

We can immediately see that such a guilt is felt to lie deeper than the instances of guilt-feelings which arise from specific wrongful acts. This leads us to think of the Christian doctrine of original sin, which we find Thielicke explaining in terms of what he calls "metaphysical guilt". He writes; "By metaphysical guilt I mean guilt which lies not in the realm of our acts but in the source of our being."1 This guilt stems from the fact that "... what we are now is not what we received from the hands of God".2

Adam's sin led to his expulsion from the Garden of Eden; Mircea Eliade suggests that the paradise thus lost was that of "archetypes and repetition". He writes:3

... Christianity uncontestably proves to be the religion of "fallen man": and this to the extent to which modern man is irremediably identified with history and progress, and to which history and progress are a fall, both implying the final abandonment of the paradise of archetypes and repetition.

Eliade is here pointing to the distinction, thematised by, among many others, Hegel, between nature and history, and he also has in his mind the sentence from Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of History which says: "Only the animal is truly innocent".4 Is then man's guilt to be identified with his historicity, his continual movement forward into what is forever

1. op.cit. p.49
2. ibid.
4. see ibid. pp. 90,91
new and unchartered? Such a view seems to tie in well with that conception of man's guilt - his utter lack of an excuse for his existence and what he makes of this existence - that we find in the early existentialism of Sartre, with its total historization of human existence. Sartre claims that man has no fixed nature, that he is what he makes of himself, i.e. he is his history. Thus a man can only fully be when this history is complete, and thus only when he is no longer.

We have already made a brief mention of the conception of guilt that is presented in *Being and Time*; we saw there that guilt is depicted as arising from Dasein's having to take over responsibility for that for which it can never be responsible - its own Being-in-the-world. We will discuss this conception of guilt in greater detail in a later chapter.

What I now want to outline is a somewhat different conception of man's guilt, which calls into play the distinction, to which we have already given some discussion, between facts and values. I want to suggest that we can picture man as that being who stands in the 'space' opened out by the separation of fact and value, of what is from what ought to be, of what he is from what he ought to be, without ever being able to hide himself in either of these poles of his existence. We can then depict man's guilt as arising from the tension inherent in this 'space'.

If we think in terms of this conception of the genesis of man's guilt, then we can clearly see how Nietzsche's call for absolute affirmation, for total allegiance to this world, is designed to remove from man the burden of guilt: for absolute
affirmation says in effect that what is is what ought to be. For Nietzsche, it is the nihilist "... who judges of the world as it is that it ought not to be, and of the world as it ought to be that it does not exist." In claiming that there exists nothing other than what is at any moment against which the moment can be judged as lacking or as inadequate in any way, Nietzsche has closed the place of residence of the "ought". It is interesting to note that the temporal dimension of the "ought" is the future - what ought to be now is not - so we can see that Nietzsche's call for absolute affirmation, for the destruction of the "ought" placed over against what is, goes hand in hand with his 'doctrine' of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same, which is intended to establish the present as the fundamental dimension of time.

What has by now become apparent is that Nietzsche's diagnosis and proposed overcoming of nihilism can be fruitfully discussed in terms of certain of those dualisms which we have distilled from discussions of nihilism by other authors. We have seen that both Natanson and Rosen consider that a radical distinction between fact and value is inherently nihilistic, and we have also seen Natanson's claim that nihilism, of one variety or another, arises wherever there is an attempt to deny "... the paradoxical tension between what we can know and what we can value". I have now suggested that Nietzsche's thought, centred around a call for absolute affirmation, is an attempt to diffuse this tension.

1. The Will to Power, Bk.III, Sec.I, para.585(A)
2. loc.cit. p.300
58.

- thus, in Natanson's terms, it is nihilistic.

Gurwitsch defines nihilism as "the substitution of 'concrete' things for 'abstracts'". It is clear that it is in terms of such 'abstracts' - Gurwitsch mentions "truth" and "justice" - that what ought to be can be set in contrast to what is. Nietzsche's absolute affirmation, which denies any place for an "ought", can then be seen as a call for "the substitution of concrete things for abstractions" and is thus, in Gurwitsch's terms, nihilistic.

For Thielicke, the refusal to see one's life in terms of its overall purpose, the "... surrender to the moment", is the characteristic mark of naive nihilism. Nietzsche's 'doctrine' of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same makes mockery of the belief that life as a whole, or an individual life, has a purpose which justifies its momentary vicissitudes. This 'doctrine' is an exhortation to live in the present. It would then be seen by Thielicke as supportive of naive nihilism.

For these writers, then, Nietzsche's proposed path beyond nihilism is circular - it moves only within the domain of nihilism.

It is Nietzsche's view that the nihilism he diagnosed was the necessary result of the establishment of an Ideal world in terms of which the world of becoming could be judged and assessed, and in which the "ought" could be securely grounded over against the "is", enabling the latter to be 'slandered' by reference to the former. To the extent that values are seen as the products of human valuation, evaluation, Nietzsche wants to go beyond
thought that deals with values. In a passage already quoted we find Nietzsche writing:

One would have to be situated outside life, and on the other hand to know it as thoroughly as any, as many, as all who have experienced it, to be permitted to touch on the problem of the value of life at all...

But, in our claim that absolute affirmation itself, i.e. the refusal to evaluate, involves a *value-judgment*, we are in effect saying that assessment of value is an essential component of human existence - as, we suggested above, is accountability.²

Yet I think we should accept the point Nietzsche makes in the above-quoted passage, for in some sense one does have to be both inside and outside life to assess its value. But, I believe, this is just the distinctive position which human beings occupy. Human existence itself is an intertwining of immanence and transcendence, and it is this intertwining which gives rise to the basic tensions and ambiguities of human existence, and which leads Jonas to call for a "third road", "... one by which the dualistic rift can be avoided and yet enough of the dualistic insight saved to uphold the humanity of man". Here we should also take note of the following passage in which Gurwitsch discusses the classical conception of man as *animal rationale*:³

In the classical conception the combination of the terms *animal* and *rationale* indicates the profound duality of human nature and the highly problematic character of man's existence. Even though man is an animal and thus subject to the vital necessities and impulses, he is conceived as orienting himself toward the eternal universe of unchangeable reason. Hence comes that intrinsic duality, that tension, which appears to be the lot of human existence.

1. see above p.49
2. see above pp.54,55
3. loc.cit. p.176
This passage serves as a point of unification for the many strands of thought which have been developed in this chapter. In connection with the majority of the dualisms and dichotomies we have discussed — these being the overriding dualism of man and world and the subsidiary dualisms of fact and value, reason and will (the content of an act of choice and the nature of an act of choice), nature and history, immamence and transcendence (which have been considered only very briefly), and opposing conceptions of the fundamental dimension of time — we have found the various writers claiming or intimating that it is only where there is a tension maintained between the poles of the dualism (and, for such a tension to exist, the poles of the dualisms must neither be radically separated, nor completely unified) that we can hope for an overcoming of nihilism. Gruwitsch's passage suggests that such a duality and such a tension are built into the very nature of man. Accepting this, we can conclude that nihilism becomes imminent when man loses touch with his true nature, the relative nature of his existence. (In the sense that I am using the term "relative", it does not apply to the existence of non-human animals. Such animals are simply what they are. Human beings are relative because they have a conception of an absolute, a unity, an intelligibility, to which they are related by being excluded.)

Our task in following chapters will be to investigate Heidegger's later thought with regard to nihilism, both as diagnosis and as proposed solution, in terms of the dualisms discussed in this first chapter, and the conclusions we have here reached. But
before embarking on this task, we must return briefly to Nietzsche, for as it stands our discussion of his thought in regard to nihilism is incomplete.

We have already noted and discussed the ambiguity that is present in Nietzsche's conception of the will. We have seen Nietzsche characterise the will as the summation of the instincts and thus as the expression in man of the basic reality of the natural world. The will so conceived is a principal of unity, a unity between man and nature. Time is correspondingly conceived as cyclical, as seasonal, with the present as the key dimension. Then we have also seen Nietzsche set the will over against the instincts and drives as their master. But again, by claiming that the will so conceived is free to the extent that it wills 'backwards', i.e. that it says of all that is past; "I wanted it thus!", Nietzsche presents the will as a principle of unity, a unity now between man and history. Time is now conceived as linear, with the past as the key dimension.¹

But what then of the future? Does Nietzsche work with a conception of will for which the future is the appropriate dimension? Well, let us see.

In one passage in The Will to Power, we find Nietzsche rather scornfully elaborating a whole list of ways in which he sees human beings 'intoxicating' themselves. He takes such 'intoxication' to be a response to a feeling of "deep down: not knowing whither. Emptiness."² The various 'intoxications' - "... music... tragic enjoyment of the destruction of the noblest ... blind enthusiasm for single human beings or ages ... art 'for

¹. see above pp.51-53
². The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.1, para.29
its own sake..."¹ – are in fact ways of injecting value into
an existence which no longer answers to any demand for meaning,
in the sense of goal or purpose. But Nietzsche himself rejects
the applicability of the notions of goal or purpose to life.²

Yet now we find that he seems not to be satisfied with those
activities which bolster values which bear no relation to the
postulation of goals; he condemns such activities, alongside
those springing from the values of unity (mysticism) and truth
(knowledge).³ Nietzsche sees all these as a means to attain a
self-induced sleep wherein one no longer cares whether life as a
whole, or one's own life, has any overriding direction. Nietzsche
despises such attitudes, which he sees as a species of hedonism,
but to present an alternative to them he is forced to re-introduce
into life the categories which he elsewhere claims are
inapplicable to it, viz. goal, purpose. It now becomes a sign
of the strength of a man, the strength of his will, if he can
provide a goal for his own life, while fully realising that life
itself gives him absolutely no warrant for such a postulation.
The following passage makes this clear:⁴

The nihilistic question "for what?" is rooted in the old
habit of supposing that the goal must be put up, given,
demanded from outside – by some superhuman authority.
Having unlearned faith in that, one still follows the old
habit and seeks another authority that can speak
unconditionally and command goals and tasks... One wants
to get around the will, the willing of a goal, the risk of
posing a goal for oneself; one wants to rid oneself of
the responsibility (One would accept fatalism)...

¹. ibid.
². see ibid. Bk.I, Sec.I, para.12(A)
³. ibid. para.29. But cf. Bk.III, Sec.IV, Para.800 which begins:
"The feeling of intoxication, in fact corresponding to an
increase in strength".
⁴. ibid. Bk.I, Sec.I, para.20. Nietzsche would maintain that his
thought as expressed in "On Redemption" is not an expression
of fatalism, for it calls not for a passive acceptance but for
a willing of what has been determined by fate.
Nietzsche is here clearly not decrying the "nihilistic question, 'for what?'", but is rather concerned to show that we can no longer suppose that our goals are ordained and secured by anything other than our own will. Far from ignoring the question "for what?", Nietzsche is telling us that we must attempt to answer it, while realising that life can give us no support for our answer. We cannot find an answer to this question, we must create an answer. Clearly here we find the warrant for the existentialist reading of Nietzsche.

For Nietzsche "[the] basic instinct of all strong natures" shows itself in "the question 'for what?' after a terrible struggle, even victory". The vital thing, "... a hundred times more important than whether we feel well or not", is "that we have a goal for which one does not hesitate to offer human sacrifices, to risk every danger, to take upon oneself whatever is bad and worst..."\(^1\)

So it is here the future, not the past or the present, which holds the key to redemption; it is the Übermensch, the "... man of the future" who will "... redeem us not only from the hitherto reigning ideal [Christianity] but also from that which was bound to grow out of it, the great nausea, the will to nothingness, nihilism". Such a man will "... liberate(s) the will again and restore(s) its goal to the earth..."\(^2\)

But the ultimate goal of the will is the Übermensch himself - and, we might argue, Nietzsche does see this goal having 'ontological' support: for the path to the Übermensch is the path of life itself, as depicted by Nietzsche, the path of

\(^{1}\) ibid. Bk.I, Sec.I, para.26. See also para.35.
\(^{2}\) The Genealogy of Morals, trans.cit. Second Essay, Sec.24
growth, consolidation, further growth, a continual process of self-overcoming, for "... life must overcome itself again and again".1

But we now need to ask; in what sense can the Übermensch be the goal of an individual life, and through this of life itself? For the Übermensch is not an ideal type; one can never actually be a Nietzschean Übermensch; it remains a continually receding possibility, without hope of realisation.

The problem that is here being pointed to can be brought more sharply into focus by asking; in what sense can a supposed goal which, of its very nature does not admit of realisation, be properly considered a goal? Is not such a goal really goallessness? There is one passage in The Will to Power where Nietzsche himself seems to concede this point, and thus to conclude that his own thought has been nihilistic. He writes:2

It is only late that one musters courage for what one really knows. That I have hitherto been a thorough-going nihilist, I have admitted to myself only recently: the energy and radicalism with which I have advanced as a nihilist deceived me about this basic fact. When one moves toward a goal it seems impossible that "goallessness as such" is the principle of our faith.

Admittedly in a passage written shortly after this Nietzsche speaks of himself as "... the first perfect nihilist of Europe who, however, has even now lived through the whole of nihilism, to the end, leaving it behind, outside himself",3 but the former passage retains its interest, especially given the fact that it was written after Nietzsche had developed his doctrine of the Übermensch, and so can be taken to bear on this doctrine.

The problem in Nietzsche's thought we are here concerned with

1. Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans.cit. "Of the Tarantulas".
2. Bk.I, Sec.1, para.25, "On the Genesis of the Nihilist".
3. The Will to Power, Preface, para.1
shows itself again in his program for the revaluation of all values. For the revalued values revolve around the central values of power and strength, and their derivatives, nobility and courage.

But when we unpack Nietzsche's notion of power, of strength, we find that its value-content consists in the recognition of the fact that life is without meaning, in the sense of goal or purpose. We might say that, for Nietzsche, the value-judgment that life supports is; "there are no values". For this is the supreme recognition which is the measure of value, for its continual affirmation demonstrates the power and strength of the person who has attained to this vision.¹

It seems then that Nietzsche is presenting the human will, as an expression of human subjectivity, as the creator of value against the back-drop of a world of becoming itself indifferent to value. But does not this contradict our earlier claim that Nietzsche sees the world of becoming, life itself, as what is truly valuable?² Further, does not the point just made concerning the centrality to the program for the revaluation of all values of the attributes of power and strength (of will) conflict with the claim made above that what is central to this program is the replacement of judgmental values with values stemming from affirmation?³ Do not the activities of willing, of positing a goal for one's life which is supported only by the will itself, and affirming this life, conflict?

But we have already hinted that this is not so. For Nietzsche

¹ see The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.I, para.14
² see above, pp.49,50
³ see above, p.46
presents the fundamental goal of the will as continual self-overcoming, which he sees as the very nature of life, of reality itself. Thus in willing a goal one is affirming life – somewhat paradoxically, for Nietzsche, man affirms life, unites himself with the world, by exerting his power over it. So again we find that in Nietzsche’s thought the will is a principle of unity.

But we now see that this unity takes two forms: on the one hand, it involves an incorporation of man into the world – here the will is seen not as something distinctively human, not as a mark of human subjectivity, but as the expression in man of the will-to-power, which precedes and transcends anything human. Here man, as the creator of value, is essentially a re-creator of life – and on the other hand it involves an incorporation of the world into man – here the will is presented as a distinctively human faculty or capacity, which creates human values which inform the world, making it a distinctively human world. Through the voice of Zarathustra we hear it said that man is the evaluator; it is he who "... first implanted values into things to maintain himself he created the meaning of things, a human meaning!" Such evaluation is creation, "valuating is itself the value and jewel of all valued things", indeed "only through evaluation is there value: and without evaluation the nut of existence would be hollow".¹ But, of those values "... by means of which we have tried so far to render the world estimable for ourselves and which then proved inapplicable and therefore devaluated the world", Nietzsche writes that they are, "psychologically considered, the results of certain perspectives

¹. Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans.cit. "Of the Thousand and One Goals".
of utility, designed to maintain and increase human constructs of domination - and they have been falsely projected into the essence of things. What we find here is still the hyperbolic naivete of man: positing himself as the meaning and measure of the value of things.¹

We can thus conclude by saying that the ambiguity apparent in Nietzsche's conception of the will, and also in his conception of creation,² is symptomatic of a deep tension in his thought. This tension manifests itself in his call both for a translation of man into the non-human world, and for the translation of the non-human world into man. But it should not be forgotten that these tensions are circumscribed by the overall monistic thrust of his thought.

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We are now in a position to embark upon the task foreshadowed above, this being the examination of Heidegger's later thought in the light of the discussion of nihilism presented in this chapter. We will find that our discussion of Nietzsche's thought will prove of special significance in this task.

¹. The Will to Power, Bk.I, Sec.I, para.12(B)
². Camus makes note of this ambiguity in The Rebel, p.65
CHAPTER TWO

METAPHYSICS AS NIHILISM
The following sentences appear in *The Question of Being*: 1

The essence of nihilism ... is based on the oblivion of Being.

The getting-over (Verwindung) of metaphysics is the getting-over of the oblivion of Being.

On what is the overcoming (Überwindung) of nihilism based? On the getting-over of metaphysics.

It will be the task of this chapter to present an expanded picture of that nihilism of which Heidegger speaks in the first of these claims, and with this to assess the direction of the path beyond nihilism which Heidegger proposes — a path which, he tells us, leads by way of a getting-over of metaphysics.

We will begin with some remarks about the second of these points.

A question to which the above-quoted sentences immediately give rise is; what does Heidegger mean when he talks of a "getting-over of metaphysics"? The issue here is clouded because in other places Heidegger talks of the overcoming (Überwindung) of metaphysics, most notably in the collection of notes entitled "Überwindung der Metaphysik".2 Joan Stambaugh, at the beginning of her translation of these notes, makes the point that "although Heidegger uses the familiar word Überwindung for 'overcoming', he means it in the sense of the less familiar word Verwindung." She notes that "when something is overcome in the sense of being Überwunden, it is defeated and left behind"; however, "when something is overcome in the sense of being verwunden, it is, so to speak, incorporated."

Stambaugh's conclusion is that "... to overcome metaphysics


would mean to incorporate metaphysics, perhaps with the hope, but not with the certainty, of elevating it to a new reality”.¹

Clearly Heidegger's use of the word "Verwindung" in Zur Seinsfrage - a later work than "Überwindung der Metaphysik" - supports the negative point Stambaugh makes in the above passage. But I do not agree with her positive suggestion, with its flavour of Hegelian Aufhebung. For Heidegger is not at all concerned to "elevate metaphysics to a new reality"; his concern is rather to leave metaphysics as it is, but to direct thinking to that which grounds metaphysics, and which metaphysical thinking itself, in his view, always leaves behind.

For Heidegger, metaphysics is fundamentally concerned with the question; what are beings (Seiende) qua beings? But he claims that metaphysics can never reach down to that which first makes beings as such manifest, 'visible', and thus open to question. That in virtue of which beings are manifest is, Heidegger writes, "the light of Being", the "revealedness of Being" which he takes to be the original essence of truth - unconcealness. So "the truth of Being may thus be called the ground in which metaphysics is kept and from which it is nourished". And Heidegger further claims that "when we think of the truth of Being, metaphysics is got-over (überwunden)".²

¹. The End of Philosophy, p.84, note.1. I will translate both Überwindung and Verwindung, when used in reference to metaphysics, as "(the) getting-over". The warrant for this is that the verb verwinden can mean in everyday German "to get-over something", e.g. a shock or a traumatic experience or something of the like. I think this captures a good deal of the meaning Heidegger wishes to convey. It should be noted that Kluback and Wilde translate "Verwindung" consistently as "restoration"! see p.91 and passim.

So it is clear that, for Heidegger, getting-over metaphysics involves thinking of Being in its truth, its unconcealedness, and such thinking goes back into the ground of metaphysics.

To the question: why should such a getting-over of metaphysics be necessary? which in Heidegger's terms asks: what is at stake with the arrival of the truth of Being or its failure to arrive? he answers:  

What is to be decided is nothing less than this: can Being itself, out of its own unique truth, bring about its involvement in human nature; or shall metaphysics, which turns its back to its ground, prevent further that the involvement of Being in man may generate a radiance out of the very essence of this involvement itself - a radiance which might lead man to belong to Being.

Thus the path Heidegger hopes to trace back into the ground of metaphysics, thus to get-over metaphysics and in this way to provide a basis for the overcoming of nihilism, leads in the direction of a conception of man which presents him as belonging to Being. We might suspect that Heidegger is here implicitly attempting to heal the dualistic rift spoken of by Jonas. Whether this suspicion is correct, later chapters will tell.

The talk of "radiance" in the above passage tends to draw one's attention away from the central point, which is expressed by Heidegger more clearly in another place, where he writes that "metaphysics almost seems to be, without knowing it, the barrier which keeps man from the original involvement of Being in human nature".  

But what is the thought which lies beneath this claim? It is briefly this: for Heidegger, "the characteristic of all metaphysics shows itself in the fact that...

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1. ibid. p.209 (Wegmarken. p.198)
2. ibid. p.210 (Wegmarken. p.200) For Heidegger, metaphysics cannot fully be such a barrier, since there is an involvement of Being in human nature - metaphysics can only cover and distort this involvement.
it is 'humanistic'" and, further, "... all ... humanisms ... presume(s) as self-evident the most general 'essence' of man. Man is considered as the animal rationale."¹ It is Heidegger's claim that "... the humanistic interpretations of man as animal rationale, as 'person', or as an intellectual, spiritual, corporeal, being ... do not yet come to know the authentic dignity of man".² Such humanistic views of man, Heidegger writes, "do(es) not set the humanitas of man high enough".

So we can conclude that Heidegger's way back into the ground of metaphysics, his path beyond nihilism, leads by way of a development of a non-humanistic conception of man, i.e. a conception which does not attempt to characterise the uniqueness of man by first placing him in the category animal and then bestowing on him a distinctive feature, such as rationality, person-hood, or the possession of an immortal soul, by means of which he can be picked out.

It seems then that Heidegger is going right against the conclusion that we reached in the first chapter, this being that thought which does not recognise the significance and ramifications of the characterisation of man as animal rationale is in danger of succumbing to nihilism.⁴ The question as to whether Heidegger's thought averts this danger will be taken up in following chapters, when we examine his attempt to elaborate a non-humanistic conception of man.

³ ibid.
⁴ see above, pp.59,60.
For the remainder of this chapter we will examine in some
detail Heidegger's view of the humanistic, and thus, in his
terms, nihilistic, development of metaphysics. This will
enable us to see whether the nihilism Heidegger identifies
with metaphysics - "metaphysics is as metaphysics the
authentic nihilism" - bears any relation to those nihilistic
phenomena identified in the first chapter.

Heidegger claims that "the beginning of metaphysics in
Plato's thinking is at the same time the beginning of
'humanism'. We need to ask; what is the line of thought
which leads Heidegger to make this claim? Heidegger sees the
beginning of metaphysics in Plato's interpretation of Being as
idea. Prior to this, Heidegger claims, Being was experienced
and conceived as physis, which means "... self-blossoming
emergence ... opening up, unfolding, that which manifests
itself in such unfolding and perseveres and endures in it..."

Physis designated a process, but it "... must not be taken as
a process among other processes," for "physis is Being itself,
by virtue of which beings become and remain observable".

Physis is then that process whereby beings come to stand in
unconcealment. The Greek word which means unconcealment is,

1. "Die Seinsgeschichtliche Bestimmung des Nihilismus", in
Nietzsche II (Pfullingen, Verlag Günther Neske, 1961) p.343.
Except where otherwise indicated, translations from Nietzsche
II are my own.

as "Plato's Doctrine of Truth", John Barlow, in Barrett and

3. "Mit Platon's Auslegung des Seins als idea beginnt die
Philosophie als Metaphysik", "Der Europäische Nihilismus",
Nietzsche II, p.226.

4. Einführung in die Metaphysik, (Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag,
1953), p.11 (hereafter EM), trans. as An Introduction to
Metaphysics by Ralph Mannheim, (New Haven, Yale University
Press, 1959) p.14. Here and elsewhere, in the interest of
consistency, I have amended the translation slightly.
Heidegger tells us, "aletheia", a word which we translate as truth. Thus Heidegger sees in early Greek thought a unique and essential relationship between physis (Being) and aletheia (truth). He claims that, on the strength of this relationship, "... the Greeks would have said: beings are true in so far as they are. The true as such is what-is. [Das Seiende ist als Seiendes wahr. Das Wahre ist als solches seidend.]" Heidegger is thus claiming that, when Being was experienced and conceived as physis, the place of truth was beings themselves - so conceived, truth bears no relation to human judgments about or representations of beings.

Given the claim that "... the Greek essence of truth is only possible in one with the Greek essence of Being as physis", then the change in the interpretation of Being which Heidegger locates in Plato's thought should be held to occasion a change in the conception of the essence of truth - and we find that Heidegger claims that such a change does indeed occur. He argues that, in the cave-allegory of the Republic, we find the beginnings of a humanisation of truth, in which the locus of truth shifts from beings themselves to human judgment about beings, and the solidification of this judgment in the statement. The lecture "Plato's Doctrine of Truth"

1. ibid. p.102 (EM p.78)
2. ibid.
involves a detailed argument in support of this claim.¹

Heidegger concedes that what is at issue at each stage of the soul's ascent from within the cave and its subsequent descent back again is the unconcealedness of beings, whether these be mere shadows or images illuminated by the light of the fire within the cave, beings standing forth in themselves as they are, or the supreme idea which makes possible all 'visibility'. Heidegger recognises that Platonic ideas, in contrast to ideas understood in a 'modern' way, are not in the mind of man, nor are they in any way functions of man's mind. Heidegger recognises that, in the cave-allegory, the stages of ascent and descent are determined in terms of what stands unconcealed or manifest at each stage, not in terms of the way this unconcealedness is appropriated or dealt with by the soul. He concedes that "in a certain manner Plato still

1. We cannot here enter into the argument concerning the status of Heidegger's dialogues with past thinkers, i.e. his search for what remains unsaid in their saying (see 'Plato's Doctrine of Truth', trans.cit. p.251, Wegmärken, p.109). We should note, however, that a number of commentators see these as violent re-interpretations - one writer calls them "anti-interpretations" (Heinemann, op.cit.p.94) - and Heidegger himself, in An Introduction to Metaphysics, seems to give some support to this charge. At one point he writes, concerning his discussion of a chorus from Sophocles' Antigone: "If we concern ourselves with what the poem directly says, the interpretation is at an end. Actually it has just begun. The actual interpretation must show what does not stand soln words and is nevertheless said. To accomplish this the exegete must use violence". (trans.cit. p.162, EM, p.124). Heidegger also shows a rather mocking recognition of the attacks made on his hermeneutical method. He speaks of the "... far-fetched and one-sided Heideggerian method of exegesis, which has already become proverbial". (ibid. p.176, EM, p.134). But of course this little piece of Heideggerian humour does not show that his method of exegesis is not indeed far-fetched and one-sided: however, it would take us too far afield to attempt to follow this up. For discussion of Heidegger's interpretation of Plato, see Stanley Rosen, "Heidegger's Interpretation of Plato", Journal of Existentialism, Summer, 1967, and David A. White, "Truth and Being: A Critique of Heidegger on Plato", Man and World, Vol. 7, 1974. For a general discussion of Heidegger's dialogue with past philosophers, see the chapter entitled "Heidegger and the Tradition", in Bernd Magnus, Heidegger's Metahistory of Philosophy, (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff,1970).
has to adhere to 'truth' as a characteristic of beings...\(^1\), but argues: "But still, even if aletheia in the 'allegory of the cave' may be specifically named at emphatic points, another essence of truth besides unhiddenness forces its way into the foreground. In saying this it is also granted that unhiddenness still retains its own place in the background".\(^2\)

Heidegger is thus claiming that there is an ambiguity in Plato's 'doctrine' of truth, and we find him narrowing this ambiguity down to the notion of appearance, appearing.

Heidegger is quite willing to admit that "... the interpretation of Being as idea results from the basic experience of Being as physis\(^3\), and he further seems loath to suggest that thought which so interprets Being has "fallen-away" from a more original thought.\(^3\) But then the question arises; in what way does the interpretation of Being as idea differ from its interpretation as physis?

Heidegger's answer to this is that although both physis and idea revolve around the notion of appearing (Erscheinen), that this notion is conceived and experienced differently in the different cases. These different conceptions arise, Heidegger suggests, from an ambiguity in the notion of appearing itself, for:

appearing means first: that which gathers itself, which brings-itself-to-stand in its togetherness and so stands. But second it means: that which, already standing-there, presents a front, a surface, offers an appearance to be looked at.

2. ibid. p.261, (Wegmarken, p.130)
4. ibid. p.182, (EM p.139)
The ambiguity Heidegger is here referring to is present in ordinary language. We say; "such and such a celebrity will appear tonight", and this means; he/she will be here, will be able to be seen. There is no contrast here between appearance and reality. But we also say things like; "that person appeared to be hurt, but he turned out not to be." Here there is a definite distinction between the appearance and the reality; the appearance is mere appearance.

For Heidegger, Being conceived as physis is appearance, in the first of these senses, "... self-manifestation, self-representation, standing-there, presence".1 "Being means appearing. Appearing is not something subsequent that sometimes happens to Being. Appearing is the very essence of Being."2 But when Being is conceived as idea, the appearance of what appears becomes, Heidegger claims, mere appearance.3

The idea now becomes a paradeigma, a model. At the same time, the idea necessarily becomes an ideal. The chorismos, the cleft, has opened between the idea as what really is, the prototype and archetype, and what actually is not, the copy and image ... Since the copy never equals the prototype, what appears is mere appearance. Now the on becomes distinct from the phainomenon.

Heidegger is in effect claiming that, when Being comes to be interpreted as idea, appearing is no longer conceived as the "coming-into-the-light" of beings, of their self-manifestation; now appearing, appearance is understood as that which can be made out by the blurred and faulted 'vision' of man. So, with this change in the conception of appearing, of Being, the place is cleared for the 'looking' of man to become decisive in relation to the unconcealedness of beings.

1. ibid. p.100 (EM, p.139)
2. ibid. p.101 (EM, p.77)
3. ibid. p.184 (EM, pp.140,141)
Of unhiddenness (unconcealedness) in the cave-allegory, Heidegger writes that it is "... hitched to the 'relation' to seeing, and is 'relative' to this". The vital point is that "... a shift of the place of truth takes place ... As unhiddenness truth is still a basic feature of beings themselves. But as correctness of 'looking' truth becomes the label of the human attitude towards beings".

Here we have uncovered the reasoning behind Heidegger's claim that the "beginning of metaphysics in Plato's thinking is at the same time the beginning of 'humanism'", a humanism which shows itself in the fact that "... man ... moves into a position in the midst of beings without becoming the highest being". For Heidegger, humanism begins with the humanisation of truth - and he maintains that all metaphysical thought, no matter how non-humanistic its content might appear, is nonetheless a species of humanism, because it is grounded in a conception of truth (and untruth) as a mark of human judgment and representation, as the character of human thought.

Now, for Heidegger, the ambiguity which he sees embedded in Plato's 'doctrine' of truth, only fully disappears when idea completes a historical journey to become perceptio. Heidegger

2. ibid. p.265 (Wegmarken pp.136, 137)
3. ibid. p.269 (Wegmarken p.142)
4. We can give a plausible account of the main movements of this historical journey as follows. Platonic ideas are in no way mental items; they are amentai forms and as such quite independent of the demiurge whose task it was to fashion a world by means of them. However, with the interpenetration of Greek and Christian thought, the latter took over the conception of a realm of eternal, unchanging forms, but located these forms within the mind of God. Once the ideas thus became mental items, even though if to begin with they were domiciled in a divine mind, it was but a short step to the point where man, fashioned as he was taken to be in the image and likeness of God, came to partake, albeit imperfectly; of the contents of the divine mind. Thus ideas came to be considered as features of the mind of man ... Heidegger himself makes a brief reference which can be taken as some support for this view. (see Nietzsche II, p.227).
makes the point that *idea*, as understood in Greek thought, "... is not the name for 'representations' that as I-subjects we have in consciousness"; rather "idea is the name for Being itself. The 'ideas' are *proteron te physai*, that which lies before us as presence". Heidegger concludes that "in order to grasp the Platonic-Greek essence of *idea*, we must exclude every relation to the modern designation of *idea* as *perceptio* and with this the relation of *idea* and 'subject'".1

Thus Heidegger argues that, while Plato's thought marks the beginning of *humanism* - through its characterisation of truth as a mark of human judgment - it is nonetheless not a metaphysics of *subjectivity*. By this Heidegger does not mean to say that the notion of the *subject* is foreign to Plato's thought; on the contrary, Heidegger writes that "... up to the beginning of modern metaphysics with Descartes and even in this metaphysics each being, insofar as it is a being, is grasped as *subiectum*. *Subiectum* is the Latin translation and interpretation of the Greek *hypo-keimenon*, and means that which lies under, or at the base of, that which already lies out from itself".2 Rather Heidegger maintains that metaphysics only becomes a metaphysics of subjectivity when one being in particular, namely man, becomes the subject par excellence, with the result that all other beings come to be conceived as essentially *objects* (*Gegen-stände*), as that which "stands-over-against" the subject. And Heidegger claims that "through Descartes and since Descartes man, the human 'I', has become, in metaphysics, in a predominating fashion, 'subject'".3

1. "Der Europäische Nihilismus", in Nietzsche II, pp.217,218
2. ibid., p.141
3. ibid.
80.

For Heidegger, Descartes' thought is the place where idea completes its historical journey to perceptio. Here, he claims, "the essence of idea changes from visibility and presence into re-presentedness for and through the representor". Further, Heidegger argues, the re-presentation is of such a nature that it always contains a kernel of self-representation: this reflexivity derives, he suggests, from the self-transparency of the Cartesian cogito ergo sum. He stresses that the cogito ergo sum is not a deduction or inference: he writes that "... the 'ergo' does not designate a consequence", and adds: "it means just as much as: 'and this says in itself'". So the cogito ergo sum reads for Heidegger: I think, and this says in itself, I am. Thus each act of thinking is transparent to the thinking subject: this results in the thinking subject becoming self-securing and then unshakeable, and thereby serving as a certain ground not only for itself, but also for what it re-presents in thought. (This self-guaranteeing certainty of the thinking subject is of a different order from that certainty supposedly afforded by clear and distinct ideas, for, as characterised by Descartes, this relies on a belief, which it is possible not to hold, in the goodwill of God.) For Heidegger:

"Cogito sum" says neither only that I think, nor that I am, nor that from the fact of my thinking my existence follows. The proposition... says that I am as the re-presenter, that not only my Being is essentially determined through this representing, but that my representing, as the decisive re-presentatio, decides as to the presence of all that is intended in it.

1. ibid. p.230
2. ibid. p.161
Heidegger concludes that:

The proposition says: the re-presenting, that is itself essentially re-presented, posits Being as re-presentedness and truth as certainty.

Here we have the thought underlying Heidegger's claim that Cartesian philosophy, and the modern metaphysics of subjectivity of which it is the source, is grounded in a second decisive change in the conception of the essence of truth. From Descartes on, Heidegger maintains, truth is no longer conceived as correctness of representation or judgment, but as certainty of self-representation. This he sees as a further step in the humanisation of truth. Heidegger also argues that a correlative change occurs in respect of the conception of Being: no longer is it conceived as presence (Anwesenheit), but as that which admits of re-presentation through human acts of re-presenting. "Being is re-presentedness..." As a consequence of these changes, Heidegger suggests, man begins to take on the role of fundamentum absolutum et inconcussum, he becomes "a basis which no longer depends upon a relation to something else but rather is absolved from the very beginning from this relation, and rests within itself". Man, as representor, "... already lies present in all re-presenting and for all re-presenting", for "... what constantly already lies present for re-presentational thinking during representation which presents something to itself is the representor itself (ego cogitans), before which everything represented is brought, to which and back to which (re-praeentare) it becomes present".

1. ibid.
2. ibid. p.162
4. ibid. pp. 28,29 (Nietzsche II, p.432)
For Heidegger, this is the process by which man comes to be the legislator over beings. While admitting that, for Descartes, "... knowledge is governed by beings", Heidegger adds for Descartes, "... only that counts as a being which is guaranteed in the manner of the already characterised re- and self-presentation". So Heidegger, while conceding that, for Descartes, man as subject is in an important sense governed by objects - that for Descartes human knowledge does not create its own objects, but results from a representation of objects which must accord with the natures of the objects - maintains that before (both in a temporal and in an ontological sense) any act of representation can occur the object must be validated as an object, and that this validation of object-ness is grounded in the self-certainty of man as the representing subject. Thus, Heidegger claims, in Descartes' thought human subjectivity becomes the sub-iectum par excellence, the Zugrunde-liegende, that which lies at the ground of all else and to which everything must be referred back. Thus Heidegger sees here the decisive beginning having being made for the structuring of the world after the image of man.

In passing it is of interest to note that Heidegger sees Descartes' thought as providing the metaphysical foundation for the identification of freedom and autonomy, which Heidegger calls "... the freeing of man into the new freedom as the self-giving law which is certain of itself." I think that we can say with a good deal of justification that the notion of authenticity elaborated in Being and Time rests on a debased form of this view of freedom as self-legislation. For Kant man is free, is autonomous, to the extent that his will conforms to the laws uncovered by his reason - thus freedom, autonomy,

2. ibid. p.147
is grounded in knowledge. This view, though based on a conception of will foreign to classical Greek thought, is not unlike the conception of freedom found in Plato. As one commentator writes: "Platonic freedom is the ability to act in accord with reason and the common good." And we find Iris Murdoch, reacting to what she sees as the total identification, within existentialist thought, of freedom and freedom of the will, writing:\(^2\)

> the freedom which is a proper human goal is the freedom from fantasy... What I have called fantasy, the proliferation of blinding self-centred aims and images, is itself a powerful system of energy, and most of what is often called 'will' or 'willing' belongs to this system. What counteracts the system is attention to reality inspired by, consisting of, love... Freedom is not strictly the exercise of the will, but rather the experience of accurate vision which, when this becomes appropriate, occasions action.

Clearly Murdoch is saying that freedom is grounded in knowledge, and that this knowledge has an essential moral dimension. She writes that "... goodness is connected with knowledge... with a refined and honest perception of what is really the case...",\(^3\) and rejects the view or "the hard objective world out of which the will leaps into a position of isolation".\(^4\) For Murdoch, true freedom is a kind of 'necessity' where "... the will [is presented] not as unimpeded movement but as something very much more like 'obedience'".\(^5\)

But, we might now point out, in the thought of Being and Time the will is not presented as "unimpeded movement"; Heidegger stresses there that "... every Dasein always exists factically. It is not a free-floating self-projection".\(^6\) But the knowledge

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1. Vernon Bourke, Will in Western Thought, (New York, Sheed,1964 p.86. Bourke argues that the notion of free will does not appear in pre-Christian thought, and therefore that this notion is a Christian legacy.
2. op.cit. pp.66, 67.
3. ibid. p.38. This would surely gladden Rosen's heart.
4. ibid. p.25
5. ibid. p.40
which informs Dasein's self-projection does not contain a moral dimension. It is simply the knowledge of the situation, and comprises the recognition that the choice of a certain course of action renders former possibilities impossible. It is in terms of such knowledge that Dasein can be truly free, for "freedom ... is only in the choice of one possibility — that is, in tolerating one's not having chosen the others and one's not being able to choose them".¹

Thus Dasein's freedom is grounded in an attenuated form of self-legislation. It is therefore, in the terms of the later Heidegger, a thoroughly metaphysical, and thus humanistic, conception of freedom. This suggests to us two points: firstly, that the thought of Being and Time is, in the terms Heidegger later comes to use, humanistic,² and secondly: that an analysis of the account of freedom we find in the later Heidegger will give us an inside view of the non-humanistic conception of man which he elaborates, and also of some of the ramifications of this conception. We will follow up both these points, but especially the latter, in later chapters. But now let us return to our discussion of Heidegger's account of the humanistic, and thus in his terms nihilistic, path of Western metaphysics.

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We find that it is a central claim of Heidegger's Nietzsche analysis that Nietzsche's thought is in essence a radicalisation of those changes in the essence of truth, Being, and man which he (Heidegger) locates in Descartes' thought. Heidegger

¹ See H.285.
maintains that it is one and the same metaphysical ground-position which underlies the thought of both Descartes and Nietzsche.\(^1\) We will begin our examination of this claim by looking at the relation Heidegger draws between the respective conceptions of truth which he claims to find in Descartes and Nietzsche.

Heidegger makes much use of the following lines from *The Will to Power*: "truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The value for life is ultimately decisive".\(^2\) Heidegger maintains that here we find the expression of Nietzsche's doctrine of truth;\(^3\) he links this to what he sees as the traditional conception of truth by claiming that "in Nietzsche's defining of truth as incorrectness of thinking there lies the concession to thinking of the traditional essence of truth as the correctness of making an assertion (logos)". He concludes that "Nietzsche's concept of truth is an example of the extreme consequence of that changing of truth from the unhiddenness of beings to the correctness of the glance".\(^4\)

Heidegger's reasoning here is that, in characterising truth as a certain form of error, Nietzsche is retaining what Heidegger sees as the traditional conception, within metaphysical thought, of the place, the location, of truth, this being human judgment about things and the solidification of this judgment in the statement. Thus, Heidegger argues, Nietzsche's characterisation of truth as a species of error is a radicalisation of that conception of truth ambiguously present

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2. Bk.III. Sec.1, para.193.
in Plato and clearly present from Descartes on. In passing it is worth remembering the claim we made in the first chapter, to the effect that Nietzsche's explicit characterisation of truth as error, his exhortation to believe that beliefs could never be true — his call for a recognition of "the necessity of lies" — is an attempt by him to bring about a change in the conception of the place of truth, by showing that human judgment could never reach the reality, the truth of things.¹ If this point is correct, then both Nietzsche and Heidegger have at least one task in common, this being the de-humanisation of truth. Of course Heidegger does not recognise this, for he interprets Nietzsche quite differently. We will discuss this variance of interpretation later in this chapter.

But even if for the present we accept Heidegger's account of what underlies Nietzsche's concept of truth as a certain kind of falsity — this being a conception of truth as correctness of judgment, of representation — still we must ask; given that, for Heidegger, Nietzsche's concept of truth is a radicalisation of the pre-Cartesian concept, does he not have to also show that Nietzsche's concept of truth exemplifies a conception of truth as certainty, and is thereby a radicalisation of the Cartesian concept?

Heidegger does indeed attempt to show this, though his argument is somewhat convoluted and difficult to follow. It moves by way of an account of what he calls "value-thinking" (Wertgedanke). Let us remind ourselves of those lines from Nietzsche which Heidegger takes to present Nietzsche's conception of truth. These say: "truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The

¹. see above pp. 47,48
value for life is ultimately decisive". We need now to fix our attention on the second of these sentences. Heidegger takes this to mean that, for Nietzsche, truth is a value, with "value" being understood to mean condition for the possibility (Bedingung der Möglichkeit). So, claims Heidegger, truth is for Nietzsche a condition for the possibility of life (i.e. in Nietzsche's terms, will-to-power) continuing its incessant movement of growth, consolidation, further growth, of continual self-overcoming.

Heidegger claims that the conception of values as conditions for the possibility is prepared for in Plato's thought. He argues that it is a mistake to interpret the Platonic idea of the Good, to agathon, as having a moral dimension, saying that "as the Greeks thought of it, to agathon means that which is of use to something and which makes something useful [was zu etwas taugt und zu etwas tauglich macht; i.e. what is good for something, in the sense that we might say of a certain tool that it is good for doing certain kinds of jobs]". Heidegger writes of the Platonic ideas that "the essence of idea lies after all in making anything possible...". Yet, Heidegger claims, Plato's thought is not value-thinking: "value-thinking itself is no less foreign to Plato than the interpretation of man as 'subject'". He suggests that "only through the metaphysics of subjectivity does the till then still hidden and withheld essential feature of idea - to be that which makes possible and conditions - come into the open and then be given a free rein".

2. ibid. (Wegmarken, p.134)
3. "Der europäische Nihilismus", Nietzsche II. p.227
4. ibid. p.230
the metaphysics of subjectivity, in Descartes' thought, Heidegger maintains that Being, now conceived as representedness, "... becomes a condition which the presenter, the subject, has and must have at his disposal, if objects are to stand opposite him. Being is grasped as a system of necessary conditions with which the subject, and indeed with a view to beings as objects ... must always calculate in advance".¹

Heidegger claims that the inmost movement of modern metaphysics is that in which Being comes to be seen more and more incontestably as the condition for the possibility of beings being objects for man as subject. And he writes that "Kant's metaphysics accomplishes the most decisive step in this process".² For Heidegger Kant's epistemology is in fact a surreptitious metaphysics and ontology which is "... based on truth as the certainty of guaranteed representatioⁿ..."³ Indeed Heidegger sees all epistemology as "... metaphysics of the object, that is, of beings as object, of the object for a subject".⁴ But he maintains that it is Kant who "... first thinks transcendentally and grasps expressly and consciously that which Descartes as the beginning of the question placed in the horizon of the ego cogito".⁵ Heidegger concludes that "it is first through Kant's interpretation of Being that the beingness (Seiendheit) of beings

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¹ ibid.
² ibid. p.231
³ "Overcoming Metaphysics", trans. cit. p.88 (VA p.75). I will follow Stambaugh's translation of "Überwindung der Metaphysik" as "Overcoming Metaphysics" as far as this is used as the title of these notes.
⁴ ibid. p.89 (VA p.75)
⁵ "Der europäische Nihilismus", Nietzsche II. p.232.
is expressly thought in the sense of 'condition of possibility'".

But, for Heidegger, Kant's thought is not yet value-thinking; he sees it only as clearing the way for the development of value-thinking in Nietzsche. Thought only becomes value-thinking when values are posited expressly as conditions for the possibility. Heidegger argues that this is precisely what Nietzsche does. He argues that the values which Nietzsche identifies, which include goal and purpose as well as truth, are simply posited by the will-to-power as conditions for its own possibility. Heidegger writes that, for Nietzsche, "value is the condition for will-to-power itself conditional on the will-to-power".

If truth is conceived as a value in this sense, i.e. as a creation of the will-to-power to render possible its activity of continual self-surpassing, then we can with a little thought see why Heidegger takes Nietzsche's doctrine of truth to be the extreme result of the change in the essence of truth from correctness of representation to certainty of self-representation.

1. ibid. This point is interesting, given the fact that the thought of Being and Time, through the conception of ontology used there, seems itself to be a search for "conditions for the possibility" of Dasein's experiential, i.e. ontic dimension. As an example, we can cite the following passage, where Heidegger discusses the call of conscience. He writes that "that which can be established, and which seeks to be established, is not what gets called in and to a particular Dasein from an existentiell [ontic] standpoint, but is rather what belongs to the existential [ontological] condition for the possibility of its factual-existentiell potentiality-for-Being". (H.280). See also pp.16 & 21 of John D. Caputo, "The Rose is Without Why", p.4 in Philosophy Today, Spring, 1971.

2. See ibid.
3. See ibid., p.65.
4. See ibid., p.65.
According to Heidegger, will-to-power is will-to-will. By this he means that, for Nietzsche, power cannot be understood as something apart from will; power cannot be seen as an external goal towards which the will moves - will-to-power is thus quite different from (say) will to win. Heidegger claims that, for Nietzsche, "all the goals and catch-cries of struggle are always only means of struggle. What the struggle is about is decided in advance: it is power itself, which doesn't require goals. It is goalless..." Thus he sees will-to-power, will-to-will, being self-justifying, self-certifying. There is for Nietzsche no question of the will agreeing with or adequately representing any reality outside itself, for it itself is the very nature of reality. Thus will-to-will is certain of itself as long as it is continually willing. So that which is a condition for the possibility of will-to-will, itself posited by will-to-will - i.e. truth as a form of error - is grounded in a self-guaranteeing certainty. Heidegger writes that:

in that the will-to-power attains its most extreme, unconditional guarantee, it is the sole criterion that guarantees everything, and thus what is correct. The correctness of the will-to-will is the unconditional and complete guaranteeing of itself. What is in accordance with the will is correct and in order, because the will-to-will itself is the only order. In this self-guaranteeing of the will-to-will, the primal being of truth is lost.

It is clear that the will-to-will as characterised by Heidegger, guaranteeing itself at the same time as guaranteeing what is correct, grounds a transparent certainty about all things. In another place, Heidegger talks of the time "...when reality has been discovered in its essence as will". He

1. "Der europäische Nihilismus", Nietzsche II. p. 125
claims that "this happens when truth has become certainty, evoking from the essence of Being the fundamental characteristic of the universal ensurance of structure in a ground which ensures itself".¹

We now need to look at Heidegger's general claim that "ever since the developed beginning of metaphysics, Being is will..." He adds to this: "'will' contains a manifoldness of essence. It is the will of reason or the will of spirit, it is the will of love or the will to power".² For Heidegger, it is in the doctrine of the will-to-power that this metaphysics of will finds its most complete expression. His analysis of the internal structure of what he designates as the metaphysics of will need not concern us. What is of interest to us is the relation Heidegger draws between Kant and Nietzsche around the notion of will. The following passage concerns this relation:³

The aimlessness, indeed the essential aimlessness of the unconditional will-to-will, is the completion of the being of will which was incipient in Kant's concept of practical reason as pure will. Pure will wills itself, and as the will is Being. Viewed from the perspective of content, pure will and its law are thus formal. Pure will is the sole content for itself as form.

The first point to note is that the last two sentences of this passage express concisely the point on which we accused the early Sartrean doctrine of freedom, together with the doctrine of authenticity elaborated in Heidegger's own Being and Time, of being nihilistic, claiming that both doctrines present only a formal law for acts of choice, of will, a law concerning not the content of the choice, but its nature as an

². Ibid. p.47 (Nietzsche II p.452)
act of the human psyche. If this objection is valid, then, in the terms we find Heidegger later using, his thought in *Being and Time* is an example of the metaphysics of will.

Clearly for the later Heidegger the metaphysics of will is thoroughly nihilistic, and with this view I am in complete agreement. What this suggests to us is that Heidegger's path beyond nihilism will pass through one of the key dualisms which we discussed in the first chapter, that between reason and will, or the content of an act of choice and its nature. This shows that the nihilism with which Heidegger identifies metaphysics, and which he characterises as a forgetfulness of Being, can be brought into relation with more standard discussions of nihilism. This in turn suggests that much is at stake in Heidegger's attempt to go beyond nihilism.

Now let us turn our attention to the second point suggested by the above-quoted passage, which is the relation Heidegger draws between Kant and Nietzsche around the notion of will. I think that it can be said with a good degree of justification that the modern existentialist conception of will is present in embryonic form in Kant, but it remains a question as to whether Nietzsche's conception of will stands on the path which leads from Kant to the early Sartre. We have argued that, in at least one prominent strand of his thought, Nietzsche elaborates a conception of will which stands quite apart from this path; that he attempts to translate the will into nature and thus to de-humanise it, to present it not as the supreme mark of human subjectivity, but as the expression in man of the will-to-power, which he sees as ontologically prior to

1. See above pp. 28-31
2. See Iris Murdoch, *op. cit.* pp. 80, 83
everything specifically human. A revaluation of all values grounded in will so conceived is not an attempt to reconstruct the world after the image of man; yet we find Heidegger claiming that Nietzsche's thought unifies itself around a call for "... the positing of the world in the image of man..." Heidegger sees Nietzsche's program for a revaluation of all values being grounded in the will-to-power, but he seems to conceive of will-to-power as designating, for Nietzsche, something specifically human, as being a property of man. We would rather say: for Nietzsche, man is a property of the will-to-power.

It can be argued that Heidegger doesn't draw the obvious conclusion from his own claim that "for Nietzsche, man is subject in the sense of the instincts and affects which stand out as the 'most basic facts'; this means, in short, the body". To begin with Heidegger doesn't hold firm to this point. At other times he interprets Nietzsche as saying that the will, as the creator of value, is the fundament of human subjectivity. Heidegger writes that "in the nihilistic reversal of the priority of representation to the priority of will as the will-to-power, the will first attained absolute dominance in the essence of subjectivity". He claims that, for Nietzsche, with the collapse of the supra-sensible world of Being, "... man must provide the place for the pure essence of the fulfilled subjectivity, because he alone is as a representing, value-positing will in the middle of all-beings-as-such-as-a-whole". The point is that the will lends itself

1. see above pp. 50,51
2. "Der europäische Nihilismus", Nietzsche II, p.123
3. ibid. p.190
4. "Nietzsches Metaphysik", Nietzsche II pp.300,301
5. ibid. p.303
to be construed as something essentially human. Thus if the will-to-power is conflated with will, with the latter understood as a distinctive capacity of human beings, then it becomes humanised, hitched to human subjectivity. But if the body is thought of as the ground of human subjectivity, this danger decreases, for the body is not so easily conceived as something distinctively human. We might say that the subjectivity of the body precedes any specifically human subjectivity.

However, Heidegger doesn't make this move.

It must certainly be granted that the (basically existentialist) interpretation of Nietzsche which Heidegger offers is not without textual support. Heidegger makes much of the following passage, which prefaces the second book of The Will to Power. This says:

All the beauty and sublimity we have bestowed upon real and imaginary things I will reclaim as the property and the product of man: as his fairest apology. Man as poet, as thinker, as God, as love, as power: with what liberality he has lavished gifts upon things so as to impoverish himself and make himself feel wretched! His most unselfish act hitherto has been to admire and worship and to know how to conceal from himself that it was he who created what he admired.

Heidegger takes this passage at face value. But a passage we have already referred to, which ends by talking of "... the hyperbolic naivete of man: positing himself as the meaning and measure of the value of things", is interpreted by Heidegger in terms of what it (supposedly) leaves unsaid. Heidegger writes that "on a superficial reading the proposition

2. It is also supported by Iris Murdoch, who writes: "it is not such a very long step from Kant to Nietzsche, and from Nietzsche to existentialism and the Anglo-Saxon ethical doctrines which in some ways closely resemble it". op.cit. p.8
3. Passage which introduces Bk.II, Sec.1 (This passage is without source or date. It is quoted by Heidegger in Nietzsche II, p.124).
leads to the opinion that Nietzsche is demanding — in opposition to the action of naive value-positing, which always lays human values in the things themselves and so humanises all beings — an experience and designation of beings in which all humanism is avoided". However, Heidegger concludes, "...this interpretation of the proposition is incorrect; for it is not the humanisation of things that is the deficiency in the naivity, but rather that the humanisation is not carried out consciously". Now such an interpretation is not wholly implausible, but neither is it an account of what the passage from Nietzsche actually says; indeed, what it presents is contrary to what the passage says.

It is a basic assumption of Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche that the latter's thought is a consistent and unified whole. But Heidegger gives no real justification for this assumption — and nothing in Nietzsche's writings can shake it because Heidegger interprets them all in terms of this fundamental assumption. For Heidegger, if anything Nietzsche says is at odds with his (Heidegger's) interpretation, then he interprets Nietzsche's 'doctrine' in terms of what is unsaid, even if this unsaid 'doctrine' conflicts with what is said. Such a method of interpretation is well nigh unassailable, but it also runs a serious risk of becoming sterile. I think in fact that it prevents Heidegger from seeing that a rejection of any form of humanism comprises a very deep current in Nietzsche's thought.

To support this, I want now to examine a long passage from ...
The Will to Power where, I believe, Nietzsche attacks precisely that conception of truth of which, according to Heidegger, he is a proponent. This passage runs:

"The valuation "I believe that this and that is so" as the essence of "truth". In valuations are expressed conditions of preservation and growth. All our organs of knowledge and our senses are developed only with regard to conditions of preservation and growth. Trust in reason and its categories, in dialectic, therefore the valuation of logic, proves only their usefulness for life, proved by experience - not that something is true. That a great deal of belief must be present; that judgments may be ventured; that doubt concerning all essential values is lacking - that is the precondition of every living thing and its life. Therefore, what is needed is that something must be held to be true - not that something is true. "The real and the apparent world" - I have traced this antithesis back to value relations. We have projected the conditions of our preservation as predicates of being in general. Because we have to be stable in our beliefs if we are to prosper, we have made the "real" world a world not of change and becoming, but one of being.

We have seen Heidegger argue that, for Nietzsche, truth is a value, i.e. a condition for the possibility of growth, consolidation, further growth, this being the basic nature of the will-to-power. I want to argue that in the above passage Nietzsche is drawing a distinction between values, so understood, and truth. The first sentence; "the valuation 'I believe that this and that is so' as the essence of 'truth'" is, I think, not an expression of Nietzsche's view of truth, but his diagnosis of how in fact truth has been unwittingly understood. At the end of the first paragraph there is a clear distinction drawn between what is "useful for life" and what is true, but, admittedly, this might mean that for Nietzsche nothing is true.

1. Bk.IV. Sec.1, para.507
2. The problem of deciding in whose voice Nietzsche is speaking is ever-present for the reader of The Will to Power.
But let us look closely at the second paragraph, and ask: in whose voice is Nietzsche speaking when he says: "what is needed is that something must be held to be true - not that something is true"? What we are really asking is: what is the force of the word "needed" in this sentence? Now the sentence preceding this presents us with "preconditions of every living thing and its life". The word "needed" gets its sense from this. The sentence in which it appears can be re-written as: "the precondition of every living thing and its life is that something must be held to be true - not that something is true."

Now Nietzsche includes among such preconditions the fact that "doubt concerning all essential values is lacking"; and it is without question that Nietzsche takes such a lack of doubt, along with the presence of a "great deal of belief" and the "venturing of judgments", to be a sign of weakness. This suggests that the word "needed" is used in a disparaging way, and thus that Nietzsche himself wants to draw a distinction which he thinks has been blurred - this distinction being between what is held to be true and what is true. This conclusion is in direct contradiction with Heidegger's claim that, for Nietzsche, "...truth is identical with holding-to-be-true."

And in the last paragraph of the quoted passage Nietzsche is clearly disapproving of that projection of values wherein "the conditions of our preservation" become "predicates of being in general", for such a projection, he claims, gives rise to the antithesis between the real and the apparent worlds, an antithesis which he sees lying at the heart of all metaphysics.

I think that the whole of the quoted passage, if read in

terms of the Heideggerian hermeneutical thesis that "the 'doctrine' of a thinker is that which is left unsaid in what he says", supports the position argued in our first chapter — this being that Nietzsche's thought contains, as an important thread, an attempt to relocate the place of truth, to present truth not as a mark of human judgments or beliefs, but as the character of the real world, this being, for Nietzsche, the world of change and becoming.

At one place Heidegger half-admits this point. He talks of Nietzsche's attempt to overcome metaphysics as a reversal of Platonism, which he characterizes by saying that "... for Nietzsche the sensuous becomes the true world and the supra-sensuous becomes the untrue world..." Heidegger claims that such a reversal of Platonism is "... in the spirit of nineteenth century positivism", and is "... only the final entanglement in metaphysics". Heidegger is right about the positivistic undercurrent of Nietzsche's thought; it will be interesting to see whether Heidegger himself, in his attempt to get-over metaphysics, is able to avoid a regression to a surreptitious form of positivism.

For Heidegger it is value-thinking which is "... the fulfillment of the completion of metaphysics". We have seen Heidegger use the term "value" to refer to "conditions of possibility", and to interpret value-thinking accordingly. But we also find him using the concept of value in the sense of moral value, where it is bound to the notion of the categorical "ought". Again it is in Plato's thought that Heidegger locates

2. ibid.
3. "Der europäische Nihilismus", Nietzsche II, p.227
the incipient beginning of value-thinking grounded in this conception of value. He claims that the interpretation of Being as idea (an interpretation which he stresses is not foisted onto Being from outside, but arises from the very nature of Being itself) "brings with it a relation to the proto-typical, the exemplary, the ought. As Being itself becomes fixed as idea, it strives to make good the resultant degradation of Being. But by now this is possible only if something is set above Being, something that Being never is but always ought to be". Thus, for Heidegger, it is precisely with the beginning of metaphysics that the "ought" comes to be set over against the "is". It then seems reasonable to conclude that his path back into the ground of metaphysics, thus to get-over metaphysics and to prepare the ground for an overcoming of nihilism, will lead outside the region of tension between the "ought" and the "is". This in turn suggests that Heidegger, unbeknown to himself, is following the same path already traversed by Nietzsche in his attempt to free himself from nihilism, a positivistic path which demands complete allegiance to the world of temporality and finitude, where the "ought" dissolves into the "is".

That this is indeed the direction in which Heidegger is headed is supported by the following passage, where he presents in a few lines his account of "... what really happens in the history of the humanity moulded in the West". This is that "man thinks in terms of the fact that the essence of truth is the correctness of the representing of all beings according to 'ideas' and esteems everything real according to 'values'. The

decisive point is not which ideas and which values are set, but that the real is expounded according to 'ideas' at all, that the 'world' is weighed according to 'values' at all."¹ A call for allegiance to the world is clearly present here. We are also reminded of the sentence from Nietzsche which says: "The total value of the world cannot be evaluated".² Heidegger claims that "this basic principle of Nietzsche's metaphysics doesn't say that human capacities are unable to discover the total value of the world, which exists nonetheless, though hidden".³ But I want to claim that this is exactly what Nietzsche does say: that when he writes, "becoming ... has no value at all",⁴ he means that its value is such that it cannot be approached by human evaluation: "one must reach out and try to grasp this astonishing fineness, that the value of life cannot be estimated".⁵ Heidegger argues that, in making such claims, Nietzsche is clearing the ground to enable human valuation (evaluation) to be seen, and to see itself, as the source of all value. My argument is rather that Nietzsche wishes to de-humanise the notion of value, and that he would be in complete agreement with Heidegger that "the decisive point is not which ideas and which values are set, but that the real is expounded according to 'ideas' at all, that the world is weighed according to 'values' at all".

Heidegger obscures from himself this relation between his own and Nietzsche's thought because he misinterprets Nietzsche: his interpretation takes as a basic assumption the existence of a systematic unity in Nietzsche's thought which, I have

²The Will to Power, Bk.III, Sec.II, para.708
³"Nietzsche's Metaphysics", Nietzsche II, p.283
⁴The Will to Power, Bk.III, Sec.II, para.708
⁵Twilight of the Idols, trans.cit."The Problem of Socrates", Sec.2.
argued, is simply not there. Heidegger's view of Nietzsche's thought is resultantly extremely narrow, in fact blinkered. It is blind to the deep anti-humanistic strand which runs through Nietzsche.

A question which now arises is whether the criticisms brought against Nietzsche's anti-humanism¹ (I do not want to deny that there are also deep humanistic currents in Nietzsche) can also be levelled against the later Heidegger's non-humanistic conception of man. But before this question can be answered, we need to examine in detail this conception. The following chapter provides such an examination.

¹ see above, pp.57,58
CHAPTER THREE

EK-SISTENCE
Heidegger nowhere in his later writings presents anything resembling the detailed analyses of the nature of man which form the bulk of Being and Time. What I will therefore attempt to do in this chapter is to draw together various of the remarks which Heidegger makes concerning man in his later work, and in this way to construct a picture of his later view of the nature of man.

We have already seen Heidegger's claim that the conception of man as animal rationale, which he sees as the fundamentally humanistic conception of man, "... does not set the humanitas of man high enough". Heidegger admits that such a view of man is "... not declared wrong, nor rejected", but he questions whether the method of thought which underlies this determination - this method being location of man in the genus animal, whereby he is thought of first as a living being among others, followed by the picking out of man through the bestowal on him of a distinctive characteristic, this being rationalitas - is adequate to grasp the uniqueness of man. Heidegger asks: "are we on the right track to reach the essence of man, if, and as long as, we delimit man as a living being, amongst others...?" He answers negatively, for he argues, by this approach "... man remains cast off in the essential realm of animalitas, even when one does not put him on the same level as the animal, but attributes a specific difference to him. In principle one always thinks of the homo animalis, even when one puts anima as anima.

1. see above p.72
3. ibid. p.277 (Wegmarken, p.154)
sive mens and later as subject, as person, as spirit. To put it so is the way of metaphysics. But by this the essence of man is too lightly considered and is not thought of in the light of its source.¹

Even Christian thought, Heidegger implicitly claims, operates with a metaphysical, and thus in his terms a humanistic, conception of man - of man as an animal organism "... equipped with an immortal soul".² But for Heidegger, even the character of the possession of an immortal soul does not grasp what is truly unique in man, for we have seen his claim that "... the highest humanistic determinations of the essence of man do not yet come to know the authentic dignity of man".³

We find now that it is by means of the notion of ek-sistence (Ek-sistenz)⁴ that Heidegger presents a characterisation of what he sees as this "authentic dignity".

To begin with, Heidegger stresses that man's "authentic dignity" does not lie "... in the fact that he is as the 'subject' of beings, their substance, so that as the despot of Being he may let the character of beings dissolve into an 'objectivity' that is much too loudly praised". He continues:⁵

Man is rather "cast" ["geworfen"] by Being itself into the truth of Being, in order that he, ek-sisting thus, may guard the truth of Being; in order that in the light of Being, beings as beings may appear as what they are.

¹ ibid. (Wegmarken, p.155)
² ibid. p.778 (Wegmarken, p.156)
³ ibid. p.281 (Wegmarken, p.161)
⁴ This is also translated as "ex-sistence" (Lohner, "Letter on Humanism") and "ec-sistence" (Versenyi, op.cit. p.127). I am following the translation used by William Richardson, Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p.699.
⁵ ibid. (Wegmarken, pp.151,162)
For Heidegger, man, as ek-sistent, is "... a place — namely, the location of the truth of Being". But, Heidegger insists, man's ek-sistence "... derives from Being itself, insofar as Being raises man as the ek-sisting one for the guardianship of the truth of Being".

Heidegger's thought here becomes clearer if we look at his later 'elucidation' of the sentence from Being and Time which runs: "... nur solange Dasein ist ... 'gibt es' Sein". This is translated in Being and Time as: "... only as long as Dasein is ... 'is there' Being". But, in his later discussion of this sentence, Heidegger claims that the "es gibt" must be understood literally, as "it gives". He says that the sentence means that Being, whose essential nature is to "give itself" — "the 'gives' names ... the essence of Being, the giving itself and the imparting of its truth" — requires a place wherein such "giving" is accepted, is received. For Heidegger, man's distinctiveness consists in the fact that he affords Being this place.

This account of man's distinctiveness which we find in the later Heidegger can be traced back to two distinct sources — the thought of Heraclitus and Parmenides, as interpreted by Heidegger, and the thought of the medieval German mystic, Meister Eckhart.

3. H.212.
For Heidegger, the fundamental of pre-Socratic thought is the conception and experience of Being as *physis*. Being so conceived, Heidegger tells us, means "to stand in the light, to appear, to enter into unconcealment".\(^1\) Heidegger writes of the "entry into unconcealment" that "where this happens, i.e. where Being prevails, apprehension [Vernehmung] prevails and happens with it; the two belong together".\(^2\)

The thought here is clear. Being, *physis*, is appearing, entering into unconcealment, coming to stand in openness. But there is appearing, openness, only if there is apprehension, a taking-in of what appears. So for there to be appearing, there must be a 'looking' which 'sees' that which appears. Hence Heidegger's claim that "where Being prevails, apprehension prevails and happens with it".

Heidegger also claims that, within early Greek thought, the essence of man is thought in terms of the relation between Being (*physis*) and apprehension.\(^3\) He writes that, certainly for Parmenides, "... man's being is determined by the essential belonging-together of Being and apprehension".\(^4\) Taking his cue from his reading of Heraclitus and Parmenides, Heidegger writes:\(^5\)

The question of who man is is closely bound up with the question of the essence of Being. But the definition of the essence of man required here cannot be the product of an arbitrary anthropology that considers man in basically the same way as zoology considers animals. Here the direction and scope of the question of being-human are

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2. ibid.
3. Vernehmung is Heidegger's translation of the Greek "noein", which is normally translated as *Denken* (thinking).
4. ibid. p.140 (EM, p.107)
5. ibid. pp.204,205 (EM, p.156). The anthropology Heidegger here refers to is philosophical anthropology, the attempt to answer the Kantian question "what is man?" - it bears little relation to anthropology as we, in English speaking countries, understand this.
determined solely through the question of Being. In accordance with the hidden question of the beginning, man should be understood, within the question of Being, as the site which Being requires in order to disclose itself.

Clearly we have here a pre-figurement of the later Heidegger's characterisation of man as ex-sistent.

The attempt to relate Heidegger's later thought to that of Meister Eckhart is not an arbitrary undertaking. Heidegger himself refers respectfully to the German mystic, calling him at one place "this master of thinking..."\(^1\) And in his Habilitation dissertation Heidegger expresses the intention of writing a work relating Eckhartian mysticism to the metaphysics of the problem of truth.\(^2\) This work has not appeared, but this fact need not lead us to conclude that the early interest shown by Heidegger in Eckhart did not continue, perhaps even deepen.

Now while there is no explicit mention made by Heidegger of any indebtedness to Eckhart in his thought concerning man, nonetheless we find striking parallels between the two thinkers in this regard. These have been clearly brought out by a number of writers, central among whom is John Caputo.\(^3\)

Caputo points out that, for Eckhart, the essence of the human being, "the ground of the soul", is conceived as "... a 'place' among creatures into which God may come, a place for God's advent into the world".\(^4\) This advent of God into the world, through the souls of individual human beings, is called by

Eckhart "the birth of the Son". And, Caputo writes, speaking for Eckhart: "the divine Father is essentially a process of giving birth, the divine Son essentially a process of being born. The being of each is their relationship to one another". 1

Further: 2

While the birth of the Son in the soul is the work of God, it cannot be accomplished without the soul's assistance. So necessary is the soul's participation in this process ... that Eckhart does not hesitate to say that the soul "cobeares" (mitgebiert) the Son, that it "collaborates" (mitwirkt) with God. There is only one work, which the Father initiates and with which the soul cooperates.

Caputo quite rightly points out that the reciprocity outlined by Eckhart between God and the soul is analogous to the relation between Being and man presented by Heidegger in his later thought. Further, Caputo suggests, Eckhart's God and Heidegger's Being are akin, for "each is a process of rising up out of an inner recess into manifestness (self-emergence)". 3 He sees that Heidegger's characterisation of physis as self-emerging, enduring power (aufgehend-verweilend-Walten 4) is "... very close to Eckhart's talk of the 'life' of God as the process of 'welling up' within Himself and then overflowing first into other Persons of the Trinity and finally into creation itself". 5

Now we find Caputo arguing that Eckhart pulls back from advocating the (heretical) view that the soul is "... a necessary complement, an indispensable medium, in which the divine life is completed and fulfilled". 6 For Eckhart, Caputo

2. ibid. pp.490,491.
4. Einführung in die Metaphysik, pp.11,12
5. "Heidegger and Eckhart", Pt.II, p.68
claims, "... the divine life is a self-contained and self-sufficient process".¹ But he then concedes that "whatever Eckhart's own intentions may have been, his expressions have fathered a long tradition of the divine 'need' of man in the German tradition".² Caputo then makes the interesting point that, when this notion of God's 'need' of man is translated into secular, i.e. philosophical language, we are led immediately to think of nineteenth century German idealism, with its view of man as the 'place' where the Absolute comes to itself. This suggests a definite affinity between Heidegger's later thought and German idealistic thought — Rosen sees this and writes of what he calls "... a continuing Hegelian resonance"³ in Heidegger's thought. But any attempt to pursue this point would take us too far afield. Having demonstrated the close relation between Heidegger's later thought about man and the thought of Meister Eckhart, we need now to return to what we have claimed is the other source of the later Heidegger's conception of man, the thought of Heraclitus and Parmenides.

Heidegger claims to find in Fragment 3 of Parmenides⁴ expression of an essential belonging-together (Zusammengehörigkeit) of Being and man, through which the distinctiveness of man is made clear. (Heidegger uses this emphasis to show that the relation of Being and man is that which makes each to be what

¹ ibid.
² ibid.
³ op.cit. pp.127, 128
⁴ Heidegger designates this as Fragment 5. It says: "to gar auto noein estin te kai einai". It is variously translated as: "for it is the same thing to think and to be", (Freeman) and "that which it is possible to think is identical with that which can Be" (Zeller and Burnett). See Kathleen Freeman, Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers, (Oxford, Blackwell, 1948) p.42.
it is, i.e. that Being and man are only what they are in relation.

For Heidegger, the belonging-together of Being and man is not to be thought of as a co-ordination (Zuordnung), i.e. a relation, the poles of which are what they are independent of the relation). This distinctiveness, Heidegger claims, lies in the fact that man, "... as a being who thinks, is open to Being, face to face with Being; thus man remains referred to Being and answers to it. Man is essentially [eigentlich] this relationship of responding..."¹

Thus, says Heidegger, man is appropriated (ubereignet - assigned to) to Being. But Heidegger stresses that this appropriation moves also in the opposite direction; for Being, thought "... according to its original meaning, as presence ... is present and abides only as it concerns man through the claim [Anspruch] it makes on him".² Heidegger continues:³

For it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence. Such becoming present needs the openness of a clearing, and by this need remains appropriated to human being.

But Heidegger reiterates, "this does not at all mean that Being is posited first and only by man", but rather that "man and Being are appropriated to each other. They belong to each other".⁴

For Heidegger, man and Being come into their own through being delivered over to each other in what he comes to call the "event of appropriation" (Ereignis). Of this term Stambaugh writes:⁵

The event of appropriation (Ereignis) is a word belonging to common language and means "event". But Heidegger's use

². ibid. (ID, p.23)
³. ibid. (my underlining)
⁴. ibid. pp.31,32 (ID, p.23)
⁵. The End of Philosophy, p.14, note.1.
of it is more (1) "abstract" in the sense of being infinitely removed from everyday events and yet of being that which is so close to us that we cannot see it, and (2) "concrete" in its use of the very roots of that word: er-si-gen (eigen = own, thus to come into one's own, to come to where one belongs) and er-augen (auge = eye. This is the real etymological root of er-si-gen), thus to catch sight of, to see with the mind's eye, to see face-to-face.

The etymological considerations to which Stambaugh here points lead us to think that in the notion of the event of appropriation (Ereignis) Heidegger has moved right away from the conception of authenticity (Eigentlichkeit), certainly as this functions in Being and Time. For in the event of appropriation, where for the later Heidegger man comes into his own, i.e. where he becomes what he is, we have quite the opposite of the self-possession, the mineness, which are central to the early notion of authenticity. (Self-possession does not refer to one's being master of, in possession of, a thing-like ego, but rather concerns the way one projects oneself upon one's choices - it concerns whether one recognises the possible nature of the possibilities which confront one, or whether one considers these possibilities more as covert actualities which have not yet been 'reached'.) Indeed, in the "Letter on Humanism" Heidegger writes, concerning the terms "authenticity" and "inauthenticity" as these are used in Being and Time, that they signify "... the 'ecstatic' relation of man's essence to the truth of Being". He continues: "... this relation ... does not derive from ek-sistence, but the essence of ek-sistence derives existential-ecstatically from the essence of the truth of Being".  

Leaving aside the question concerning the status of this as interpretation of the thought of *Being and Time*, we can see here clearly that, for the later Heidegger, authenticity/inauthenticity does not concern man's self-relation, his self-possession; in fact, we might say that it doesn't concern man at all, for it refers to the openness of man for the truth of Being, an openness which stems in the final instance not from man but from the truth of Being itself. Versenyi writes that, according to Heidegger's later notion of authenticity, "... authentic existence is one in which man fulfills his essence by answering the call of Being. Inauthentic existence is the failure to become essential, but even this is not really man's failure, just as authenticity is not really man's achievement. It is Being that grants or fails to grant itself authentically." The significance of this point will be discussed in the following chapter; what can tentatively be said now is that ek-sistence can be more properly characterised in terms of appropriateness, i.e. as corresponding to the event of appropriation, than authenticity. This suggests that there is a fundamental difference between the Heideggerian notions of existence and ek-sistence, since the former notion is intimately bound to the concept of authenticity. We will now examine this difference.

In his "Letter on Humanism" Heidegger is at great pains to show that the existentialist interpretation of the concept of existence elaborated in *Being and Time* is mistaken. The main

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1. A number of authors claim that Heidegger's own early thought suffers at the hands of his hermeneutical method. See Versenyi, op.cit. pp.126-131 and Bernd Magnus, Heidegger's Metahistory of Philosophy, esp. p.86; also Karl Löwith, Heidegger: Denker in dürftiger Zeit. (Frankfurt am Main, S. Fischer Verlag, 1953), pp.21,22.
thrust of his argument is that the notion of existence which functions there bears no relation to the traditional concept of existentia, which he takes to mean that-ness, i.e. actuality, in contrast to essentia, what-ness, possibility. (Essentia is linked to possibility because it stands apart from any actual instantiation.)

Referring to Sartre's renowned phrase, "existence precedes essence", Heidegger writes: 1

Sartre's key phrase on the superiority of existentia over essentia undoubtedly justifies the name "existentialism" as a suitable title for this philosophy. But the key phrase of "existentialism" has not the least thing in common with the same phrase in Being and Time.

This passage gives rise to the following questions: firstly, to what extent is Heidegger justified in his claim that the Sartrean concept of existence is identical with the traditional concept of existentia? Secondly, to what extent is Heidegger justified in drawing the distinction he does between the notion of existence presented in Being and Time and the Sartrean notion, most clearly articulated in Being and Nothingness?

We begin with the first of these questions. Heidegger writes in the "Letter on Humanism" that "existentia (existence) means ... actualitas, actuality in contrast to mere possibility as idea ... Existentia remains the name for the actualization of a being, as an instance of its idea". 2 Now, while I admit that the accounts of human existence which appear in existentialist philosophies cannot be reduced to the idea of actuality over against possibility, certainly not in the way just characterised by Heidegger, nonetheless I would argue that even their most

2. ibid. p.279 (Wegmarken, p.158)
sophisticated conceptions of human existence - for instance Kierkegaard's account of existence as the interpenetration of the finite and the infinite - find their origin and impetus in the notion of bare actuality, which is taken to be the first, and an irreducible, given of human existence. This view is at the bottom of Kierkegaard's claim that thought thinks away from existence, not towards it. Also Sartre's phrase "existence precedes essence" says in part that the most basic thing that can be said about, or can be experienced by, any particular human being, is that he/she exists, i.e. is actual, as against being a mere idea in the mind of God, or in the thought of a speculative philosopher.

So thus far, we can accept Heidegger's identification of the existentialist notion of existence and the traditional notion of existentia. But matters cannot rest here. For it is a central recognition of existentialist thought that human existence, i.e. human actuality, shows itself to the individual human subject as possibility - 'that I am' shows itself to me as 'that I have to be'. So for the existentialist the existing subject stands out from, i.e. transcends, his own actuality as an item in the spatio-temporal world, and thus can take a stand towards himself. So we see that the akin notions of possibility and transcendence are central to the existentialist conception of human existence, and it is the centrality of these notions which serves to necessitate their drawing a radical distinction between the existence of human beings and the actuality of all that is actual but that is not human. To this extent the existentialist conception of existence stands apart from the traditional notion of existentia. This means that the distinction Heidegger draws between the
conception of existence operative in *Being and Time* and the traditional concept of *existentia* does not in itself serve to show that the former conception is not a thoroughly existentialist one.

So the second question we put above remains unanswered. But an examination of *Being and Time* shows that existence as conceived there shares many of those features contained in the existentialist conception of existence. (I do not mean to suggest that there is but one conception of human existence operative in existentialist philosophy: such a view would be palpably false. But I think nonetheless that the accounts of human existence given by various existentialist philosophers have sufficient common ground for it to be meaningful to talk of an existentialist conception of human existence. The notions of possibility, transcendence, choice, becoming, responsibility, and freedom (conceived as freedom of the will), play a key role in all existentialist conceptions of human existence.)

We find that Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, places a definite emphasis on the notions of possibility and transcendence. He writes that "in determining itself as a being, Dasein always does so in the light of a possibility which it is itself and which, in its very Being, it somehow understands".  

1. H.43. See also H.285. "Dasein is its basis existently - that is, in such a manner that it understands itself in terms of possibilities".

2. H.192.
The essence of Dasein lies in its existence\(^1\) means: \(^2\)

that the "what" (essentia) of Dasein must be understood
on the basis of its "that": on the basis of its disclosure
to itself that it is and has to be ... Dasein is
essentially a possibility to itself ... a being to which
its own modes of Being are revealed as a demand rather
than a fact ... Dasein ... is always already related to
itself as something to be achieved, something at stake.
Dasein is for and through itself what it has to be.

Clearly on this interpretation of the sentence from Being and
Time (with which I am in agreement), this sentence reads as an
unequivocal statement of the central theme of the existentialist
conception of human existence. But now we need to look at how
Heidegger himself clarifies (re-interprets) the meaning of this
sentence in the "Letter on Humanism". He claims here that the
sentence says: \(^3\)

man is essentially such that he is "here" (Da) i.e.
within the clearing of Being. This "Being" of the here,
and only this, has the basic trait of ek-sistence: i.e.
it stands outside itself within the truth of Being.

This passage leads us immediately to ask; what is the
significance of Heidegger's use of the hyphenated form of the
word "ek-sistence" (Ek-sistenz)? To my knowledge this usage
first appears in the "On the Essence of Truth" essay - certainly
it does not appear in Being and Time. (This fact may be taken as
circumstantial support for the opinion that, in the "Letter on
Humanism", Heidegger is indeed re-interpreting the thought of
Being and Time.) Clearly by hyphenating "ek-sistence", Heidegger
wants to draw attention to its etymological roots - the Greek
"ek-" (Latin "ex-") meaning "out" or "outside", and "istemi"
(Latin "sistere"), meaning "to place" or "to stand". "Ek-sistence"
understood in the light of this thus means "to stand out". \(^4\)

\(^1\) H.42.
\(^2\) Versenyi, op.cit. pp.9,10. See H.284.
\(^3\) trans.cit. p.278 (Wegmarken, p.157)
\(^4\) The Greek work "ekstasis" has a similar root-meaning, as is
noted by Macquarrie and Robinson, H.329, Note.2.
But now the question arises: is not Heidegger's rendering of "existence" as "ek-sistence" quite consonant with, indeed a precise expression of, the existentialist conception of human existence, with the latter's emphasis on possibility and transcendence?

We could say that for the existentialist man ek-sists in that he stands out both from his world - he may himself become the object of his own attention and reflection; as a conscious being he can step back outside the causal order which holds sway in the natural world - and from himself - he is never complete, but is always becoming; his Being is characterised by a not or a lack which, for any particular person, is only 'filled in' when he is no longer; one's own actuality shows itself to one as a possibility. We can see that the notion of man as ek-sistent fits all this perfectly.

But what has so far been said has not taken into account a vital point, a point not brought out by the hyphenating of "ek-sistence". This is that, for Heidegger, ek-sistence is not to be conceived simply as a standing-out, as a going-beyond-oneself, as transcendence.1 For Heidegger, man ek-sists in that he stands-out-in the truth (clearing) of Being.2 He writes that "the standing in the clearing of Being I call the ek-sistence of man",3 and then: "man is in his essence (...) that being whose Being as ek-sistence consists of dwelling in the nearness of

Further "ek-sistence' is ... the ek-static dwelling in the nearness of Being.2

Ek-sistence, so thought of as a standing-out-in, differs fundamentally, certainly from atheistic existentialist accounts of existence. We might say that, for the existentialist, man ek-sists in that he stands-out-in nothingness; and the later Heidegger might to some extent agree with this formulation. But, for Heidegger, this nothingness would not be "empty nothingness" (das nichtige Nichts), a 'gap' which supposedly separates the conscious subject from its objects, or the act of choice from the situation in which the choice is made, but rather the "veil of Being", that in terms of which all beings are other and against the back-drop of which they stand fully unconcealed.3 The transcendence embedded in the existentialist conception of existence is seen to make possible man's self-relation - it is only because he can go beyond himself that man can take a stand towards himself. But the later Heidegger's notion of ek-sistence, and its accompanying notion of transcendence, are not taken to point to man's self-relation, but rather to man's belonging to that which, though more original than he, needs him so that it can be itself. Of the ek-static character of ek-sistence, Versenyi writes that it is:4

repeatedly stressed by Heidegger in an effort to make clear that in ek-sistence man is beside and beyond himself, beyond the subjectivity of the self-certain subject, exposed - ... - into the disclosure of Being, which he did not create but into which he has been summoned. Man ... is possessed by Being for its disclosure.

4. op.cit. p.127.
But perhaps the most striking demonstration of the difference between the existentialist conception of existence which we find in Being and Time, and the later notion of ek-sistence, is given by a comparison of the respective conceptions of thrownness (Geworfenheit) which Heidegger elaborates - this notion being central to both existence and ek-sistence.

The term "thrownness", which in Being and Time expresses the fact that any particular Dasein always finds itself already within a world in which it is faced with a certain restricted range of possibilities - that Dasein cannot go back behind its own beginning and reconstitute itself 'from the ground up' - in the "Letter on Humanism" refers to the fact that Dasein (man) is in the cast, or throw (Wurf) of Being. Here we have, I believe, an instance of Heidegger radically re-interpreting the thought of Being and Time. In this work, thrownness carries with it the strong suggestion that, while ineluctably in the world, Dasein does not truly belong in the world. The picture conveyed is that Dasein has been thrown into the world from outside, though the notion of an outside to the world is quite empty. Admittedly Heidegger's conception of Being-in-the-world denies that Dasein is, as an already fully constituted being, simply put into the world: however I will argue below that Heidegger, in Being and Time, does not think through the full implications of his notion of Being-in-the-world.

Now when we turn to the notion of thrownness as explicated in the "Letter on Humanism", we find that it carries markedly different implications (and conveys a very different mood, a not insignificant point given the emphasis Heidegger gives in

1. "Dasein" is a term which virtually disappears from Heidegger's later writings: he talks simply of man (der Mensch) or, increasingly, of mortals (die Sterblichen).
Being and Time to the disclosive power of moods\textsuperscript{1}). Here it points to an essential belonging-relation between man and Being. Man, in the cast of Being, is not cast off to drift alone; he is not a castaway. He remains under the guardianship of Being. The picture conveyed is not one of man being violently thrown into Being, but rather one of man being created as an expression of Being, as the unique site wherein Being can be itself.

We have already seen in passing that it is in terms of the notion of thrownness that Heidegger explicates, in Being and Time, his conception of Dasein's guilt.\textsuperscript{2} Here Heidegger is concerned to uncover, in the Being of Dasein, the conditions for the possibility of those experiences in which Dasein feels itself to be guilty or to be without guilt, to owe something or to be without debt. (We should note that the German word for "guilt", "Schuld", can also mean "debt"; Heidegger makes use of these differences in meaning.) He claims that "... Being-guilty does not first result from an indebtedness ... on the contrary, indebtedness becomes possible only 'on the basis' of a primordial Being-guilty".\textsuperscript{3} He claims to find this "primordial Being-guilty" in Dasein's thrownness, in the fact that "it has been brought into its 'there', but not of its own accord", in the fact that it must be "the basis of its potentiality-for-Being, although it has not laid the basis itself". He claims that "this 'not' belongs to the existential meaning of thrownness".\textsuperscript{4}

Thus, for the Heidegger of Being and Time, Dasein is guilty (with a guilt which precedes and makes possible any particular instance of guilt due to a wrongful act) because it must be the

\textsuperscript{1} See H.134,135.
\textsuperscript{2} See above, p.22
\textsuperscript{3} H.284. All in italics in original.
\textsuperscript{4} H.284.
basis for itself, but, as an existing being, i.e. as a being that has been thrown, it is not and never can be such a basis. Dasein is always in a state of debt, of owing something which it can never repay, this something being its own Being.

Heidegger’s discussion of guilt in Being and Time takes place in the context of a broader discussion concerning the call of conscience, wherein, Heidegger claims, Dasein’s fundamental guilt is disclosed, even when one has a ‘clear’ conscience, which assures one that one is without guilt. For Heidegger, the call of conscience is a call from "the uncanniness of thrown individualisation" to "the uncanniness of thrown individualisation" the call of conscience is such that "the 'whence' of the calling is the 'whither' to which we are called back".¹ And Heidegger implicitly relates Dasein’s guilt with the mood of uncanniness, for he writes that "in uncanniness Dasein stands together with itself primordially. Uncanniness brings this being face-to-face with its undisguised nullity, which belongs to the possibility of its ownmost potentiality-for-Being".² It is this nullity at the base of Dasein which, for Heidegger, constitutes its primordial guilt.

Given the importance Heidegger attaches to moods as disclosive ways of Being, it may be worth our while to examine more closely the mood of uncanniness. Heidegger connects this mood intimately with what he terms in Being and Time Dasein’s most basic state-of-mind, anxiety. He writes that "in anxiety, one feels 'uncanny'".³ The German word which is translated as "uncanniness" is "Unheimlichkeit", literally "unhomelike". Heidegger makes explicit use of this literal meaning. He writes that "... here 'uncanniness' also means 'not-being-at-home'". He then contrasts

1. H.280
2. H.287
3. H.188
such not-at-homeness with the "falling, tranquillised, everydayness" which typifies inauthentic Dasein. He talks of "... the everyday publicness of the 'they', which brings tranquillised self-assurance - "Being-at-home", with all its obviousness - into the average everydayness of Dasein". Then comes a passage which succinctly states Heidegger's view, in *Being and Time*, of the relation between Dasein and world. This says:

that kind of Being-in-the-world which is tranquillized and familiar is a mode of Dasein's uncanniness, not the reverse. From an existential-ontological point of view, the "not-at-home" must be conceived as the more primordial phenomenon.

So we see that, for the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, Dasein is guilty, and that this guilt is an expression of Dasein's fundamental not-at-homeness in the world. This clearly underlies Heidegger's emphasis there on the burdensome character of existence.

What we have here uncovered is the metaphysical framework of the philosophy of existence expounded in *Being and Time* - and it can be easily seen that it contains clear signs of that view of metaphysical alienation which, we have suggested, forms the seed-bed for much existentialist philosophy. This metaphysical framework of the thought of *Being and Time* can be brought more sharply into relief by comparing it with an avowedly metaphysical system of thought with which it shares marked similarities, this being the Gnosticism of the early centuries of the Christian era. Here I will draw chiefly on the work of Hans Jonas. I will begin with a brief account of what Jonas takes to be the principal

1. H.188
2. H.189
3. See H.134,284
4. See above, pp.41,42
features of Gnostic belief.

Jonas tells us that the first point to be emphasised in any study of Gnosticism is "... the radically dualistic mood which underlies the gnostic attitude as a whole and unifies its widely diversified, more or less systematic expressions". This dualism has two arms - a dualism of man and world, and a dualism of world and God. Within gnostic belief, the world is conceived of as a barrier separating man from God: it is seen as an order, as law-governed, but governed by a law foreign to human self-hood; it is "... an order with vengeance, alien to man's aspirations". And, Jonas writes, for the gnostic, "since not the true God can be the creator of that to which self-hood feels so utterly a stranger", then the world is conceived as the creation of a "lowly demiurge", a "perversion of the divine", which has retained of the nature of divinity "... only the power to act, but to act blindly, without knowledge and benevolence".

For the gnostic, Jonas writes, "the world ... is the product, even the embodiment of the negative of knowledge. What it reveals is unenlightened and therefore malignant force, proceeding from the spirit of self-assertive power, from the will to rule and coerce. The mindlessness of this will is the spirit of the world, which bears no relation to understanding and love". To the gnostic, then, "... primary would be the feeling of an absolute rift

2. Ibid. p.219
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
between man and that in which he finds himself lodged - the world". The knowledge of self and God which held out hope to the Gnostic of salvation from his servitude did not "... aim at integration into the cosmic whole and at compliance with its laws", for "the aspiration of the gnostic individual was not to 'act a part' in this whole, but - in existentential parlance - to 'exist authentically'". Within Gnostic thought the self (pneuma), "the indefinable spiritual core of existence, the foreign spark", was seen as distinct from both the body and the psyche or soul - the self then was held to be radically acosmic, its "hidden nature" thought to "... reveal(s) itself only in the negative experience of otherness, of non-identification and of protested indefinable freedom". But, it might now be asked, was not God held to provide substance, law for Gnostic freedom? In answer to this Jonas points to the fact that the Gnostic God was seen to be radically transcendent, and as such "... [not standing] in any positive relation to the sensible world...". For Jonas, "... this hidden

1. ibid. p.218. The following passage by another writer on Gnosticism is of interest here. Susan Taubes writes that "the spirit of antiquity rests in the simple conviction of an ultimate harmony of human and cosmic nature... The apriori of the Greek spirit, the conviction that man is at home in the cosmos, remained valid even for late antiquity when the social presuppositions of the harmony between man and the cosmos had vanished. The physicotheology of the Stoa reaffirmed this sense of harmony. A cosmic 'optimism' runs through all Stoic writings that all the disillusionment in the political sphere could not quench... The spirit of the Gnosis stands in extreme opposition to the cosmic 'optimism' of the Stoa. In all its variations and sects... one motif prevails: man is not 'at home' in the cosmos. The logos of the Gnosis is 'not of this world'". "The Gnostic Foundations of Heidegger's Nihilism", loc.cit. pp.159,160.

2. ibid. p.224
3. ibid. p.227
4. ibid. p.225
5. ibid.
God is a nihilistic conception: no nomos emanates from him, no law for nature and thus none for human action as a part of the natural order.\(^1\)

Now clearly much of this reminds us of modern existentialist thought - indeed the Gnostic emphasis on the acosmic nature of the pneuma, the heart of human subjectivity, can very plausibly be seen as a forerunner of the key role given to the will in existentialist thought. But Jonas claims that it is the notion of thrownness which provides the most striking relation between existentialist thought and Gnosticism. He writes of 'thrownness':\(^2\)

The term, as far as I can see, is originally gnostic. In Mandaean literature it is a standing phrase: life has been thrown into the world, light into darkness, the soul into the body. It expresses the original violence done to me in making me be where I am and what I am, the passivity of my choiceless emergence into an existing world which I did not make and whose law is not mine.

I think that we can see that this Gnostic notion of thrownness, as explicated by Jonas, is indeed strikingly similar to the notion of thrownness we find in Being and Time. Yet, as Jonas rightly points out, the force of this notion relies on the acceptance of a dualistic metaphysics, a metaphysics which Heidegger's thought supposedly rejects, or at least makes no use of. It is here, I want to suggest, that we can see that Heidegger has not really taken seriously his notion of Being-in-the-world, for the notion of thrownness smuggles in aspects of a thought which the emphasis on Being-in-the-world as an essential structure of Dasein's Being supposedly opposes. For, as Jonas points out, "what is the throw without the thrower, and without

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1. ibid.
2. ibid. p.229. Taubes also makes a point of the centrality of the notion of thrownness in Gnostic thought, and, like Jonas, connects this notion with that of violence. loc.cit. p.159.
a beyond whence it started?" If the notion of Being-in-the-world is taken really seriously, then it should be said that "... life - conscious, caring, knowing self - has been 'tossed up' by nature. If blindly, then the seeing is a product of the blind, the caring a product of the uncaring, a teleological nature begotten unteleologically".

Jonas suggests that the paradoxicality of the seeing being a product of the blind, the caring of the uncaring, lends support to the rejection of the notion of an indifferent nature or world. He takes up the Heideggerian designation from Being and Time of Dasein's Being as care and writes:

... the mere fact of there being such a supreme care, anywhere within the world, must also qualify the totality which harbours that fact, and even more so if "it" alone was the productive cause of that fact, by letting its subject physically arise in its midst.

The point Jonas is here making is in itself an extremely interesting and challenging one - and it is also of interest for our immediate purposes because, if we substitute "Being" for "nature", we find that Heidegger's later thought follows Jonas' suggestion. We have argued above that, for the later Heidegger, "thrownness" refers not to the original violent entry of man into

1. ibid. p.233.
2. ibid.
3. ibid. p.234. A similar thought underlies the following passage from Alan Watts: "this feeling of being lonely and very temporary visitors in the universe is in flat contradiction to everything known about man (and all other living organisms) in the sciences. We do not 'come into' this world; we come out of it, as leaves from a tree. As the ocean 'waves', the universe 'peoples'. Every individual is an expression of the whole realm of nature, a unique action of the total universe". The Book on the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are, (London, Abacus, 1973), pp.15,16.
4. I am not here suggesting that this is a substitution of identities. However, Heidegger's Being and Jonas' nature are similar in one decisive respect. This being that each is conceived as providing the context for human life/ek-sistence. For the later Heidegger, the world is the "clearing of Being". See the "Letter on Humanism", trans.cit. p.279 (Wegmarken, p.157).
Being, but rather points to man's ek-sistence as an expression of Being - man is in the throw, the cast of Being, he is "tossed up" by Being as that 'place' wherein it can fulfil its essential nature, which is to appear, to manifest itself. Man, as ek-sistent, takes this manifestation into his care.¹

The analysis of the notion of thrownness, as used by both the earlier and the later Heidegger, leading into a discussion of Gnosticism and its relation to modern existentialism, has aided us to show that there is a fundamental opposition between the metaphysics of existence and the metaphysics of ek-sistence - and that, within the latter, the rift between man and total reality which Jonas locates at the ground of nihilism, a rift which dominates the metaphysics of existence, is healed.

Jonas points out that, despite the marked similarities between modern existentialism and Gnosticism, there is nonetheless one cardinal difference. This is that, whereas "Gnostic man is thrown into an antagonistic, anti-divine, and therefore anti-human nature, modern man [is thrown] into an indifferent one".² Jonas continues: "only the latter case represents the absolute vacuum, the really bottomless pit... That nature does not care, one way or the other, is the true abyss".³ We can summarise this as follows: the world of the Gnostic is a malevolent world; the world of the existentialist is absurd. The metaphysics of existence, i.e. of the existential analyses of Being and Time, is a metaphysics of absurdity. It says that there is a fundamental rift between man and world; it says that only inauthentic existence conceives itself at home in the world, while denying that there is any other world in which man might find a home.

¹. See above, pp.119,120
². loc.cit. p.233
³. ibid.
It is the "not-at-home" which is the truly primordial phenomenon.\(^1\)

We find that the notion of homelessness is discussed at some length by Heidegger in his "Letter on Humanism", where he refers to his intention of "... thinking of the homelessness of modern man as seen from the essence of the history of Being".\(^2\)

Heidegger then adds that "the last one to experience this homelessness was Nietzsche. He was incapable of finding any other way out of metaphysics than by the reversal of metaphysics. This, however, is the height of Being lost".\(^3\)

The connection here drawn, without comment by Heidegger, between "the homelessness of modern man" and metaphysics is given grounding, within Heidegger's own thought, when he writes: "homelessness, so understood, lies in beings' abandonment of Being. It is a sign of the oblivion of Being".\(^4\) We can conclude from this that the homelessness of which Heidegger here speaks - and which he goes on to claim is the ground of key modern expressions of human alienation - is a concrete manifestation of the nihilism which he identifies with metaphysics. So, whereas in Being and Time homelessness is depicted as the existential state of Dasein (kept clearly in view by authentic Dasein, covered over and hidden, but not removed, by inauthentic Dasein), in the later work it is seen as an expression of nihilism. Perhaps we can take this as unwitting support from

\(^1\) See above, p.122
\(^3\) ibid. (Wegmarken, pp.168,169).
\(^4\) ibid.
\(^5\) See ibid. p.287 (Wegmarken, p.170)
Heidegger himself that the doctrine of authenticity presented in *Being and Time* is embodied within a nihilistic framework.

It seems then that there is some agreement between the characterisations of nihilism given by Jonas and Heidegger respectively, since the former's grounding of nihilism in "the disruption between man and total reality" clearly traces nihilism back to a metaphysical homelessness.

But now we need to ask: is there not a tension in Heidegger's claim that modern metaphysics, which he sees as a metaphysics of subjectivity, a form of humanism, is itself the source of "the homelessness of modern man"? For it is Heidegger's view that from within modern metaphysics, the world is seen as an expression of man, as informed by human consciousness - the world is the human world. But how can human beings be without a home in a human world?

Yet a brief reflection on Kant's thought shows that even the location of the conditions for the possibility of coherent experience in the human subject need not render familiar the world which forms the horizon of such experience. We see that, for Kant, the phenomenal world, though structured by human subjectivity comprises "... a countless multitude of worlds..." which "... annihilates ... my importance as an animal creature". For Kant it is not the world whose forms are located in the human subject to which man belongs, but the world of a moral order which embraces man, within which man, as a moral being, finds a determinate place. Indeed, as Laszlo Versenyi points out, it

is when "... man becomes the measure of all things" that "... [he] himself, as well as his whole world, becomes measure-less, aim-less, goal-less." Versenyi concludes that "man's experimentum mediatis - attempt to make himself the unconditional ground and centre of all - leaves man himself groundless and centreless.'

This suggests that a metaphysics of subjectivity and a metaphysics of absurdity are indeed not opposed, but essentially related. This relatedness is made clear by the atheistic existentialists, who accept and radicalise Kant's view of the contingency (a forerunner of absurdity) of human existence within the phenomenal world, but reject the idea of a noumenal world in which man as a moral being belongs. Certainly they take human subjectivity as the only point of departure for access to the world, but this does not in their eyes serve to render the world congenial to human aspiration.

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It must now be admitted that the characterisation we have given of Heidegger's notion of ek-sistence is rather schematic - we have said simply that man, as ek-sistent, is that 'place' which the truth of Being needs in order to reveal/conceal itself. I want now to suggest that we can find a more concretised account of human ek-sistence in the notion of dwelling (wohnen), a notion which plays an increasingly important role in Heidegger's later thought. But first we need to see whether an attempt to closely relate the notions of ek-sistence and dwelling - an enterprise for which Heidegger gives no explicit warrant - can be justified.

1. op.cit. p.73.
For Heidegger, "all that man is ... rests in his ek-sistence".1 And, similarly for Heidegger, all of the activities carried out by man, working, playing, thinking, listening to music ... are aspects of man's dwelling (understood verbally). Dwelling, says Heidegger, rather than being one among many of man's activities, designates the way man is, i.e. the way man ek-sists, on the earth.2

The connection we are here alluding to between ek-sistence and dwelling in Heidegger's thought is given support by the term which, Heidegger claims, most beautifully designates what is meant by "existence" in the context or an inquiry that is prompted by, and directed toward, the truth of Being - this term being "Inständigkeit"3, which is variously translated as "instancy",4 "instance",5 and "in-dwelling"6. The noun "Inständigkeit" is formed from the adjective "inständig", which means urgent, pressing (e.g. of a request). "Inständig" can also be used adverbially, as in the sentence: "Er bat mich inständig", (He implored/beseeched me). "Inständig" carries with it the suggestion of persistence, and Heidegger makes use of this in his designation of ek-sistence (existence) as "Inständigkeit". But Heidegger is also aware of the sleeping presence in "Inständigkeit" of the root "ständig", meaning fixed, permanent, established, and

3. "The way back into the Ground of Metaphysics", trans. cit. p.213, (Wegmarken, p.203). Heidegger's later characterization of ek-sistence often takes the form of an account of how the notion of existence developed in Being and Time is to be properly understood. This means that in his later writings Heidegger often uses the term "existence" when he might more consistently speak of "ek-sistence". The quoted sentence is a case in point.
4. see ibid.
5. William Richardson, Heidegger-Through Phenomenology to Thought, p.701.
6. John Anderson & E.Hans Freund, Discourse on Thinking, pp.81,82, 92.
of the relation of this root to "Stand", the most basic meaning of which is standing-position. "Inståndighet", understood in the light of this as "In-ständighet", now designates the fact that, for Heidegger, ex-sistence is a standing-out-in the truth of Being ("das Innestehen in der Offenheit des Seins")¹. And, further, "In-ständigkei t" leads us to think of a word which figures centrally in Heidegger's "Memorial Address" for the composer Conradin Kreutzer² — this is the word "Bodenståndighet". This word crystallizes what is expressed by the phrase "auf dem Boden stehen"; it is translated into English by the words "rootedness" or "autochthony".³ Heidegger claims in this address that "the rootedness, the autochthony of man is threatened today at its core!"⁴ Much of Heidegger's later thought can be seen as an attempt to answer the question which this recognition leads him to put, which asks: "even if the old rootedness is being lost in this [atomic] age, may not a new ground and foundation be granted to man, a foundation and ground out of which man's nature and all his works can flourish in a new way..."⁵

Heidegger's use of "Bodenståndighet" is symptomatic of the sensitivity to the world of nature which appears in his later writings, a sensitivity which is lacking in the thought, and in the mood, of being and Time.⁶ We find that the "Memorial Address"

¹. Wegmarken, p.203
². In Gelassenheit, pp.11-29, trans. in Anderson and Freund, Discourse on Thinking, pp.43-57
³. ibid. pp.48,49.
⁴. ibid. (Gelassenheit, p.18)
⁵. ibid. p.53 (Gelassenheit, p.23)
⁶. Here again the similarities between the thought of Being and Time and Gnosticism are apparent. Jonas writes that the "...existentialist depreciation of the concept of nature... has something in common with the Gnostic contempt for nature". And he is surely right when he writes that "no philosophy has ever been less concerned about nature than Existentialism, for which it has no dignity left". loc.cit. p.232. On this point, also see Taubes. loc.cit. pp.159,160.
in particular, but other of Heidegger's later writings as well\(^1\), convey a markedly agricultural atmosphere. John Anderson, in the Introduction to his translation of the "Memorial Address", writes that Heidegger here uses a language "... that is simple and has the flavour of the earth. He strives for simile and metaphor involving the soil and growth, and by this means he achieves a poetic tone ... phrases and words occurring in the larger context often evoke overtones of feeling associated with the land, with fields, and with what is the ground of things".\(^2\) But rather than simply achieving a poetic tone, as Anderson suggests, or perhaps in achieving this tone, Heidegger's language here serves to suggest that man belongs on the earth; that while standing out from the earth into a world, man is held up and supported by the earth. In another place Heidegger writes that it is possible for man, as against merely using the earth, "... to receive the blessing of the earth and to become at home in the law of this reception in order to shepherd the mystery of Being".\(^3\)

It is this aspect of Heidegger's thought which leads Adorno to link Heidegger to the Blut und Boden (Blubo) ideology of National Socialism, which emphasised the interdependence of one's life with one's native soil.\(^4\) While it is true that the word "Bodenständigkeit" does figure in some of Heidegger's quasi-

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1. For example the lectures "Building Dwelling Thinking", "... Poetically Man Dwells ...", and "The Thing", all translated by Albert Hofstadter in Poetry, Language, Thought.
2. Discourse on Thinking, p.14
political writings of 1933, Nonetheless his use of this word carries no undertones of concern with racial purity - the Blut aspect of Blut und Boden ideology is lacking. In his inaugural address as rector of Freiburg, Heidegger comes close to the language of Blut und Boden when he writes: "... the spiritual world of a people ... is the power which most deeply preserves the forces stemming from earth and blood as the power which most deeply moves and profoundly shakes our being". Karsten Harries points out that, while this is "embarrassingly close to the 'Blut und Boden' vocabulary of the Nazis", that nonetheless such language was not the prerogative of the Nazis alone at this time.

In answer to Adorno's charge I think that we can say that ideas of racial purity and racial superiority, if perhaps not far removed from the emphasis we find in Heidegger, are nonetheless not a necessary concomitant of such an emphasis.

Perhaps Adorno makes a more serious objection to Heidegger's adoption of the term "Bodenständigkeit", and his increasing use of agricultural imagery, when he (Adorno) claims that "in 1956 the stable professions, which are themselves a stage of social development, are still the norms for Heidegger. He praises them


2. Heidegger defends himself against charges of anti-Jewish behaviour when rector of Freiburg and after in the interview, given in 1966 but not published until after his death, in Der Spiegel, Nr.23, 1976.

3. Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität, (Breslau, W.G. Born. 1933) p.11. This passage is translated by Karsten Harries in "Heidegger as Political Thinker", loc.cit. p.655

4. loc.cit. p.655
in the name of a false eternity of agrarian conditions".1 Speaking specifically of Heidegger's (later) thought2, Adorno writes that "philosophy, which is ashamed of its name, needs the sixth-hand symbol of the farmer as proof of its primalness, as a way of acquiring some otherwise unavailable distinctiveness".3 Further, Adorno claims, the "... falsity of rootedness" becomes evident "... as soon as rootedness descends to something that has a concrete content".4 These are serious charges — they claim that Heidegger's later thought, through its use of agricultural imagery, is ascribing a primalness, a truth, to a particular way of life, which now seems all the more attractive because it is fast disappearing, and which was first made possible by certain economic, social, and political conditions which human societies have rightly rejected. But before we can assess these charges, we need to lay out that concrete content which, we have suggested, is to be found in Heidegger's notion of dwelling.

The fundamental character of dwelling, as conceived by Heidegger, is clearly expressed when he writes that "the way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans are on the earth, is ... dwelling. To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell".5 Heidegger also writes that "dwelling ... is the basic character of Being in keeping with

1. trans. cit. p.56
2. Adorno himself seems to see little or no difference between the earlier and the later stages of Heidegger's thought. I think this is a definite weakness in his appraisal of Heidegger.
3. ibid.
4. ibid. p.57
which mortals are". \(^1\) Etymological considerations play a key role in leading Heidegger to this position, and he makes further use of such considerations in giving a fuller account of the nature of dwelling. He writes: \(^2\)

But in what does the nature of dwelling consist? Let us listen once more to what language says to us. The Old Saxon "wuon", the Gothic "wunian", like the old word "bauen", mean to remain, to stay in a place. But the Gothic "wunian" says more distinctly how this remaining is experienced. "Wunian" means: to be at peace, to remain in peace. The word for peace, Friede, means the free, das Frye, and fry means: preserved from harm and danger, preserved from something, safe-guarded. To free really means to spare [Schonen]. The sparing itself consists not only in the fact that we do not harm the one whom we spare. Real sparing is something positive and takes place when we leave something beforehand in its own nature, when we return it specifically to its being, when we "free" it in the real sense of the word into a preserve of peace. To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving. It pervades dwelling in its whole range. That range reveals itself to us as soon as we reflect that human being rests in dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth.

This passage has much to tell us concerning the relation between Heidegger's later thought and the accounts of nihilism given in the first two chapters, and particularly in this regard the notions of freedom and temporality.

We suggested above\(^3\) that the account of freedom we find in the later Heidegger will give us an inside view of the non-humanistic conception of man which he elaborates, as well as an insight into some of the ramifications of this conception. To fully bring out the relevant points in Heidegger's later conception of freedom, we need to go back briefly to the essay "On the Essence of Truth".

1. ibid. p.160 (VA, p.161)
2. ibid. pp.148,149 (VA, p.149)
3. see page 84
Here we find Heidegger presenting an account of ek-sistence which binds this notion to a definite conception of freedom, which is in turn bound to the conception of truth as aletheia, unconcealedness. Indeed Heidegger writes here that "the essence of truth is freedom". He contends that one might think that such a view "... abandon(s) truth to the caprice of man ..." only if one holds to the obstinate view "... which contends that freedom is a property of man...". For Heidegger, "freedom is not... the random ability to do as we please, to go this way or that in our choice". But, he continues, "nor... is freedom a mere readiness to do something requisite and necessary...". "Over and above all this ('negative' and 'positive' freedom)....", Heidegger claims, "... freedom is participation in the revealment (Entbergung) of beings-as-such". The nature of this participation Heidegger terms letting-be (Seinlassen). He stresses that such letting-be is to be distinguished from modes of behaviour such as simply leaving something alone or undone, not concerning oneself with something, being indifferent to it. Letting-be, says Heidegger, is the very opposite of these, though it is equally removed from "... pursuing, conserving, cultivating and planning some actuality casually met with or sought after". Rather to let beings be means to allow beings to reveal themselves as what they are - if they are things of use, man lets them be by using them appropriately: if they do not call for use, man lets them be by refraining from making use of them. As Versenyi

1. trans.cit. p.330 (Wegmerken, p.81)
2. ibid. pp.331,332 (Wegmerken, p.82)
3. ibid. p.334 (Wegmerken, p.84)
4. ibid. p.333 (Wegmerken, p.83)
5. ibid. p.333 (Wegmerken, p.83)
writes, for Heidegger, "the authentic meaning of 'use' involves an appropriate employment suited to the nature of what is used".1

Clearly there is an intimate connection between the letting-be here characterised and the sparing and preserving (Schonen) discussed in "Building Dwelling Thinking". Both letting-be and sparing actively allow beings to be what they are. Further the account of freedom that Heidegger gives in both lectures is strikingly similar. Freedom is depicted not as a capacity of man to initiate different courses of action; rather, man is said to be free to the extent that he 'frees' beings, i.e. to the extent that he lets beings be what they are. Indeed Heidegger goes so far as to deny that freedom is something specifically human. He writes that "... man does not 'possess' freedom as a property, it is the contrary that is true: freedom, or ek-sistent revelatory Dasein, possesses man".2

It is clear that Heidegger is here presenting an account of freedom which is the antithesis of a doctrine of freedom of the will. But then the question arises: what relation does Heidegger's later conception of freedom bear to the traditional notion of freedom as rectitude, as holding oneself to what one knows to be right. Let us put this question more precisely and ask: what is the relation between letting-be and knowledge in Heidegger's later thought? On the one hand, we might say, letting-be must be grounded in knowledge, a knowledge of the natures of things into which man lets each thing return - surely it is only on the basis of knowledge that man can appropriately use things of use, and refrain from using things which do not call for use. Yet, on

1. op.cit. p.120
the other hand, Heidegger writes that true freedom is not "... a mere readiness to do something requisite and necessary..."\(^1\)

This carries the suggestion that freedom, understood as letting-be, is not grounded in knowledge, in terms of which it would be seen as a kind of necessity.\(^2\) Heidegger himself doesn't elaborate on the relation between knowledge and letting-be; in fact, especially in his later thought, we are confronted with an almost complete absence of any discussion of the problem of knowledge at all. Part of the reason for this is Heidegger's concern to place his thought outside what he sees as the epistemological bias of modern metaphysical thought, but it results in his not even giving recognition to the problem of distinguishing between knowledge and opinion, between true and false belief. We will examine the ramifications of this omission in the following chapter, and this will enable us to gain a clear idea of the nature of that freedom which, Heidegger claims, is not a possession or property of man, but which rather itself possesses man.\(^3\) The question we will there ask is: can such freedom, which is neither freedom of the will nor, it seems, freedom based on knowledge, be distinguished from slavery?

But let us now return to the long passage quoted some pages back from the "Building Dwelling Thinking" lecture. We find that the notion which dominates this passage is that of peace. Dwelling, Heidegger writes, is "to be at peace, to remain in peace". What then is the significance of this? Clearly Heidegger is here not referring to peace just in the sense of absence of strife, cessation of violence. Peace, we might suspect, like letting-be, like sparing, is "something positive". For Heidegger, man is at peace when he lets things be what they are, when he 'frees' things

\(^1\) ibid. p.334
\(^2\) See Iris Murdoch, op.cit. p.40, for a discussion of freedom as being, ideally, a kind of necessity.
\(^3\) See above, p.138
and thus is himself free. And this agrees with what is given to us in the mood of peace, when we feel that all things are according to their own natures, and are thus in their proper place. Do we not, when we feel at peace, feel that we truly belong where we are, in a world where everything equally belongs where it is? It may be that such a mood has an essentially religious dimension, for John Macquarrie writes that "to enjoy peace in the religious sense is to be at home in the world and to have sense of affinity and perhaps of confidence in the underlying reality of the world".¹ So, in presenting peace as the basic mood of dwelling, Heidegger wants to emphasize that human beings belong in the world - and we can surmise that the peace here talked of is something far different from the "tranquilized, familiarized everydayness" in terms of which inauthentic Dasein's "Being-at-home" is characterized in Being and Time.

It is also of some interest to note that the notion of peace figures prominently in, of all places, the discussion of anxiety in the "What is Metaphysics?" lecture. Heidegger here talks of anxiety, the mood in which he claims nothingness is manifested, being "... pervaded by a peculiar kind of peace",² and also writes: "in anxiety there is a retreat from something, though it is not so much a flight as a spell-bound peace".³ However, it should also be noted that it is in terms of violence, not peace, that Heidegger, in the later work An Introduction to Metaphysics, characterizes the relation of language, of thought, and therefore of man, to Being. Man is "... the violent one",⁴

². trans.cit. p.366 (Wegmarken, p.9)
³. ibid. p.369. (Wegmarken, p.11)
⁴. trans.cit. pp.150,154,161 (EM, pp.115,118,123)
language, the word, is "originally an act of violence that
discloses Being".1

But let us return to Heidegger's use of the notion of peace,
for there is a further point to be made concerning the 'peaceful'
nature of dwelling — this concerns temporality. I think it
can be said that the mood of peace, while it may contain elements
of hope and resignation, and thus relate to both the future and
the past, has as its essential dimension the present. This
point is indirectly supported by Heidegger's description of
dwelling, "being at peace", as "remaining, staying in a place";
absent from this is the ceaseless dynamic of time, the incessant
movement of future into past "without a present to dwell in",
which Jonas sees as being indicative of nihilism.2 Indeed in The
Principle of Ground we find Heidegger writing that "to rest, to
last, to endure, is ... the old meaning of the word 'sein' ['to
be']".3 Dwelling, as a sparing and preserving of things, shares
in the temporality of things, which are always in the present and
thus create an inhabitable present for human dwelling. Jonas
points out that the conception of things operative in Being and
Time makes it impossible for them to be seen as placing a hold on
the temporal dynamism of existence4 — but as we shall shortly
see, Heidegger presents a far different conception of the thing
in his later writings, in terms of which the thing can be seen
to provide such a hold.

1. ibid. p.172 (EM, p.131). One gets the uneasy feeling that
the prominence of the concepts of power and violence in this
book — written in 1935 but not published until 1953 — is
not without political significance.
2. See above, pp.14,15. See also in this regard, Otto Bollnow,
Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Neue
Geborgenheit (which bears the interesting sub-title "Das
Problem einer Überwindung des Existentialismus") are my own.
3. Der Satz vom Grund, (Pfullingen, Verlag Günther Neske,1957)
pp.207,208. The last section of this book, simply entitled "Der
Satz vom Grund", is translated by Keith Höller in Man and World,
VOL.7, 1974, pp.207-222.
4. See above, p.16.
So we can say that the fundamentally nihilistic conception of temporality, present in the thought of *Being and Time*, is absent from Heidegger's later thought. Its absence is in keeping with the disappearance of the early notions of authenticity (we have argued that this notion disappears completely from Heidegger's later thought) and freedom. The disappearance of all these notions suggests that the nihilism of *Being and Time* has been left behind. However we have found that the changed notion of freedom which Heidegger sketches gives cause for concern that he may have given up one nihilistic position for another. The last chapter will attempt to ascertain whether this concern is warranted.

But we have yet to investigate sufficiently the later Heidegger's notion of dwelling. To this we will now turn.

The fact that, for Heidegger, there is an appropriate place for human dwelling in the world, is evident in the notion he develops of the *fourfold* (das *Geviert*). He stresses that human dwelling is firmly placed on *the earth*, and he moves on from this to say:

"But "on the earth" already means "under the sky". Both of these also mean "remaining before the divinities" and include a "belonging to men's being with one another". By a primal oneness the four - earth and sky, divinities and mortals - belong together in one.

The oneness of the four of which Heidegger here speaks he calls the *fourfold*, and elsewhere he writes that "... the mirror-play of the simple onefold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, we call the world".

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1. In his later thought, Heidegger often talks of "authentic poetry" or "authentic building"; however, the notion of authenticity is not used to refer to human ek-sistence. See "... Poetically Man Dwells ...", *trans.* p.227, (VA,p.202)
2. "Building Dwelling Thinking", *trans.* p.149 (VA,p.149)
This conception of the world as a structural unity of earth and sky, mortals and gods, can be traced back to early Greek religious thought, which rested on a vision of strife between the Olympian gods, "... deities of heaven and light", and Chthonian gods, "... deities of earth and night". The gods which Heidegger locates as one of the poles of the fourfold are, like the Greek gods, innerworldly; rather than transcending the world they are structural aspects of the world itself, a hypostatisation of its fundamental powers, expressions of its basic realities. With this in mind we can understand a reference made by Jonas to what he calls "the profoundly pagan character of Heidegger's thought", and his further claim that "quite consistently do the gods appear in Heidegger's philosophy. But where the gods are, God cannot be". Vycinas too admits that "on the path of his thought, Heidegger does not encounter God in the Christian sense", but he argues that an acceptance of the gods as "ultimate world-structuring realities" does not bear on the question of the existence or the nature of a transcendent God. We need not enter into this question. But what we can say, following up the points made by Jonas, is that one of the most compelling, and at the same time most exasperating, aspects of Heidegger's thought, is the fact that it involves a rather haphazard admixture of both Greek and Biblical motifs. Jonas certainly recognises that Heidegger's

2. See Vycinas, op.cit. p.176
3. "Heidegger and Theology", in The Phenomenon of Life, p.248
5. Rosen makes a brief note of this point; see op.cit. p.130
thought contains a "... Biblical or generally religious ring..."\(^1\), with its "... vocabulary of guilt and conscience and call and voice and hearing and response and mission and shepherd and revelation and thanksgiving".\(^2\) Jonas sees that "... there is much secularised Christianity in Heidegger's thought",\(^3\) but he implicitly suggests that this makes its fundamentally pagan character less obtrusive and thereby more insinuating.\(^4\)

But, certainly if we take the divinization of the natural world as a characteristic mark of pagan thought, we could hardly call the thought of Being and Time pagan in character; rather, as Jonas himself has shown clearly, Being and Time shares many features with the radicalised, indeed heretical Christianity of the Gnostics. And the Gnostic heresy, which sees the natural world as an expression, not of a divine principle, but of the powers of ignorance and evil, makes this thought further removed from paganism than is orthodox Christianity, for which the natural world is a creation of a benevolent, loving God.\(^5\)

Certainly Heidegger's thought changes markedly in this regard.

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2. ibid. p.243
3. ibid. p.241
4. But for Jonas, Heidegger's thought is "rightly pagan, insofar as it is philosophy". (ibid. p.248) Jonas' objection is rather that Heidegger's thought hides and obscures its true nature with its parasitic use of religious language and religious imagery, and thus seems to absolve itself from the need for objective norms.
5. Nonetheless I feel that there is a deep tension in Christian thought about the status of what is natural. On the one hand, Christianity teaches that human beings will find salvation through refusing, through the exercise of the power and freedom of their will, to succumb to their natural inclinations and instincts. But then there is also the view, clearly evidenced in contemporary debates concerning such matters as contraception, abortion, and homosexuality, that what is proper and right is what is natural. It should also be noted here that the Christian God reveals himself most decisively, not in nature, but in history.
perhaps under the influence of Hölderlin, for whom, as Vycinas points out, "nature ... is holiness itself", for whom "gods are holy because they stand in the realm of holiness, in nature". 1 So, for Hölderlin, holiness does not originate from the gods - their holiness is derivative. Similarly, for the later Heidegger, holiness originates not from a God or gods; rather "only from the truth of Being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only from the essence of the holy can the essence of divinity be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought and said what the word 'god' is to signify". 2 So, for Heidegger, the truth of Being is the origin of the divine. But we are now, he tells us, in an epoch where the truth of Being reveals the character of divinity to man by concealing it from him - man now relates to the divinities by realizing that, though they are a structural aspect of the world, they are present only in their absence; and it is not for man to bring about their return. 3 Hence the answer Heidegger gives in Gelassenheit to the question of what is to be done: "we are to do nothing but wait". 4

Although the framework of Being and Time, formed by the question of Being, is Greek in origin, the substance of this book, the existential analyses of human existence, draw deeply from Christian thought. But increasingly throughout Heidegger's later thought Christian motifs are replaced by Greek ones. This process of replacement reaches its culmination with Heidegger's introduction of the notion of the fourfold, and his characterisation of the world in terms of it. But nonetheless

1. op. cit. p.168
3. The idea of absence being a certain form of presence is common in Heidegger; e.g. he sees technology as a bestowal by the truth of Being of its own absence. See "Letter", p.287, (Wegmarken, p.171)
4. Discourse on Thinking, trans. cit. p.62 (Gelassenheit, p.37)
Biblical images remain - a central one being that of giving thanks, of thanksgiving.

Indeed we find Heidegger, again using etymological considerations as a form of argument, relating thinking (thinking that recalls, das andenkende Denken; foundational thinking, das wesentliche Denken; meditative thinking, das besinnliche Nachdenken), by way of memory (Gedächtnis) and devotion (Andacht) to thanking (danken). He says that to think is to hold in memory, to thank, to offer devotion. The locus of such thinking is the heart (das Gemüt) which, "in giving thanks ... gives thought to what it has and what it is. The heart, thus giving thought and thus being memory, gives itself in thought to that to which it is held [dem es gehört: to which it belongs]. It thinks of itself as beholden [hörig], not in the sense of mere submission, but beholden because its devotion is held in listening. Original thanking is the thanks owed for Being [das Sichverdanken]."

Now, as Heidegger himself points out, "the things for which we owe thanks are not things we have from ourselves. They are given to us". We do not give thanks for what we have coming to us from our own efforts, for what we have earned or bought - we thank the shop-attendant not for giving us what we have paid for, but for the courtesy with which he has served us.

1. See Was Heisst Denken? (Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1954), pp.93-95 and 157-159. (hereafter WD?) trans. J.Glenn Gray and Fred Wieck, (New York, Harper & Row, 1968) pp.139-147. The question of the correctness or otherwise of Heidegger's etymological investigations is one that cannot be taken up here. Nonetheless it is interesting to see that Bollnow also makes note of a close etymological relation between "denken" and "danken": see op.cit. p.129.
2. It is interesting to note that Heidegger mentions with approval Pascal's "thinking of the heart". See ibid. p.139 (WD? p.92).
3. ibid. p.141 (WD?, p.93)
4. ibid. p.142 (WD?, p.94)
To give thanks is to recognise dependence, to recognise the reception of a gift. We will let Heidegger continue: "we receive many gifts, of many kinds. But the highest and really most lasting gift given to us is always our essential nature, with which we are gifted in such a way that we are what we are only through it. That is why we owe thanks for this endowment, first and unceasingly".¹

How different a picture we find here from that of the Dasein-analyses of Being and Time. There man is presented as a being thrown into a world wherein he must bear the burden of existence - for the Heidegger of Being and Time, a mood such as elation is possible only because of the essentially burdensome character of Dasein² - constantly projecting himself into a future which can never be present, onto possibilities which, if actualised, serve merely as a springboard for the leap toward further possibilities.

But now man, through that thinking which recalls (das andenkende Denken), through his devotion (Andacht), is seen as presenting his thanks for the gift of his being, his nature.

But now we must ask: to whom are these thanks directed? If to Being, then Heidegger is here giving traits of personhood to his supposedly impersonal Being. But perhaps these thanks are not directed anywhere; perhaps they merely point to recognition of dependence, but not to the goodness or benevolence of what is depended upon. But surely, we might reply, giving thanks for a gift is recognition of the goodness of the gift, and of that from whence the gift comes. Does this then not suggest that

¹ ibid.
² H.134
Heidegger's 'doctrine', that which remains unsaid in what he says, is simply that Being is good? Certainly we find Heidegger designating the negativity he sees inherent in Being as the source of the evil in human affairs. But Heidegger himself would clearly not accept this. For him, the truth of Being lies before and beyond all moral categories: all that can be said of Being is that "it is itself". But this is very reminiscent of Nietzsche's view that the world of becoming lies "beyond good and evil"; however, we have seen that this in effect says that the world of becoming is good, with evil being a necessary part of this goodness. Heidegger's view of Being, as comprising an essential negativity from which evil arises, lends itself to a similar interpretation - that Being is good, that it calls for and deserves our thanks, but that evil is an integral part of this goodness. We will take this point up in greater detail in our final chapter.

What we can say now is that the relation Heidegger draws

2. ibid. p.281. (Wegmarken, p.162). Kitaro Nishida is a Japanese philosopher in whose person are brought together the experience of Zen Buddhism and the concepts of Western (predominantly German) philosophy. Nishida's thought concerning Being bears marked similarities to Heidegger's. In the Introduction to his translation of Nishida's Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness, (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1973) Robert Schinzinger writes that, for Nishida "... in front of this eternal background [of nothingness], all being is as it is, without 'whence' or 'whither'. Being is there with 'wonderful self-identity' [it is itself]". Further, Schinzinger writes on Nishida's behalf, "such an affirmation of Being is a kind of salvation, and does not stem from moral consciousness with its contradictions, but from a depth where good and evil no longer exist". (pp.3,4). I hope to show in the final chapter of this thesis that Heidegger's later thought similarly presents a path to salvation through an affirmation which (supposedly) transcends the opposition of good and evil.
3. See above, p.54.
between thinking and thanking clearly demonstrates the distance between his later thought and the existentialism of Sartre or Camus. For, as Otto Bollnow writes, "... gratitude [Dankbarkeit] ... is the infallible sign that a person has overcome the existentialist obduracy".\(^1\) The height of such obduracy would be, one imagines, Camus' proclamation that he wants to live "without appeal".\(^2\)

Bollnow suggests that this new (i.e. post Second World War) feeling of gratitude, of thankfulness to life itself, is an expression of a new sense of shelteredness, of security, of being safe (neue Geborgenheit). He cites the poets Bergengruen: "what comes from pain is only transient. And my ear heard nothing but songs of praise", and Rilke: "everything breathes and returns thanks. Oh you troubles of the night, how you sank without a trace", as evidence for his belief that "... after all the experiences of terror, a new feeling, of affirmation of Being, is beginning to make its appearance, a joyful and thankful harmony with the very existence of man, as it is".\(^3\)

The broken, fragmentary, absurd world of the existentialists, the shattered world of immediate post-war Germany, has become for Bollnow eine heile Welt, a whole, a healed world.\(^4\) Bollnow stresses that "... the world is not 'whole', 'healed', in the solidity of its external existence, but only in its hidden depths", and that "this wholeness at its core is compatible with many blemishes on its surface".\(^5\) Further, he writes, "... this wholeness is at the same time not something which man can bring about solely through his own efforts, but something that, when

\(^1\) op.cit. p.143
\(^2\) The Myth of Sisyphus, trans.cit. pp.53,59
\(^4\) Die Heile Welt is the name of the title poem of a book by Werner Bergengruen (Zürich, Peter Schifferli Verlags AG,1952) p.94.
\(^5\) op.cit. p.150.
On returning to Heidegger, we find this concept of a heile Welt explicitly present in his thought. In his discussion of Hölderlin's poem Heimkunft: An die Verwandten, Heidegger introduces the notion of the Serene (das/die Heitere), which he characterises as a spatially-ordered region (das Aufgeräumte) which "... is alone able to house everything in its proper place". The Serene is that which, though "coming nearer and nearer" is "mostly overlooked and passed by". Within the Serene, we are told, "... both men and things now first appear", and "the Serene lingers over its unobtrusive appearance. It demands nothing for itself, it is no ob-ject and at the same time it is not 'nothing'". Clearly the Serene so characterised is one with the open sphere of unconcealment where beings stand manifest, the free sphere (das Freie) in which humans dwell at peace by letting things be according to their respective natures - i.e. the clearing of Being, the world, into which man stands out, ex-sists. So when Heidegger writes: "the Serene preserves and holds everything in tranquillity and wholeness [Heilen]. The Serene is fundamentally healing [die Heitere heilt ursprünglich]", we can hear clear echoes of the healed, non-fragmented world of which Bollnow and Bergengruen speak. And Bollnow is right when he says:4

1. ibid. p.152.
3. ibid. p.271 (Erlauterungen, p.18)
4. op.cit. p.153.Bollnow is here pointing to the difference between the concepts ganz (whole in the sense of entire) and heil (whole in the sense of healed). Whereas the former is present in Being and Time, the latter is not - nor, as Bollnow rightly suggests, could it be.
there was indeed no room for the concept of wholeness, for here human life is conceived from the point of view of the uncanniness [Unheimlichkeit] of the world and the lack-character of human being which is grounded in it: thus only in death can we find wholeness.

In his "Remembrance of the Poet" Heidegger conflates the notions of heil (whole, healed), and heilig (holy). Having written there that "the serene is fundamentally healing", he adds without further comment: "it is the holy [heilig]". Of course the concept of holiness is intimately bound up with that of devotion, which, Heidegger claims, is the basic attitude of thinking that recalls. The centrality of these concepts in Heidegger's characterisation of non-calculative thinking justifies us in saying that, in his later thought, Heidegger is attempting to point us towards a sacrosanct world, a world of grace, though for Heidegger this is best described as a secular sacrosanct world.

This leads us to think of a claim that Camus makes in The Rebel, to the effect that "... only two possible worlds can exist for the human mind, the sacrosanct (or, to speak in Christian terms, the world of Grace) or the rebel world". Heidegger would deem Camus' rebel world an expression of human pride - for the later Heidegger, the cardinal virtue is humility, the proper state of man poverty (both in the 'spiritual' and, one suspects, the economic realms) - for Camus' rebel "... is a man ... determined on creating a human situation where all the answers are human or, rather, formulated in terms of reason".

For Camus, there simply does not exist today a sacrosanct world in which human beings can live - "we live in an

1. trans.cit. p.271 (Erlauterungen, p.18)
2. trans.cit. pp.26,27
   Also What is called Thinking?, p.159 (WD? p.161)
unsacrosanct period1. But whereas the sacrosanct world of
which he conceives is one in which "... no real problems are to
be found...", with "all the answers having been given
simultaneously",2 this is not so with Heidegger's sacrosanct
world. The thinking, the devotion, the thanking of which
Heidegger speaks is not grounded in what he calls "the
unconditional character of faith";3 they do not find expression
in acts of belief. For Heidegger, man shows his thanks, his
devotion, i.e. man thinks, in questioning - "... questioning
is the piety [Frömmigkeit] of thought".4 Concerning the answer
to the question "what is called thinking?", Heidegger writes
that it "... maintains the question in its question-worthiness".
He continues: "the question cannot be settled, now or ever.
If we proceed to the encounter of what is here in question ...
the question becomes in fact only more worthy of question.
When we are questioning within this question-worthiness, we
are thinking".5

So Heidegger is saying that foundational, meditative,
recollective thinking involves asking the question: what is
called thinking? But for Heidegger the decisive question which
embraces this question is: what is that which commands us,

1. ibid. p.27
2. ibid. p.26
is here mis-characterising the nature of faith. One writer
says of faith, in its relation to love: "... faith is faith:
it is not vision; it is 'dark'; it inevitably contains what
theologians now call the 'element of risk'. Faith
accompanied by hope gives as much assurance as is possible;
but the inner certainty of being loved once for all, together
with its perfect security, is not accorded to man in this
life". (The Still Point, William Johnston, New York, Harper
4. "Die Frage nach der Technik", in Vorträge und Aufsätze. p.44
which calls on us to think? Thus essential thinking is a questioning which asks of itself: what is it that demands such thinking, such questioning? Heidegger suggests an answer, which is really no answer. This says: that which demands thinking, that which calls for questioning, is that which is most worthy of thought (das Bedenklichste). So essential thinking thinks what is most worthy of thought, questions what is most worthy of question. It does not seek to produce an answer, but rather to deepen the question-worthiness of what is worthy of question.

Heidegger accepts the charge that thinking so conceived is completely self-contained, that it can lead to no results. He claims that "the things which we conceive and assert to be the results of thinking, are the misunderstandings to which thinking ineluctably falls victim." He admits to the 'weakness' of strict thinking, which he describes in the following four statements: "1. Thinking does not bring knowledge as do the sciences. 2. Thinking does not produce usable practical wisdom. 3. Thinking solves no cosmic riddles. 4. Thinking does not endow us directly with the power to act." And we find Heidegger saying in the "Letter on Humanism" that "thought does not become action because an effect issues from it, or because it is applied. Thought acts in that it thinks".

We will discuss the ramifications of this conception of thought in our final chapter. But first we need to follow Heidegger's

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1. ibid. p.160 (WD? p.162)
2. ibid. p.121 (WD? p.85)
3. ibid. p.159 (WD? p.161)
4. ibid. p.169 (WD? p.164)
5. ibid. p.159 (WD? p.161)
characterisation of thought into an area to which it directly points — the area of mystery. For, just as essential thought does not seek to answer the questions it raises, in order to dispose of them as quickly and as conclusively as possible, so Heidegger writes, "... we never get to know a mystery by unveiling and analysing it: we only get to know it by carefully guarding the mystery as mystery". The proper response to mystery is wonder, and, Heidegger writes, "man alone of all beings, when addressed by the voice of Being, experiences the wonder of all wonders: that beings are". For Heidegger, "the sentence 'beings are' [das Seiende ist] ... holds the most completely fulfilled mystery of all thinking". And he claims that "today, when talk about 'Being' and 'existence' is practically a daily routine, we notice only the monotony of the sentence 'beings are' ... And yet the day may come when someone will find the sentence astonishing nonetheless ..."

We are here led to think of the line from Wittgenstein's Tractatus which says: "not how the world is, is the mystical,

2. "Remembrance of the Poet", trans. cit. p.279. (Erlauterungen, p.23). Although the notion of mystery has, when first introduced by Heidegger, a technical meaning (see "On the Essence of Truth", trans. cit. p.311, Wegmarken, pp.89.90), it gradually takes on more and more of the undercurrents of meaning which the same notion has in the writings of such people as Rudolf Otto and Gabriel Marcel. For Otto, the feeling of the mysterious, the numinous, is the kernel religious mood (see The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1959). For Marcel, a mystery is a meta-problem, "... a problem which encroaches upon its own data, invading them as it were, and thereby transcending itself as a simple problem". Whereas, for Marcel, a problem is soluble, a mystery cannot be solved but only made more mysterious; see "On the Ontological Mystery", in The Philosophy of Existence, trans. Many Harari, (London, The Harvill Press, 1948) esp. pp.9,10.
but that it is",¹ and also the experience Wittgenstein relates in his "Lecture on Ethics", which he says can best be described by saying that "... when I have it I wonder at the existence of the world". He continues: "and then I am inclined to use such phrases as 'how extraordinary that the world should exist'.²

This apparent interrelatedness of the thought of the Tractarian Wittgenstein and Heidegger has been taken up by one commentator, Ingvar Horgby, who sets out to show that, despite the fact that Wittgenstein and Heidegger "are naturally to a high degree philosophical contraries", that nonetheless "there is a similar awareness (consciousness) in both". Horgby claims that "this special awareness is based on a particular experience", and that "this experience can preliminarily be defined as an experience of the world's 'that', not only of its 'what' or 'how'".³

But we find that for Heidegger, the distinction between what beings are (what what is is) (essentia), and that beings are (existentia), is a thoroughly metaphysical one – indeed he writes that "the beginning of metaphysics is revealed as an event that consists in a determination of Being, in the sense of the appearance of the division into whatness and thatness".⁴

For Heidegger, Being as physis, as aletheia, lies before this distinction: so that thinking which seeks to recall Being in its truth must, for Heidegger, seek to uncover a region wherein the separation between what beings are and that they are has

¹. trans.cit. p.44 In this regard a passage from William Johnstone's The Still Point is of interest. It says: "Mystical prayer is existential in the sense that (to follow the wording of The Cloud of Unknowing) I no longer think of what God is but of that God is - and no more". p.93.
². Philosophical Review Vol. 74, 1965, p.8
not yet occurred. Nonetheless we must agree with Horgby that Heidegger does often seem to be thinking in terms of this distinction, and that it is a useful tool for understanding much of his thought.¹

Let us continue with this for a moment. We find that Heidegger accepts Kant's point about the vacuity of the concept of existence - which is designated in modern parlance by saying that "existence" is not a predicate - but only insofar as "... what the words 'Being' and 'existence' designate can be grasped primarily and only in a concept".² But the thinking Heidegger wishes to evoke is supra-conceptual; and for such thinking "the fact that [in a phrase of the form 'the tree is ...'] we take the 'is' too lightly is no proof that the 'is' and what it names does not keep within it a weightiness that we can hardly ever weigh".³ That thinking which may be able to feel some of the weight of the "is" stems from the heart (Gemüt)⁴

1. Perhaps Heidegger sees a distinction between "that beings are" and "that beings are", but I must confess I cannot see a real distinction here. At this point we should make note of that question with which Heidegger begins An Introduction to Metaphysics and ends "What is Metaphysics?" (trans.cit.pp.1 and 390 respectively, EM, p.1 and Wegmarken, p.19): this asks: why are there any beings at all and not rather nothing? As it stands this question seems to be a natural response to that experience of wonder which led Wittgenstein to exclaim: "how extraordinary that anything should exist". It has often been so understood, e.g. by Horgby, loc.cit.p.238, and by Milton Munitz, The Mystery of Existence, (New York, Meredith, 1965) pp.9,10. But the account of the meaning of this question Heidegger gives in the Introduction to "What is Metaphysics?" seems to militate against such an interpretation. See "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics", trans.cit. pp.217,218 (Wegmarken, pp.210,211).


3. ibid. p.174 (WD p.107)

4. See above, p.146
- it is more closely related to mood than to conceptual thought.
(As Heidegger writes in Being and Time: "... the possibilities of disclosure which belong to cognition reach far too short a way compared with the primordial disclosure belonging to moods\(^1\)).

It shares the distinctive feature of that wonder of which Wittgenstein speaks - a wonder not that this or that is as it is, but that anything is at all - for it attempts to go beyond the limits set by conceptual thought and its solidification in language. As Wittgenstein says: "to say 'I wonder at such and such being the case' has only sense if I can imagine it not to be the case ... But it is nonsense to say that I wonder at the existence of the world, because I cannot imagine it not existing."\(^2\) But Heidegger would remain quite unperturbed by this, for he claims that "reason and its conceptions are only one kind of thinking...\(^3\) he sees it as his task to free language from the constraints of logic and grammar and to "... place(ing) it in a more original and essential framework"; more correctly, he sees this as the task for poetry and thought.\(^4\)

In the lecture "What is Metaphysics?" Heidegger's thought attempts to delve into that nothingness which he sees delimiting the world (all-beings-as-a-whole), as forming the backdrop against which the world stands manifest. He says there that nothingness is not a being nor an object,\(^5\) but nonetheless it (?) is revealed in the mood of anxiety. Indeed we find that

1. H.134. But for such a position the question arises: how is a distinction to be drawn between moods which disclose how things are and moods which disclose how things are not?
2. loc.cit. pp.8,9
5. trans.cit. p.368 (Wegmarfen, p.10)
nothingness has a nature: "[it] does not attract: its nature is to repel", and that it acts, it 'nihilates' ("nichtet") of itself.¹ But what is happening here? Is Heidegger guilty of simply misusing language, of treating "nothingness" as if it were the name for some peculiar kind of entity?² Or does the apparent nonsensicality of Heidegger's language point to the fact that a particular human experience 'says' (or, in Wittgenstein's language, 'shows') something that cannot be encompassed by logical thought? This in fact is the claim that I want to make - that the experience of nothingness, of 'metaphysical' wonder, is a human possibility which defies attempts to encapsulate it within the bounds of logic. To this extent I am in sympathy with Heidegger's thought in "What is Metaphysics?". But unfortunately he claims too much for this experience and what it reveals, arguing that "nothingness is that which makes the revelation of beings as such possible for our human existence".³ The objection he himself brings against this claim is not answered. In brief it says: nothingness 'is' only as revealed in the experience of anxiety. But how can this rare experience provide the condition for the possibility of all experience?⁴ We need not follow this any further. But let us return briefly to Wittgenstein. At the end of his "Lecture on Ethics" he speaks of the attempt to "... go beyond the world..."

1. ibid. p.369 (Wegmarken, p.11)
2. For the elaboration of the view that Heidegger is indeed guilty of this error, see Munitz, op.cit. pp.147,148.
3. trans.cit. p.370 (Wegmarken, p.12)
as a "... running against the walls of our cage..." It is, he says, "absolutely hopeless", but he concludes: "but it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting and I would not for my life ridicule it".\footnote{loc.cit. pp.11,12. Although Wittgenstein is here speaking specifically of ethics, it is clear that he would describe in the same way any attempt to thematise what is given in the experience of 'metaphysical' wonder.} And, we might add, we can only know the dimensions of our 'cage' by continually trying to stretch them. Perhaps this is one way to see the task of Heidegger's non-calculative thinking.

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For the later Heidegger, thinking is both a thanking and a questioning. We need to ask: what does this say about the relation Heidegger sees between man and world? Simply this: man only fully accepts and makes proper use of the gift of his existence, he only takes over his allotted place in the world, when he begins to question what is worthy of question. It says that wonder, though placing a distance between man and world, is a unitive rather than an alienating experience. It says that man finds security only when he touches the mystery of existence, a mystery which his questioning cannot dispel but only deepen.\footnote{It is, I believe, a fact not without significance that Wittgenstein, in the "Lecture on Ethics" mentions the experience of feeling "absolutely safe" immediately after describing the experience of 'metaphysical' wonder. See \textit{loc.cit.} p.8.}

Let us follow up this last point. In the \textit{Principle of Ground} Heidegger speaks in a deprecating tone of "the fundamental characteristic of contemporary human existence, which seeks security everywhere", a security based on calculation and information.\footnote{\textit{trans.cit.} p.216 (\textit{DG}, p.202)} Heidegger's implicit suggestion here is that man can only find true security when he ceases...
trying to make everything safe and secure, but realises through the continual deepening of his questioning his place of dependence within a reality which transcends and embraces him. This view is given support in the "Letter on Humanism", where Heidegger cites with approval the Heraclitean Fragment 119, which he translates as: "the (secure) [geheure] abode for man is the open quality of the presence (Anwesung) of God (of the insecure, the strange) [des Un-geheuren]".¹

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One commentator, Giles Driscoll, claims that "Martin Heidegger's real achievement lies in his radical revitalization of the question of Being", that Heidegger has recognised anew "that Being is ultimately and ever the wondrous".² And further, Driscoll claims, "it is by the re-emphasis of mystery that Heidegger has effected his response to nihilism", for "nihilism knows no mystery". He continues: "nihilism is the denouement of a thwarted demand for answer ... the incubus of nihilism hides within every attempt to wring from Being answers. But he who dwells within mystery seeks no answers; mystery itself suffices".³

I certainly agree with Driscoll that, especially the reductionist varieties of nihilism are closed to any awareness of a phenomenon of mystery distinct from both puzzles and problems, and I also believe that the awareness of this phenomenon stands at the far end of the spectrum from the leached out experience of the nihilist. But I am somewhat

¹. trans.cit. p.297 (Wegmarken, p.187)
³. ibid.
worried by the way Driscoll, on Heidegger's behalf, conceptualises the role of mystery as a response to nihilism. For I feel that the experience of mystery shares an essential feature with happiness, this being that it comes only as a by-product of other endeavours - that any attempt to pursue it in and for itself is doomed to frustration and a trivialisation of the experience. To put the point another way; it may well be that certain questions are unanswerable - and this not in virtue of any linguistic or conceptual malformation - but that this can be admitted only at the last, when all attempts at answer have failed.\footnote{Milton Munitz’s book The Mystery of Existence is an interesting attempt to show that the question which he finally formulates as “Is there a reason-for-the-existence-of-the-world?” is, although a proper question, in fact unanswerable.} It is only through the attempt to answer a question that its questionworthiness can be deepened. I fear that Heidegger does not see this, for he seems to completely sever essential questioning (and thus thinking) from the concern to find answers. But such a severance is, I feel, doomed to lead to sterility.

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We have seen in this chapter that, in Heidegger's later thought, the rift between man and world, between man and total reality - a rift lying just under the surface of the thought of Being and Time - has been healed. We have also seen that the later Heidegger dispenses with what we have claimed is a nihilistic concept of authenticity, together with the concomitant conceptions of temporality and freedom which dominate Being and Time. We can now add that the emphasis
Heidegger places on the activity of questioning seems to assure that, in the healing of the dualistic rift, the ambiguities, the tensions, which we have claimed are an integral part of human existence, are not defused. Heidegger's later thought thus seems to be a candidate for Jonas' third road; whether it is in fact such a candidate, we will endeavour to make clear in our final chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

BEYOND NIHILISM?
For Heidegger, all post-Cartesian thought is grounded in a metaphysics of subjectivity, in terms of which all beings are conceived as objects for man — and man, because of the reflexivity, the transparency to itself of his consciousness, takes himself to be a fundamentum absolutum et inconcussum.

We find that Heidegger, in his later writings, is quite explicit in his attempt to dethrone consciousness, and thus human subjectivity. He subordinates this to ek-sistence, which is in turn grounded in the unconcealment/concealment of the truth of Being. Heidegger claims that it is not because man is a conscious being, but rather because he is ek-sistent, that man has access to beings. He writes:

"The existential nature of man is the reason why man can represent beings as such, and why he can be conscious of them. All consciousness presupposes ecstatically understood existence as the essentia of man ... But consciousness does not itself create the openness for beings, nor is it consciousness that makes it possible for man to stand open for beings.

Heidegger makes essentially the same claim in the lecture "The Thing", where he writes: "man can represent, no matter how, only what has previously come to light of its own accord and has shown itself in the light it brought with it".

Heidegger's thought here is radical, in the sense that it goes back to what he sees as the root of Western historical humanity, the experience and conception of Being as physis. As depicted by Heidegger, physis is emergence, coming to presence, standing manifest, appearing. Certainly Heidegger

1. "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics", trans.cit. p.213. (Wegmarken, p.204). Also see above, p.131, footnote 3. However, the final result of Heidegger's reaction to the primarily existentialist emphasis on the inwardness, the presence to itself of the human subject, is that, as depicted in his later thought, man is deprived of all trace of inwardness.
2. trans.cit. p.171 (VA, p.169)
concedes that physis so conceived has need of apprehension (thought) to receive this appearance, this manifestness - we have seen that, for Heidegger, the true dignity of man is characterised in terms of his being the place of such a reception1 - but the openness, the manifestness, stems from physis itself. This means that the possibility of 'vision' is located in the 'shining forth', the 'visibility' of what is 'seen', rather than in the disclosive and penetrative power of the 'looking eye'.

We have seen Heidegger claim that, when Being as physis is conceived from the point of view of apprehension, then appearance becomes mere appearance, "the on becomes distinct from the phainomenon".2 Hence arises that ambiguity within the notion of appearance (appearing) itself, which has also been discussed above.3 But a point that we have not yet touched on concerns the way Heidegger sees this ambiguity revealing itself in the conception of space. He writes:

> From the standpoint of space, the difference between appearing and appearing is this: appearing in the first and authentic sense as bringing-itself-to-stand-in-togetherness involves space, which it first conquers; as it stands there, it creates space for itself; it produces space and everything pertaining to it... Appearing in the second sense emerges from an already finished space ... Appearing in the first sense opens up space. Appearing in the second sense merely circumscribes and measures the space that has already been opened.

This passage leads us to think of the account Heidegger gives in his later writings concerning the nature of a thing - for just as physis, as appearing, "creates space for itself",

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1. See above, p. 105
2. See above, pp. 76, 77
3. See above, ibid.
"opens up space", so the thing, Heidegger tells us, establishes locations (Orte), which in turn "allow for spaces (Raume)", from which space (Raum), conceived as bare extension or as a system of determinable relations, derives.¹

The question as to the nature of a thing assumes importance when we realise that, for Heidegger, dwelling, "the way mortals are on the earth", is essentially a "staying with things".²

A point that should be noted immediately is that Heidegger does not use the word "thing" ("Ding") simply as a place-holder - it is not 'anything at all' that is a Heideggerian thing.

Now again we find etymological considerations assuming a leading role in Heidegger's thought, for they here give him the clue with which to start his thinking on the nature of the thing. He writes that "gathering or assembly [Versammlung], by an ancient word of our language, is called 'thing'".³

Heidegger then takes a bridge as an example to show the relation between "gathering and assembly" and a thing. To do this he depicts the bridge in its relation to the fourfold, the unity he has described of earth and sky, divinities and mortals. The following picture is presented.

The bridge joins the banks of the river, and in this joining first brings the banks to lie opposite each other. In this way, the whole surrounding landscape is opened out and ordered by the bridge. Thus the bridge relates to the earth. But then the bridge stands beneath the sky, for it is built to withstand

2. ibid. p.151 (VA, p.151)
3. ibid. p.153 (VA, p.153). The word "thing" which appears in inverted commas in this sentence appears as "thing", not "Ding", in the original.
the adverse weather that the sky might send. While allowing the river to flow on its way, the bridge enables men to cross and pursue their business on the other side. Thus the bridge provides access for the ways of men. Then the crossing which the bridge affords echoes that crossing which is a man's life, and which brings him to stand before the divinities. So Heidegger concludes:¹

The bridge gathers to itself in its own way earth and sky, divinities and mortals ... The bridge is a thing - and, indeed, it is such as the gathering of the fourfold which we have described.

What is said here of the thing (bridge) as a gathering (Versammlung) leads us immediately to think of Heidegger's discussion, in An Introduction to Metaphysics, of the logos as permanent gathering (ständige Sammlung), as collection (Sammlung), in its relation to physis in pre-Socratic thought. Heidegger writes that "logos is the steady gathering, the

1. "Building Dwelling Thinking", trans. cit. pp.152,153 (VA, pp.152,153). It is a passage such as this which suggests that we should take seriously the distinction Heidegger draws between philosophy and strict thinking: see "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens", in Zur Sache des Denkens, (Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1969), pp.61-80, trans. Joan Stambaugh in On Time and Being, (New York, Harper and Row, 1972) pp.55-73. However, on the general question of the status of Heidegger's later thought from the point of view of philosophy, I am basically in agreement with John Caputo when he writes: "... it is impossible to understand Heidegger except in terms of what is generally called 'the history of philosophy' that precedes him - the Presocratics, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Husserl, etc.", and with the claim Caputo makes that "the attempt to legislate Heidegger out of philosophy with some speculative prescription of what philosophy 'should be' is refuted by the immense existential presence of his thinking within philosophy". "Being, Ground, and Play in Heidegger", Man and World, Vol.3, 1970, p.43. We might add that this point holds even against Heidegger's own self-legislation.
intrinsic togetherness of beings, i.e. Being", and continues:¹

Physis and logos are the same. Logos characterises Being in a new and yet old respect: that which is, which stands straight and distinct in itself, is at the same time gathered togetherness in itself and by itself, and maintains itself in such togetherness.

The gathering of which Heidegger here speaks is not to be seen simply as a bringing-together of things into one place. It has more of the meaning of ordering, of holding things in their proper place. (Heidegger mentions, in company with the words "logos", "aletheia", "physis", "phainesthai", the word "harmonia", all as designations of Being.²) He writes that "gathering is never a mere driving-together and heaping-up. It maintains in a common bond the conflicting of that which tends apart. It does not let them fall into haphazard dispersion".³ Likewise the thing (bridge), in gathering the fourfold, does not bring the poles of the fourfold together or merge them into one; rather it holds each member apart in its proper relation to the others, and enables man to dwell in the space thus opened out, what Heidegger elsewhere calls the "dimension", the 'between' of earth and sky.⁴

¹. trans.cit. pp.130,131 (EM, p.100). This suggests to us that in talking of the thing as that which gathers the fourfold, Heidegger is talking of Being. This point is given support by the fact that the discussion of the thing in the lecture of the same name is given in order to illuminate the nature of nearness (die Nähe), a nearness which "... does not consist in shortness of distance". Such nearness is intimately related in Heidegger's thought to the truth of Being, for he writes in the "Letter on Humanism": "... nearer than the nearest and at the same time, for ordinary thought, farther than his farthest is nearness itself: the truth of Being". See trans.cit. p.282, (Wegmarken, p.163), also "The Thing", trans.cit. pp.165,166, (VA, pp.163,164).

². An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans.cit. p.133 (EM, p.102). We might also add here the word "mythos", for it is clear that Heidegger wishes to re-mythologise human ex-sistence. See Vycinas, op.cit. pp.94,200,201.

³. ibid. p.134 (EM, p.102)

⁴. "... Poetically Man Dwells...", trans.cit. p.220 (VA, p.195)
Vycinas presents an illuminating analogy to make clear what Heidegger means when he talks of the thing, as a location, opening out spaces in which humans can dwell. (Such locations Heidegger calls "buildings".1) Vycinas asks us to "... imagine a totally empty space which is crossed by light". He then says: "in a totally empty space light is not revealed as light. There would be mere darkness. Only if some object (artwork) [we would rather say 'thing', since, for Heidegger, a work of art is but one among other kinds of things] is raised into this empty space, is the light arrested and brought forward or revealed".2 Making use of this analogy, we can say that, for Heidegger, the light of the truth of Being in which humans ek-sist only becomes 'visible', i.e. inhabitable, when it is reflected by a thing, and each thing is "... a thing of its own kind", and thus reflects the light of the truth of Being in its own way.3

This suggests that the spaces which things open out for human dwelling are not partitioned regions of one all-inclusive, homogeneous space, wherein there are no inbuilt indications as to scale: rather these spaces are structured in such a way that they contain 'parameters' which indicate appropriate 'dimensions' for human dwelling, both for dwelling-places and for the activity of dwelling. Whether these 'parameters' encompass the ethical dimension of ek-sistence is a question which will be taken up below.

Heidegger's characterisation of dwelling as essentially a staying with things4 leads us to put the following question:

2. op.cit. p.128; see also ibid. p.235.
4. ibid, p.151 (VA, p.151)
what things are Heideggerian things? This question needs to be asked because, as we noted above, not everything is a Heideggerian thing. We can begin to follow through Heidegger’s answer to this question by looking at the indications he gives of what a thing is not. At one point he writes:2

Our thinking has of course long been accustomed to underestimate the nature of the thing. The consequence, in the course of Western thought, has been that the thing is represented as an unknown X to which perceptible properties are attached. From this point of view, everything that already belongs to the gathering nature of this thing does, of course, appear as something that is afterward read into it.

Heidegger is here talking of the conception of the thing which can most easily be seen in Locke, for whom the thing is a substance, itself property-less and thus unknowable to the human mind, to which various properties are attached. But the vital sentence in the quoted passage is the last one, which bears repeating: “from this point of view, everything that already belongs to the gathering nature of this thing does, of course, appear as something that is afterward read into it”.

Though Heidegger refers here to “this thing”, and goes on immediately to talk of the bridge as a thing, it is nonetheless reasonable to assume that this sentence concerns things in general.

What Heidegger is objecting to in this sentence is the conflation of the notion of thing with that of object. He says elsewhere that, although a thing may become an object, nonetheless “... the thingly character of the thing does not consist in being a represented object, nor can it be defined in any way in terms of the objectness, the over-againstness, of the object”.3 For Heidegger, the conflation of the notions

1. See above, p.166
of object and thing leads to an understatement of the nature of the thing, because it conceives of the thing only in terms of its relation to human consciousness. However, in his account of the nature of the thing Heidegger is not simply arguing the realist position that things exist quite apart from consciousness or knowledge of them. Nor is he simply denying the conception, central to phenomenological philosophy, that consciousness is an activity, and thus reverting to the older view of mind as a passive receptacle. Rather Heidegger is saying that consciousness is made possible only by the gathering, i.e. the opening out and structuring nature of the thing. The thinking behind this claim is that it is the thing, as location, which opens out the spaces in which humans can dwell, and dwelling, as concrete ex-sistence, precedes and makes possible all consciousness.

Here we see evidenced the fundamental difference between the (later) Heideggerian and the Husserlian conceptions of phenomenology. The notion of phenomena that Heidegger uses can be traced back to the early Greek conception of phainomenon, which he links to the verb phainesthai. He claims that, for the Greeks, this meant "... that a being assumes its radiance and in that radiance it appears..." For Husserl, however, phenomena are what are uncovered by consciousness. So Husserl and Heidegger come at the notion of the phenomenon from

1. Nonetheless I feel Heidegger's thought can justifiably be characterised as a form of realism.
2. See above, p.164
different directions, and this gives rise to radically different metaphysical positions. Husserlian phenomenology is an expression of the metaphysics of subjectivity. Heideggerian phenomenology, certainly its later variety, subordinates man to the self-manifestation of phenomena (things). Certainly modern phenomenology, following Husserl, does not work with a separation between the on and the phenomenon; however, because it understands the phenomenon as that which is uncovered by consciousness, it would involve, in Heidegger's eyes, a complete radicalisation of the on/phenomenon distinction. (The phenomenon has separated so far from the on that the latter has all but disappeared from thought.) So, for Heidegger, Husserl's call to return "to the things themselves" is really a call to return "to the objects themselves".

It is interesting to note in passing that there is a similarity between Heidegger's thought concerning the difference between the thing and the object and the later thought of the theologian Karl Barth concerning man's relation to God. Barth claims in his Church Dogmatics that, if in theology, we start from the same point as did Descartes in his philosophy, then we must end up with Feuerbach: such a path can, according to Barth, lead us only to God formed in the image of man, never to God as He is in Himself. In an analogous way, Heidegger is saying that, if we start from Descrates (the self-guaranteeing certainty of the thinking subject) then we will end up with the thing as an object for

1. The German phrase used by Husserl is "zu den Sachen selbst"; now while it is true that the words "die Sachen" and "das Ding" cannot simply be used interchangeably in German, nonetheless their differences in meaning do not bear on the point here being made.
man, but never reach the thing as a thing.¹

Before we leave this area we should note that the characterisation Heidegger himself gives in Being and Time of beings other than Dasein, i.e. the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand, seems to make the very mistake that he attacks in "The Thing"—for both the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand are thought of only in terms of their relation to Dasein, with Dasein being the key term of this relation. So, to use Heidegger's terminology, the Being of both the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand is thought of in Being and Time as Being-object. So we find clearly evidenced in Heidegger's discussions of the thing in his later writings a fundamental change from the thought of Being and Time. I cannot agree with Vycinas when he writes that "in Being and Time, the understanding of an implement [that which is ready-to-hand] can be considered as the forerunner of the understanding of a thing".² Certainly Heidegger depicts the ready-to-hand pointing beyond itself to a world, as the "totality of instrumental complexes", but this world is grounded in Dasein's projects. For the later Heidegger, the world, the clearing of Being, though it has need of man, is nonetheless not grounded in man.

Staying with the thought of Being and Time for a moment, it is interesting to note a claim Heidegger makes in his later writings that "any attempt ... to re-think Being and Time is

1. See Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh, Clarke, 1936) vol.I,pt.I, p.166. It has been pointed out to me that the same reversal of priorities led both Heidegger and Barth to move away from their early existentialist phase, both realising the limitations occasioned by the emphasis on subjectivity demanded by this philosophy.
2. op.cit. p.249.
thwarted as long as one is satisfied with the observation that, in this study, the term 'Dasein' is used in place of 'consciousness'".\(^1\) He also writes: "the term 'Dasein' neither takes the place of the term 'consciousness' nor does the 'object' designated as 'Dasein' take the place of what we think of when we speak of 'consciousness'".\(^2\)

It is true that in *Being and Time* the term "consciousness" is used infrequently, and then invariably in connection with a theory Heidegger wants to reject. The reason for this is that Heidegger is concerned there to present an ontological analysis of Dasein, i.e. he is concerned to lay bare those structural aspects of Dasein's Being which make possible and give form to the ontic (conscious, experiential) dimension of existence. However such a program, as I believe Heidegger himself came to see\(^3\), really elevates consciousness, now seen to be working within the structures which are located in Dasein's Being, to a new level of dominance, and thus itself re-enforces the dominance of subjectivity - as does Kant's transcendental philosophy, which it clearly resembles.

It can be easily seen that the subordination of consciousness to the truth of Being which Heidegger advocates in his later thought is quite at odds with his earlier attempt to uncover in the structure of man's Being the conditions for the possibility of an array of key experiences.

Let us now return to our discussion of Heidegger's account of the nature of a thing. The question we are chiefly concerned with is simply: what sort of things are Heideggerian things? The distinction Heidegger draws between things and objects still

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2. ibid.
leaves this question open. We can now sharpen our question and ask: are social and economic institutions, or political parties and doctrines, or fellow human beings and human relationships, things in Heidegger's sense? The importance of this question becomes clear when we remember that, for Heidegger, "dwelling ... the basic character of Being in keeping with which mortals are ... is always a staying with things". Admittedly, this sentence leaves open the possibility that dwelling might involve more than a "staying with things", but nonetheless it is this "staying with things" aspect of dwelling which receives most of Heidegger's attention.

For Heidegger, things are "the jug and the bench, the footbridge and the plough". He continues: "but tree and pond, too, brook and hill, are things, each in its own way. Things are heron and roe, deer, horse and bull. Things are mirror and clasp, book and picture, crown and cross". Prominent here are simple things of nature: and it is also simplicity which characterises the various artifacts mentioned. The book and the picture, the crown and the cross, may point beyond themselves to complex social, political, and religious structures, but Heidegger is little concerned with this; it is the intimacy which these things afford which attracts him — an intimacy totally lacking from the goods churned out on production-lines, and from the complex institutions which hold the threads of man's political, economic, and social life.

We suggested above that, in the notion of dwelling (as a staying with things) we might find concrete indications

as to the nature of ex-sistence. However we now find that the conception of the thing with which Heidegger operates leads us to suspect that this hoped-for concreteness will prove to be chimerical, ignoring the whole dimension of man as a political and social being. We will find this suspicion confirmed in what follows.

Concerning the things named above, Heidegger writes rather disconcertingly that they are "... modest in number, compared with the countless objects everywhere of equal value, compared with the measureless mass of men as living beings". Perhaps it would be unfair to Heidegger to try to draw too much from this sentence alone - to conclude that he takes the thing to be more fundamental than man as a living being. Nonetheless this sentence is symptomatic of a central aspect of Heidegger's thought about man, this being the failure of his thought to come to grips with the fact that, in a very basic sense, man is a living being. We can best bring this out by examining Heidegger's thought about the place of death in human existence (ex-sistence).

It is, for Heidegger, man as a mortal who belongs within the fourfold. And, for Heidegger, the nature of mortals is their "being capable of death as death". We ask: what is meant by this, if anything more than the fact that human beings die? The following passage gives the beginning of an answer:

The mortals are human beings. They are called mortals because they can die. To die means to be capable of death as death. Only man dies. The animal perishes

1. See above, p.130
3. At one point Heidegger cites "men's being with one another" as one pole of the fourfold ("Building Dwelling Thinking", trans.cit. p.149, VA,p.149), but this is an isolated reference and it receives no development.
[verendet]. It has death neither ahead of itself nor behind it. Death is the shrine of nothingness, that is, of that which in every respect is never something that merely exists, but which nonetheless presences, even as the mystery of Being itself. As the shrine of nothingness death harbours within itself the presencing of Being. As the shrine of nothingness, death is the shelter of Being. We now call mortals mortals — not because their earthly life comes to an end, but because they are capable of death as death. Mortals are who they are, as mortals, present in the shelter of Being. They are the presencing relation of Being to Being.

This last sentence says in effect that man, as a being capable of death, is that place where Being comes to itself.

Now the passage as a whole reminds us very strongly of the "What is Metaphysics?" lecture, and the description of nothingness, and its relation to Being, which is given there. For this lecture nothingness is thought of as the limit of all-beings-as-a-whole (das Seiende im Ganzen), and it is argued that it is through man's (Dasein's) experience of nothingness so conceived in the mood of anxiety, that he is able to experience the strangeness, the otherness of beings — that they are what they are and are not nothing — and thus to participate in their full unconcealment. But this unconcealment is, for Heidegger, the truth of Being, so we find him, in the "Prologue" added to "What is Metaphysics?", describing nothingness as the "veil of Being".¹

In the passage from "The Thing" just quoted we find again expression of the relation in Heidegger's thought between nothingness and Being, but here nothingness is not conceived as the limit of all-beings-as-a-whole, but rather as that which is enshrined within death, the limit of life. But death is not here construed as an event that will at some time befall every

man - death so thought of would be, for Heidegger, no
different from the demise of animals. Humans are mortal, not
because they are doomed to die, but because, to use the
language of Being and Time, they are capable of Being-towards-
death. Continuing on with the thought of Being and Time for
a moment, we find Heidegger saying there that what is given
to man in authentic Being-towards-death is death as a pure
possibility, that is as a possibility which allows of no, not
even covert (imagined) actualisation. Heidegger maintains
that usually when we concern ourselves with possibilities we
let them show as little as possible of their possibility. The
following example brings out Heidegger's point. Say that it
is possible that I will go overseas next year. I relate to
this possibility now by imagining what it might be like when
I go, people and places that I may see, feelings that I may
have, and so on. It then might be the case that next year I
actually do go overseas, and so what is now only a possibility
will then be an actuality. Or it might happen that my plans
fall through, and I realise that I can't possibly go. But
what happens in all three cases is that I turn away from the
possibility that I will go overseas next year; to use
Heidegger's words, it shows as little as possible of its
possibility.¹

Now Heidegger claims that death thought of as a possibility
does not allow of even covert actualisation - death remains
simply a possibility, or, rather, my possibility. But now
the following objection must be faced: has not Heidegger's

¹ See H.261.
thought here gone beyond the limits of sense, for is not part of what is meant when something is described as a possibility that its actualisation is possible - in other words, is not a possibility a possible actuality? Is it not then sheer nonsense to talk of a possibility which in principle allows of no actualisation?

It is thought along these lines which leads Sartre to reject Heidegger's view that my death is my possibility - for Sartre, my death is a possibility, but only for the Other, for whom this possibility can become an actuality. Sartre sees my death not as my possibility, but as the destruction of my possibilities.\(^1\)

But here I want to side with Heidegger against Sartre and the analytic point which underlies his argument. For I feel that here, as with his discussion of the experience of nothingness, as that which delimits reality as a whole and thus enables it to become questionable,\(^2\) Heidegger is attempting to characterise a distinctive human experience which extends the limits of sense, which (in this case) forces us to re-think what it means to say of something that it is possible. Heidegger has simply confronted us with an empirical possibility which does not in principle allow of actualisation. And it will not do to say that death is not a possibility but rather a certainty. For the possibility which Heidegger ascribes to death is not to be contrasted with certainty - Heidegger does not want to deny that death is certain. Death as a possibility is to be seen in contrast to death as an actuality.

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2. See above, pp.157,158
To say that my death is a pure possibility is not to say that I will never die; what it says is that my death can be actual only for another - that I cannot in actuality be dead. As Heidegger writes: ¹

The closest closeness which one may have in Being-towards-death as a possibility, is as far as possible from anything actual. The more unveiledly this possibility gets understood, the more purely does the understanding penetrate into it as the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all. Death, as possibility, gives Dasein nothing to be "actualised", nothing which Dasein, as actual, could itself be.

We can see that the notion of pure possibility here outlined is akin to the notion of nothingness which appears in the passage quoted from "The Thing" some pages back. A possibility which in principle allows of no actualisation is truly a nothingness, though not an empty nothingness (ein nichtiges Nichts), for it contains within itself the breadth of a man's life, just as nothingness, as depicted in "What is Metaphysics?", contains within itself the breadth of all-beings-as-a-whole.

In anticipating (vorlaufen: lit. running-ahead) death as a possibility, "this possibility reveals itself to be such that it knows no measure at all, no more or less".² And, as a rebound, existence itself is revealed as beyond all measure. Heidegger does not explicitly make this last point, but one has the feeling that it lies just under the surface of his thought.

To Heidegger's claim that death is a pure possibility we might object that we can perform at least an imaginative actualisation of our death. We can imagine ourselves dying in a violent or a peaceful way, in a car accident or in bed -

¹. H.262. In The Myth of Sisyphus, Camus says that the only problem which interests him is given by the question: "is there a logic to the point of death" (trans.cit.p.16). Heidegger's thought about death suggests that this question must be given a negative answer.

². H.262.
yet this doesn't touch Heidegger's point, for it rests on a conflation of the manner of our dying with death itself. The imagining described does not really touch death itself: why it does not becomes clear when we realise the pragmatic contradiction involved in trying to imagine one's own funeral, for a central aspect of it being one's own funeral is that one isn't around to do any imagining.

In Being and Time death is characterised as Dasein's most fundamental possibility, for it concerns Dasein's very Da-sein, its Being-there. Authentic Being-towards-death, called "anticipatory resoluteness" by Heidegger, involves Dasein taking over or "projecting itself upon" this most fundamental possibility. However, in the inauthenticity which, Heidegger says, Dasein almost always actually is, this possibility is covered over.¹ Heidegger maintains that it is in anticipatory resoluteness that the possibility for Dasein to be truly authentic lies.

Now given our claim that the concept of authenticity/inauthenticity plays no real part in Heidegger's later thought,² we can expect that the notion of anticipatory resoluteness does not figure in Heidegger's later characterisation of man as a mortal. We find that this is in fact the case.

For the later Heidegger, man properly takes over, or is initiated into, his mortality, not by resolutely anticipating his death, seen as his "ownmost, non-relational, certain, indefinite, not to be outstripped possibility",³ but rather by

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1. See H.252-255
2. See above, p.112
3. H.258
recognising in his death that nothingness which serves as the "veil of Being", that nothingness in contrast with which all beings are other and against which they stand fully unconcealed.

But nonetheless there is a fundamental similarity between the early and the later Heideggerian accounts of the place of death in human existence - this similarity points to a similarity between existence and ek-sistence. This is brought out in the sharp distinction Heidegger draws, both in his earlier and his later thought, between the demise of animals and the death of humans. This distinction has two aspects. Firstly, it serves to make the point that human beings can relate themselves to their end - most importantly by realising that their life will end; then they can be fearful of death or await it with equanimity - whereas (as far as we know) animals cannot. For humans, death is not simply the end of life but a part of life.

But the second result of Heidegger's distinction is this. Because death is taken to be something apart from merely the end of life - "we now call mortals mortals - not because their earthly life comes to an end, but because they are capable of death as death" - death seems to lose in Heidegger's thought all direct relation to the phenomenon of life. For Heidegger, death is a Being-phenomenon.

Adorno accuses Heidegger of in this way "falsely cleansing death of (from) its misery and stench - from being an animalistic kicking of the bucket". He continues:

This cleansing occurs in the same manner as a Wagnerian love - or salvation death. All this is similar to the

2. op.cit. pp.156,157
integration of death into hygiene, of which Heidegger accuses the inauthentic. By means of that which is kept silent in the high stylization of death, Heidegger becomes an accomplice of what is horrible in death. Even in the cynical materialism of the dissection room, this horribleness is recognized and denounced more strongly than in the tirades of ontology.

We might find Adorno’s attack here on Heidegger rather heavy-handed and gross, but conclude that, perhaps because of its grossness, it is very powerful. It points us to the question: what is the relation between ek-sistence and life in Heidegger’s thought? We can immediately re-frame this question and ask: how does Heidegger see the relation between human ek-sistence and the life of animals? In his “Letter on Humanism” Heidegger writes: ¹

... ek-sistence can never be thought of as a specific way, amongst other ways, of a living being ... thus all we attribute to man as animalitas in comparing him to the “animal” is grounded in the essence of ek-sistence. The body of man is something essentially different from the animal organism.

In what the “essential difference” between the “body of man” and the “animal organism” consists, Heidegger doesn’t say. He goes on to argue that the uniqueness of man can never be grasped if we start by thinking of man as a living being and then proceed to attribute specific distinctive features to him. He admits that there is indeed a relation between the ek-sistence of humans and the life of animals, for he writes: ²

... animals [Lebe-wesen: lit; living beings] are the most difficult of all beings for us to think of, because we are, on the one hand, most akin to them and, on the other hand, they are, at the same time, separated from our ek-sistential essence by an abyss.

Heidegger goes on to talk of the “strangeness” of animals,

1. trans.cit. p. 277. (Wegmarken, pp.155,156)
2. Ibid. pp.278,279. (Wegmarken, p.157)
which share with humans "... a barely conceivable abysmal corporeal kinship...". We have here clear signs of a recognition by Heidegger of the essential ambiguity of human ek-sistence, an ambiguity captured, we have claimed, in the characterisation of man as animal rationale. But we find that this ambiguity plays little positive role in Heidegger's thought about man; it is quickly diffused, or given nothing more than lip-service. We see this as soon as we examine the concessions Heidegger makes to what he terms the "humanistic" interpretations of man. Such concessions take the form of an admission that "... the humanistic interpretations of man as animal rationale, as 'person', or as intellectual, corporeal, spiritual being, are not declared wrong, nor rejected". The question we need to ask is: do these concessions carry any real weight within Heidegger's thought? The answer is that they do not. The admissions Heidegger makes that the humanistic conceptions of man are "not wrong" and "not to be rejected" remain quite idle, for he could just as easily, and as consistently, have said that these interpretations are wrong and are to be rejected. He at no stage fleshes out what his concessions to these interpretations might signify. Heidegger's explication of ek-sistence gives no suggestion as to which of the "humanistic" accounts of man is the more appropriate - they seem all to be equal in their character of being not wrong - yet for Heidegger the characterisation of man as a purely vital being is simply a radicalised form of the humanistic

1. ibid.
2. See above, pp. 59, 60
conception of man as animal rationale, as is the conception of man as a living being endowed with an immortal soul. For Heidegger, such opposed views of man seem to be equally "not wrong".

The result of Heidegger's neglect to give anything more than a formal concession to the "humanistic" interpretations of man means that, in his thought, there is a rift between man's ek-sistence and his 'essence', between his ek-sistence and 'all that he is', thus between man's ek-sistence and his reason, his ek-sistence and his life.

The rift between ek-sistence and life is nowhere more clearly shown than in the almost total neglect of the body in Heidegger's thought, a neglect which runs through all his thought about man. It has been called by one commentator "a kind of docetism" (the docetae were a heretical sect who held that Christ's body was either a phantom, or of celestial substance). If we return to Adorno for a moment, we find him agreeing with the main point just made - this being that in Heidegger's thought there is a rift between man as ek-sistent (also as existent) and man as living. The following passage, which refers specifically to Heidegger's thought about death, has wider significance. It says: "If Heidegger had made the transition from the inorganic to the organic [vom Anorganischen zum Leben], the existential horizon of death would have been thoroughly changed. His philosophy ... could nowhere be more

vulnerable than in this transition". 1

We might conclude by saying that, although Heidegger locates human dwelling firmly on the earth - "to be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell." 2 - he doesn't really come to terms with the significance of this location. We see again that the concreteness of dwelling, as the stay of mortals on the earth, is chimerical.

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We suggested at the end of the previous chapter that the prominence Heidegger gives to the role of questioning in non-calculative thinking gives some assurance that, while healing the dualistic rift between man and total reality, he does not defuse the ambiguities and tensions which, following Gurwitsch and Jonas, I have claimed to be an integral part of human existence. 3

The thought underlying this is that questioning seems to necessarily involve negativity: a question concerns what is not known, what is not intelligible or only partly intelligible. A question always allows of some form of negative answer.

However we find that in Heidegger's later thought the negativity which he ascribes to human ex-sistence is seen to arise fundamentally not through the inherent finitude,

1. op.cit. p.158. One commentator writes of Heidegger that "he insists upon the fundamental connection between life and Being among the Greeks, attaching strong importance to the derivation of the word Physis". Now while it is true that physis can mean growth, in the sense Heidegger understands it physis does not serve to designate the organic as against the inorganic. Physis simply means emergence, appearing. It thus bears no particular relation to life, as we understand this. See G.J. Seidel, Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1964) p.34,note.40.
3. See above, p.162.
fallibility, and incompleteness of human beings (of which questioning would be one expression), but rather through the negativity of that which grounds man's ex-sistence, this being the truth of Being. The essential place of negativity, of untruth, within the truth of Being is stressed by Heidegger in his "On the Essence of Truth" lecture, where he writes:¹

"Our quest for the nature of truth only extends into the original realm of interrogation when, having gained a preliminary insight into the complete essence of truth, we now include a consideration of untruth in the revelation of "essence". The inquiry into the dis-essence [Unwesen] of truth is not a subsequent filling of the gap; it is the decisive step towards any adequate posing of the question as to the nature of truth.

This dis-essence of truth is sharply distinguished by Heidegger from human failings, from error, mistaken judgment and miscalculation;² essential untruth is characterised here as the concealment of all-beings-as-a-whole which accompanies the unconcealment of particular beings, of particular regions of what is.³ But in his later thought, the negativity which Heidegger sees as inherent in the truth of Being is depicted as resulting from the temporal, and thus from the historical, nature of Being itself. (For Heidegger, time is not an empty continuum in which history unfolds; rather time itself is taken to be a derivative of the historical nature of Being.)

For Heidegger, man is not an historical being because many things happen to him or are undertaken by him in the course of his life, both individually and collectively. History is not essentially a chronicle of man's past; in fact history does not stem from man at all. Heidegger writes:⁴

Man ex-sists, and this now means: historical man has his

¹ trans. cit. p.338 (Wegmarken, pp.86,87)
² Ibid. pp.345,346 (Wegmarken, p.92)
³ Ibid. pp.340,431 (Wegmarken, p.89)
⁴ Ibid. p.337 (Wegmarken, p.86)
history and all its possibilities guaranteed him in the revelation of all-beings-as-a-whole. The manner in which the original nature of truth presences gives rise to the rare and simple decisions of history.

Thus for Heidegger it is the truth of Being which is essentially historical; man’s historicity results from his participation – characterised by Heidegger as letting-be – in this historical nature of the truth of Being, in taking up those possibilities bestowed on his ek-sistence by the truth of Being. For Heidegger, man’s ek-sistence is historical, not primarily “because many a thing may occur with man and human affairs in the course of time”, but because, as ek-sistent, man “stands in the destiny [Geschick] of Being.”¹

Authentic history is Geschichte, the self-sending (sich schicken) of Being, which constitutes the destiny, the fate (Geschick) of man, as the place where Being reveals/conceals itself.² It is for man to live fittingly, i.e. fatefully (geschicklich), in accordance with fate, which is “moira, mission, self-granting of Being”.³ The decisions of history find their ground, not in man, but in the truth/untruth of Being. As one commentator, writing in Heidegger’s language of “the gift of Being which presents itself differently in each epoch” says: “there is no question of really accepting or refusing this gift; rather, what seems to be involved is whether one acknowledges a gift which is imposed upon us anyway”.⁴

². See William Richardson, Heidegger - Through Phenomenology to Thought, p.435, Note 4.
³. Versenyi, op.cit. p.130
⁴. N. Lobkowicz, loc.cit. pp.61,62
What this in effect means is that Heidegger, rather than introducing negativity into human ek-sistence, through his emphasis on the centrality to thinking of questioning, in fact subjugates human ek-sistence to the negativity, the untruth, of the truth of Being, which manifests itself as history. A ramification of this is that man need no longer assume responsibility for his history, since the expressions of both truth and untruth manifested in this history derive fundamentally for Heidegger, not from human decision but from the concealing unconcealment which is the truth of Being. Heidegger sees the errors, mistakes, and misjudgments for which man can be held responsible as playing only on the outskirts of the truth of Being, with its kernel of 'authentic' untruth.

So we find that Heidegger, perhaps in reaction against the decisionistic emphasis of Being and Time, goes to the other extreme and absolves man from all significant decision and thus from responsibility, with this now being conceived solely as response-ability, cor-respondence.

Heidegger suggests in his "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking" that it is necessary, if we are to be able to see the true nature of man, for us to look away from man. With the elaboration of the notion of ek-sistence Heidegger is clearly attempting to carry this out. To see what (who) man is we are directed to look away from man towards the truth of Being which, we are told, grounds man's ek-sistence. Heidegger claims that history, freedom, even thought are not primarily

1. "Discourse on Thinking", trans.cit. p.58 (Gelassenheit, p.31)
possessions or expressions of man, but rather of Being itself. ("The manner in which the original nature of truth presences gives rise to the rare and simple decisions of history";¹ "Man does not 'possess' freedom as a property, it is the contrary that is true: freedom ... possesses man ...";² "Thought is ... thought of Being. The genitive has two meanings. Thought is of Being, insofar as thought, eventuated by Being, belongs to Being. Thought is at the same time thought of Being insofar as thought listens to, heeds, Being".³) For Heidegger, man is who he is because of his relation to Being, a relation which depends not on man but on Being itself.

Now I feel inclined to agree with Heidegger that we must, if we want to gauge the true humanity of man, look away from man (while always being careful to avoid the mistake of forgetting to look back). For instance, how else could we comprehend man's finitude, his temporality, except by seeing it against a backdrop afforded by a vision of eternity, even if all we see here recedes faster than our vision can travel? Yet it is not eternity, infinity which Heidegger sees when he looks away from man. Being, for Heidegger, is permeated by finitude; its very nature is time. In fact, when we look closely we find that Heidegger's Being is nothing but human finitude writ large. The history of Being is simply the history of man from which man as the figure of decision and

². ibid. p.336 (Wegmarken, p.85)
responsibility has disappeared. Heidegger looks away from man only to see man's magnified and distorted reflection. Thus in subjugating man to the history of Being, Heidegger in fact subjugates man to his own finitude, giving to this finitude many of the trappings of a deity and calling for man to kneel before it in humility and reverence. But this is a travesty of these notions, and a belittling of man.

We can now see that Heidegger's own later thought fails to rid itself of that anthropocentrism which he so vehemently attacks. It is thus in his own terms nihilistic. In fact this anthropocentrism serves to unite the earlier and the later stages of Heidegger's thought, so markedly at odds in other respects (as has been argued above). For with both the earlier and the later Heidegger we have, as Rosen points out, "... the same fundamental difficulty ...", this being: "how to distinguish between man and Being".1

We indicated in the previous chapter that we need to ask whether the conception of freedom developed by the later Heidegger can in fact be distinguished from slavery.2 We will now turn to this question.

We can begin by noting that, in its broad outline, this conception is not new. The idea of true freedom consisting in compliance with laws which transcend the human is present in Greek thought, and also clearly present in Spinoza. It is also the kernel of the freedom of the mystic. I think Camus is right when he says: "mystics ... find freedom in giving themselves, by losing themselves in their God, by accepting his rules, they become secretly free".3 But in these cases, the acquiescence

1. op.cit. p.131
2. See above, p.139.
3. The Myth of Sisyphus, trans.cit. p.57
in the higher realities is grounded either in knowledge, and thus belief in the intelligibility of reality, or in trust, faith, and love, and thus belief in the goodness of reality (God). But, as we have argued above, there is no place for knowledge in Heidegger's freedom; as characterised by Heidegger, the truth of Being is as much unintelligible, inscrutable, and thus beyond the reach of human knowledge, as it is intelligible and thus knowable. The unintelligibility of Being results not from the finite character of human knowledge, but from the inscrutability of Being in itself. (Here again Heidegger is endowing Being with a human characteristic - the finitude of knowledge becomes the inherent unintelligibility of Being).

Iris Murdoch writes that true freedom is best characterised as a form of 'obedience', an obedience stemming from knowledge and love. Heidegger's freedom can also be thought of as a form of obedience; but it is blind obedience to a tyrannical master. It springs neither from knowledge nor from love.

John Caputo points out that, whereas the God of Meister Eckhart is "... first and foremost a loving father", in whose hands "one knows only trust and peace", that from within the Heideggerian framework one "... must never speak of Being as loving or benevolent or fatherly". Caputo suggests that, while for Eckhart the Godhead is an abyss in which there are unknown depths, nonetheless that "... there is nothing to fear in God;

1. pp. 138, 139.
2. op.cit. p.40
everything in God should only be loved" - whereas "... there is nothing in Heidegger's Ereignis to love and almost everything to mistrust". Caputo adds that "there is nothing benevolent about the giving of the Event [of appropriation]", and suggests that the thanking which Heidegger identifies with thinking is a thanking devoid of gratitude, it being merely the acknowledgement of the gratuitous revealment/concealment of Being.1 In thinking, man gives his thanks for a gift which is neither accepted nor refused, but which is imposed upon him anyway.2

It was suggested in our first chapter that freedom which knows no law is a form of slavery - that being unable to ground one's choices in anything other than the act of choice itself is indistinguishable from having no choice at all.

We can now see that freedom which involves subordination to a 'law' which defies intelligibility and which inspires neither love nor faith nor trust is equally a form of slavery.

A concrete example of the dire ramifications of such a conception of freedom in the political sphere is given by Jonas, who writes:4

... as to Heidegger's Being, it is an occurrence of an unveiling, a fateful happening upon thought: so was the Führer and the call of German destiny under him: an unveiling of something indeed, a call of Being all right,

2. See above, p.188, Note 4.
3. See above, p.29

In supporting Jonas here I am not attempting to pass judgment on Heidegger's activities in 1933 and after. The point I am concerned with is whether Heidegger's thought, either then or now, provides the means by which an enlightened judgment could have been made about the true nature of a phenomenon such as Nazism.
fate-laden in every sense: neither then nor now did Heidegger's thought provide a norm by which to answer such calls...

Rosen shows that Heideggerian freedom is indeed a form of slavery by pointing out that, within Heidegger's (later) thought, the Nazi regime itself had to be seen as a "gift of Being", which had to "... fulfill itself as a mandate from Being". Further, Rosen suggests, nihilism (in Heidegger's terms the oblivion of Being) is also a "gift of Being" - Being presenting itself as absent. Thus "... to act against nihilism is to act against Being, and so to perpetuate nihilism", given that in human affairs nihilism expresses itself as "the will to dominate Being instead of letting it be". Thus, suggests Rosen, the conclusion Heidegger reaches in the "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking": "We are to do nothing but wait".1 But, Rosen rightly argues that the effect of this waiting is that "in his desire not to do violence to Being, man is violated by Being".2

In reacting to his belief that, in modern metaphysics, man has come to play the role of the legitimator of the Being of beings - man as representing subject determining the Being of beings as representedness for human representation3 - Heidegger now subjugates man to the truth/untruth of Being. Heidegger's "higher humanism" (that thought which sets the humanitas of man at its 'proper height') means "... the essence of man is essential for the truth of Being, and apart from this truth of Being man himself does not matter".4 What this means is that man is offered up to his own finitude.

So we find that the later Heidegger's account of man, as the

1. Discourse on Thinking, p.62 (Gelassenheit, p.37)
2. op.cit. pp.135,136
place wherein Being reveals/conceals itself, while healing
the dualistic rift of which Jonas speaks in the passage quoted
at the beginning of this thesis, does fall victim to the other
extreme which Jonas indicates — for it subordinates man,
not to nature, but to Being, so that man as man, i.e. man as
an incarnate being, a being who must assume some responsibility
for both his individual and his collective history, a being
who can uncover the expressions of evil in the world and who
can and should act to eliminate them, disappears from view.

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What I have here called the disappearance of man as man
shows itself in Heidegger's thought in other ways. I will
now point to some of these.

In his "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking"
Heidegger endeavours to give some indication as to the nature
of non-calculative thinking by making use of a term which
appears prominently in Meister Eckhart's writings, this
being "Gelassenheit".¹ In modern German this word means
composure, resignation, or patience. But Heidegger doesn't
use it specifically in any of these senses, though the mood
of relaxation, of lack of tension which "Gelassenheit" conveys
is incorporated by Heidegger.

Heidegger picks up the meaning of "Gelassenheit" which is
to be found in Meister Eckhart, where it refers to that state
to which one attains when one has given up one's self-love
and self-will and placed oneself under the aegis of the will
of God. Heidegger too uses "Gelassenheit" to refer to a state

¹ Though we have mentioned this word previously, this is the
first time we have made use of it. "Gelassenheit" is
usually translated into English as "releasement". I am
unhappy with this translation; and since Heidegger uses
"Gelassenheit" in a fairly technical sense, which we will
soon discuss, I have decided to leave it untranslated.
of non-willing, but he explicitly denies that this is to be understood as Eckhart understands it, i.e. as a giving up of one's own will and placing oneself under the will of a higher being, of God. For Heidegger, Gelassenheit so conceived is still "... within the domain of will".¹ Heidegger's Gelassenheit involves neither a willing nor a submission to a higher will, nor does it "... float(s) in the realm of unreality and so in nothingness", where "lacking all power of action, [it] is a will-less letting in of everything and, basically, the denial of the will to live".² For Heidegger, Gelassenheit is a letting-be which "... does not belong to the domain of the will".³

Heidegger maintains that "... thinking, understood in the traditional way, as re-presenting, is a kind of willing".⁴ He makes this identification because he sees, in modern metaphysics, the thinking subject construed as the provider of the conditions for the possibility (Bedingungen der Möglichkeit) of the objectivity, the re-presentedness, of the objects of thought, thus subjugating these objects to the 'demands' of thought. But, Heidegger's thinking goes, is it not the will which most clearly expresses the imposition of subjective 'demands' on the objective world? Then is it not reasonable to designate...

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¹. Discourse on Thinking, trans.cit. p.61 (Gelassenheit, pp.35, 36). Although the "Conversation" takes the form of a dialogue between a teacher, a scholar, and a scientist, Heidegger speaks equally through each of the participants: this means that there is no need to designate which of them is speaking at any time.
². ibid. p.80 (Gelassenheit, p.60)
³. ibid. p.61 (Gelassenheit, p.35)
⁴. ibid. p.58 (Gelassenheit, p.31)
thinking which locates the conditions for the possibility of
the object-ness of the objects of thought in the thinking
subject as a kind of willing?¹

Heidegger reacts to such a view of thinking by claiming
that it is thinking itself which is conditioned (bedingt) by
its subject-matter, by the thing (das Ding). He writes that:²

Thinking ... we are called by the thing as the thing. In
the strict sense of the German word bedingt, we are the
be-things, the conditioned ones. We have left behind us
the presumption of all unconditionedness.

So, by discussing the nature of non-calculative thinking in
terms of the word "Gelassenheit", Heidegger wishes to show
that it is the subject-matter of thought which determines the
nature of thought: strict thinking is, for Heidegger, not
that thinking which follows rigidly determinate rules of
procedure, but rather thinking which holds itself firmly to
the dictates of its subject-matter.

But, we might ask, in the notion of thinking holding itself
firmly to its subject-matter, is there not a suggestion of
willing? Heidegger partially admits this point. In order to
show that thinking, Gelassenheit, is not "a will-less letting
in of everything", Heidegger agrees that he has to show "... in
what respect something like power of action and resolve also
reign in Gelassenheit".³ He now characterises Gelassenheit in
terms of steadfastness (Ausdauer) and composure (Verhaltenheit),
notions which in ordinary German carry the implication of
strength of will. Again he seems to admit this point, but

1. See John Caputo, "The Rose is Without Why", Philosophy Today,
Spring, 1971, p.4.
3. Discourse on Thinking, p.80 (Gelassenheit, p.60)
then immediately retracts his admission, for he writes: "This composed steadfastness, in which the nature of Gelassenheit rests, could be said perhaps to correspond to the highest willing; but it could not." 1

Heidegger's thought here is this: to attain to strict thinking, thought must rid itself of the presumption that it provides the conditions with which its subject-matter must accord for it to become an object of thought. This requires, Heidegger says, "... a trace of willing", but a trace which is "... completely extinguished in Gelassenheit". 2 Again, as with Meister Eckhart, Heidegger's Gelassenheit has two "moments", one 'positive' and one 'negative'. 3 The negative moment involves thinking, through the assistance of "a trace of willing", ridding itself of its presumptions, which include its inclination to explain and rationalise. 4 Thinking is then, in its positive moment, free to respond to the demands of that which is to be thought, a response which, Heidegger maintains, bears no relation to willing.

We find, however, Heidegger claiming that thinking, rather than embracing a negative (active) and positive (passive) moment as we have suggested, enters a region beyond this distinction. We find it said in the "Conversation": 5

Perhaps a higher activity is concealed in Gelassenheit than is found in all the actions within the world and in the machinations of mankind... ... which activity is yet no activity.

Then Gelassenheit lies - ... - beyond the distinction between activity and passivity.

1. ibid. p.81 (Gelassenheit, p.61)
2. ibid. p.80 (Gelassenheit, p.59)
4. For an explicit connection between representative thinking and explanation see "The Thing", trans.cit. p.181 (VA, p.180)
5. Discourse on Thinking, p.61 (Gelassenheit, p.35)
But I still want to say that the thinking (Gelassenheit) which Heidegger here locates beyond the distinction between activity and passivity in fact involves an interpenetration of the poles of this distinction. We are familiar, certainly in a religious context, with the situation where one acts to prepare oneself so that one may receive what is offered one — in Christian terms, where a person, through his own effort and action, prepares himself to receive the grace of God.

I want to suggest that Heidegger's non-calculative thinking (Gelassenheit), rather than leading beyond the distinction between activity and passivity, involves an analogous active rendering of oneself passive.

Heidegger also claims for strict thinking that it goes beneath and behind the opposition of subject and object, an opposition which dominates representational thinking.\(^1\) The 'subject-matter' of strict thinking is the truth of Being, which reveals/conceals itself in the thing; and although the thing "... may become an object if we place it before us", nonetheless "the thingy character of the thing does not consist in its being a represented object, nor can it be defined in any way in terms of the objectness, the over-

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1. See *Discourse on Thinking*, p.67 (Gelassenheit, pp.42,43)
againstness, of the object\textsuperscript{1}.

Now while I might accept that on certain rare occasions in human life the opposition between subject and object is circumvented (perhaps the experience of 'ontological' mystery, as characterised by Gabriel Marcel, where the subject can no longer dis-entangle himself from that which he seeks to question, is such an occasion\textsuperscript{2}), nonetheless I must again agree with Jonas when he writes: "the subject-object relation... is not a lapse but the privilege, burden, and duty of man"\textsuperscript{3}.

Perhaps such a claim is in the end no more than an article of faith, but it is a faith that I share.

Let us return to Heidegger's Gelassenheit. We have seen him claim that this notion, as he conceives it, is not analogous to the notion of Gelassenheit which we find in Meister Ekhart, where it refers to the giving up of one's self-will and placing.

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1. "The Thing", trans.cit.p.167 (VA, p.165). We know that, for Heidegger, strict, i.e. meditative, recollective, foundational thought thinks the truth of Being. But Heidegger characterises ambiguously the way in which the truth of Being presents itself to thought. On the one hand, the truth of Being is characterised in terms of history and thus (linear) time. "... the thought which thinks of the truth of Being thinks historically" ("Letter on Humanism", p.284, Wegmarken, p.166). But on the other hand we find Heidegger thinking of the truth of Being by way of the thing, which then becomes determinative for thought. "Thinking... we are called by the thing as thing." ("The Thing", p.101, VA p.179). And we have already seen that the natural world is the source of numerous Heideggerian things (see above p.175), which bring with them, perhaps unnoticed, their seasonal (cyclical) temporality. What this ambiguity in Heidegger's conception of the 'place' in which the truth of Being reveals/conceals itself means is that, in his later thought, there is a secret re-union of the natural and historical worlds, a weakening of the sharp distinction between nature and history which is fundamental to the thought of Being and Time, and to existentialist thought generally. This is an expression of the weakening of the influence of Hebraic thought on Heidegger, for the emphasis on linear time is an Hebraic legacy.

2. See above, p.154, footnote 2.

3."Heidegger and Theology", loc.cit. p.258.
oneself totally under the will of God. But let us look more closely at this claim. Heidegger here is in effect reiterating his view that Being cannot be characterised by means of personalistic language; that we cannot think of such a thing as the will of Being. Yet Heidegger himself, in his talk of the gift of Being and the thanking which is essential thinking, is giving to Being overtones of personality. It thus seems to me quite reasonable to see that which Being gives, sends (schickt) to man as authentic history (Geschichte), as the expression and effect of the will of Being, indeed a will which gives all the indications of arbitrariness (Willkürlichkeit), even of despotism (Willkürherrschaft). If this view is accepted, then we see that Heidegger's Gelassenheit, rather than transcending the domain of will, leaves man subject to the inscrutable 'will' of Being.

Though in his discussion of non-calculative thinking as a non-willing Heidegger uses the notion of will in a somewhat metaphorical sense - his discussion doesn't directly concern the will as a separate faculty or function of the individual psyche - nonetheless the sharp distinction he draws between strict thinking, as he conceives this, and thinking "understood in the traditional way, as a kind of willing", is symptomatic of Heidegger's dramatic about-face from the decisionistic emphasis of the thought of Being and Time.

The emphasis on response-ability, cor-respondence, on 'obedience' that we find in the later Heidegger, as against will, choice, decision, and responsibility, notions which are central to the thought of Being and Time, is one of the

1. See above, p. 195
key factors which has suggested to many writers that there may be deep affiliations between Heidegger's later thought and various of the Oriental philosophy-religions.¹ For, as Arthur Danto points out in his book Mysticism and Morality, "... the mechanism of the will is considered the enemy of ultimate happiness throughout the East".²

1. William Barrett, in his Introduction to a selection of D.T. Suzuki's writings entitled Zen Buddhism (New York, Doubleday, 1956), reports that "a German friend of Heidegger told me that one day when he visited Heidegger he found him reading one of Suzuki's books: 'If I understand this man correctly,' Heidegger remarked, 'this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings'. While claiming that "... there is much in him [Heidegger] that is not in Zen, but also very much more in Zen that is not in Heidegger", Barrett concludes: "... yet the points of correspondence between the two, despite their disparate sources, are startling enough".³ These points of correspondence are explored by Peter Kreeft in his "Zen in Heidegger's Gelassenheit", International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. II, 1971, pp. 521-545. The question of the relation between Heidegger's later thought and Eastern thought generally was taken up in a Symposium held at the University of Hawaii in November, 1969. The papers from this Symposium, together with the text of a letter sent by Heidegger, are reprinted in Philosophy East and West, vol. 20, 1970. In this letter Heidegger writes that "again and again it has seemed urgent to me that a dialogue take place with the thinkers of what is to us the Eastern world", though he immediately goes on to point out that "the greatest difficulty in this enterprise always lies, as far as I can see, in the fact that with few exceptions there is no command of the Eastern languages either in Europe or in the United States". (p. 221). Heidegger also points to this difficulty in his "A Dialogue on Language" where, interestingly, the participants are Heidegger himself and a Japanese. (See On the Way to Language, trans.cit. esp. p. 23. US, p. 113).

But it should be noted that in his Spiegel-Interview, Heidegger claims that a fundamental change in the modern technologically oriented world can only be brought about by that thinking which goes back to the source of this technology. Such a change cannot be prepared for, he writes, by taking over Zen Buddhism or other Eastern world-experiences. Rather, he suggests, what is needed is a re-appropriation of the European tradition, for thinking can only be changed by thought that has the same origin and form. (Der Spiegel, No. 23, 1976, pp. 214, 215).

We find, interestingly, that one of the central strands of Danto's argument in this book bears on our overall discussion of nihilism. For it is Danto's claim that the monistic drive of much Oriental thought, its concern to "...close the gap between the world and ourselves" by bringing about "... the stunning of the will", would, if fully successful, take us beyond the realm of morality; for, Danto claims, "... the very possibility of morality presupposes the mechanism of the will and the possibility of acting contrary to or deliberately in what one takes to be conformity with the world".¹ Danto is thus saying that the moral and natural worlds cannot be identical, and it is his implicit view that the 'space' opened out by the non-coincidence of these worlds is the peculiarly human place of dwelling. Thus, to use our own terms, the collapse of this 'space' would mean the disappearance of man as man.

We suggested in our first chapter that, to avoid nihilism, an intersection of the moral and natural worlds must be maintained. What we now see is that a complete coincidence of these worlds will lead just as surely to nihilism as does their radical non-coincidence.

We now need to tie this point in with Heidegger's later thought, specifically the discussion of ethics which he gives in the "Letter on Humanism". Heidegger here, speaking of a crisis brought about by the increasing dominance of technology, quite openly concedes that "the wish for an ethics needs to be fulfilled, all the more urgently, because the overt no less than the concealed perplexity of man increases to immeasurable dimensions."² But first, he suggests, a preliminary question

1. ibid. pp.118,119
2. trans.cit. p.295 (Wegmarken, p.183)
must be taken up. This asks simply; what is ethics?

Heidegger claims that, before the time of Plato, at which time thought was transmuted into philosophy, with its various disciplines, "thinkers ... had known neither a 'logic', nor an 'ethics', nor a 'physics'". He continues: "Yet their thinking is neither illogical nor immoral. But their conception of physis had a profundity and depth which all later 'physics' was never able again to attain".1

In order to think back to what he sees as the source of what later became the discipline of ethics, Heidegger brings to light an old meaning of the Greek word "ethos" which he says originally meant "abode, place of dwelling".2 On the basis of this he writes that "if now, in accord with the basic meaning of the word ethos, ethics dwells in the abode of man, then that thought which thinks of the truth of Being as the original element of man as ek-sisting is already in itself at the source of ethics".3 But, for Heidegger, "thinking that seeks for the truth of Being and thereby determines the essential abode of man from Being ..." is itself neither ethics nor ontology.4 Thus ethical thought itself cannot reach to the source of ethics. Does this mean that the source of ethics is, for Heidegger, itself "beyond good and evil"? And if so, how can it then speak to man in terms of good and evil? Heidegger himself puts this question in a slightly different way, and asks:5

If thought, considering the truth of Being, determines the essence of the humanitas of ek-sistence from its pertinence to Being, does this thought only remain a

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1. ibid. pp.295,296. (Wegmarken, p.184)
2. Ibid. p.296 (Wegmarken, p.184)
3. ibid. p.297 (Wegmarken, p.187)
4. Ibid. p.298 (Wegmarken, p.188)
5. Ibid.
theoretical imagining of Being and of man, or is it possible to extract from [such] knowledge directives for action and put them to use for life?

Given Heidegger's view that thought which thinks of the truth of Being is more original (closer to the origin) than the opposition of subject and object, and beyond the distinction between activity and passivity, the answer he gives to this question should not surprise us. He writes:1

...such thinking is neither theoretical nor practical. It occurs before such a differentiation... Such thinking results in nothing. It has no effect. It suffices its own essence, in that it is.

But surely, we must object, the concern of ethics is the sphere of practice, of human action and interaction. When we keep this in mind we see that Heidegger has in effect cut off the source of ethics (thought that thinks of the truth of Being) and ethical thought itself. Further, for Heidegger, such ethical thought, which involves attempts by human beings to weigh and interpret history, both individual and collective, in terms of the categories of good and evil, as well as the endeavour to close the gap a little between what is and what ought to be, is merely the expression of ungrounded and inessential calculation, of evaluation, which does nothing but obscure the original domain of ethics. We find Heidegger speaking in a deprecating tone of all law that "... remains but the handiwork of human reason"; the law and rule for man must come from Being, from the destiny (Schickung) of Being which is authentic history.2

But the result of this is that man is left subject to the dictates of his historical epoch, which he lets-be in essential

1. ibid.
2. ibid. p.300 (Wegmarken, p.191)
thinking. Thus, for Heidegger, it is not a question of man living his life in the light of his conception of what is good, a conception which comes increasingly closer to the mark with increase in wisdom; rather it is for man to live fatefully, fittingly, i.e. in accord with the way in which the truth of Being gives and withholds itself as history.

Heidegger claims that his "higher humanism", although it "... speaks out against all earlier humanism", nonetheless does not "... advocate the in-human". He scoffs at the position where, "because 'humanism' is argued against, one fears a defense of the inhuman and a glorification of barbaric cruelty". But the doubt and the question remains: even if Heidegger's anti-humanistic humanism does not defend the inhuman and glorify cruelty, does it or can it provide a defense against crimes against humanity? Or, in its attempt to lay bare the essential dignity of man, to set the humanitas of the human being at its proper height, does Heidegger's thought, by virtue of its lack of opposition, unwittingly but decisively "... make common cause with the opposite of the human and espouse the inhuman, defend inhumanity and degrade the dignity of man"?

What we are really asking is: does unwillingness to think of and evaluate history in terms of the categories of good and evil, or (what amounts to the same thing) does the willingness to dissolve human history in the history of Being, of which all that can be said is that it is as it is, present unwitting support for what is evil in human life and

1. ibid. p.290 (Wegmarker, p.176)
2. ibid. p.291 (Wegmarker, pp.176,177)
3. ibid. p.281 (Wegmarker, p.161)
history? My own answer to this is a simple 'Yes!'.

I believe that Heidegger's later thought, although a form of perfectibilism only in an attenuated sense — it is perfectibilist in the sense that it locates the essential imperfections of man not in man himself but in Being, whose truth is permeated with untruth — itself succumbs to the weakness of perfectibilist views which John Passmore indicates when he asks:¹

whether the attempt to substitute for ordinary human relationships and human achievements a supposedly 'higher' relationship and 'higher' achievement — does not issue in what is actually a lower form of life, inferior to what human beings daily accomplish in their ambitious, proud, anxiety-ridden way.

I am in basic agreement with the conclusion reached by John Caputo that "the whole notion in the later Heidegger of a 'higher' humanism has a tendency to slip into a rather vacuous play on words".²

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The problems accompanying Heidegger's conception of ethics result from the compounding of a problem which can be traced back to the gulf he creates between non-calculative thinking and practical action. We have already seen Heidegger claim that strict thinking "results in nothing" and "has no effect";³ but, as Rosen rightly points out, "for a philosophy to assert that it has no results (...) is thereby to define the nature of the connection between philosophy — or thinking — and political existence. This is itself a result, and an altogether

²."Eckhart and Heidegger", loc.cit. Pt.II, p.73
³. See above, p.205
crucial, even disastrous result". And further, Rosen argues, "it is a strange consequence of Heidegger's doctrine that the dominant political configuration of the day must be taken as a sign of the character of the revelation of Being in the given epoch. Ostensibly beyond theory and practice, this doctrine gives a special importance to practice". William Richardson attempts to defend Heidegger, or better Heidegger's thought, from such charges, specifically in connection with Heidegger's (admittedly brief) capitulation to Nazism. Richardson concludes that "the worst that can be said out of fairness to his [Heidegger's] philosophy in the context of the Nazi experience is not that his philosophy compelled the capitulation but that it was unable to prevent it". But, replying for Rosen, we can say that, from within Heidegger's thought, there is no difference between these positions; that Heidegger's thought, being unable to prevent a capitulation to Nazism in 1933, in fact compelled such a capitulation, not because it advocates Nazism, but because it calls for "... a surrender to the worth of what happens as defined by the force of the times".

We find that Heidegger quite explicitly attempts to place non-calculative thinking outside the opposition of theoria and praxis - but this leads to a bifurcation of man's existence which raises the tensions and ambiguities inherent in human life to an intolerable degree, where they are no longer fruitful, but destructive. We have already noted the

1. op.cit. p.122
2. Ibid. p.131
4. Rosen, op.cit. p.134
inability of Heidegger's thought to relate man, conceived as e\-sistent, to man conceived as animal rationale, i.e. as a living being endowed with reason and the character of personhood.\textsuperscript{1} We find now that, from within the parameters set by his thought, Heidegger has no way to adequately relate strict thinking, which "... acts in that it thinks",\textsuperscript{2} and which is the distinguishing feature of man's nature,\textsuperscript{3} to calculative, evaluative thought, to whose lot it must fall to provide directions for the 'grosse' actions of man's life as a social, economic, political, living being.

Heidegger's strict thinking stands opposed to value-thinking; but, he writes, "the thinking that runs counter to 'values' does not state that all one declares 'values' is worthless [\textit{wertlos}; lit. valueless]. One should rather come to understand that it is exactly through the characterisation of something as 'value', that it loses its dignity [\textit{Würde}].\textsuperscript{4} So Heidegger is here setting in opposition the notions of value and dignity. He suggests that values are simply the intentional objects of acts of valuing; that something is valuable precisely because and to the extent that it is valued. Thus "... through the estimation of something as a value one accepts what is evaluated only as a mere object for the appreciation of man".\textsuperscript{5} So, for Heidegger, value-thinking is a species of object-thinking, where "... the objectivity has the character of value". He claims that "all valuing, even when it values positively, subjectivises the thing. It does not let beings be, but makes them valuable as the object of its action. Thinking in values here and in general is the greatest blasphemy that can be thought of in

\textsuperscript{1} See above, pp.184,185
\textsuperscript{2} "Letter on Humanism", p.271 (\textit{Wegenmarken}, p.145)
\textsuperscript{3} See Discourse on Thinking, p.58 (\textit{Gelassenheit}, p.31)
\textsuperscript{4} "Letter on Humanism", \textit{trans.cit.} p.292 (\textit{Wegenmarken}, p.179)
\textsuperscript{5} \textit{ibid.}
Heidegger is here fixing on one aspect of the logic of the concept of value, this being that values are always values for a valuer. He sees that this dependence is not shared by the notion of dignity; nor, we might add, is it shared by the notion of worth. We can see this as soon as we think of those cases where it is recognised that something is not worth the value we give it, or alternatively worth far more than the value given to it. This suggests that the worth of a thing is not directly dependent on its value for people, and it also suggests that the notion of worth is itself a value-notion, though not in the narrow sense of designating an intentional object of value-consciousness. The concept of dignity is also, in this broad sense, a value-concept.

So, when Heidegger writes: "One should rather come to understand that it is exactly through the characterisation of something as 'value' that it loses its dignity", then he is saying that human valuing and evaluating can never approach the true value of Being. Rather than denying that the concept of value has an application to Being, Heidegger is implying that the value of Being is so great and of such a kind that it cannot even be envisaged by the evaluating human subject. He is thus, unbeknown to himself, in complete agreement with a prominent strand of Nietzsche's thought, which urges us to see through the naivete of our former ideals, in terms of which we had evaluated the world, because "... the world might be far more valuable than we used to believe".

What this means is that Heidegger's non-calculative thinking,
which lets Being be, does not go beyond the domain of positive or negative evaluation; it is itself a form of value-thinking, for to decline from evaluating itself involves an evaluation. Letting-be is in effect a positive evaluation, an underhand form of affirmation of the manifestations of the truth of Being, with its kernel of untruth. As Rosen writes: "Despite Heidegger's claim that the genuine thinker can attach no 'worth' to 'what happens', and that to pass judgment on the justice, dignity, or excellence of the gifts of Being is to succumb to 'moral pharisaism', the result is a surrender to the worth of what happens as defined by the force of the times". We have argued that it is indeed towards such a surrender that Heidegger's later thought points. And we can justifiably say that Nietzsche also succumbs to it, though in his case the surrender is disguised by being given all the trappings of an attack. Nietzsche's affirmation is, or valiantly tries to be, open and joyous; Heidegger's 'affirmation' is surreptitious and resigned. But both necessitate the disappearance of man as man, i.e. man as a being who affirms only that which is worthy of affirmation.

But, in Heidegger's defense, cannot it be argued that the intimate relation he draws between non-calculative thinking and questioning militates against the view that has just been put, this being that Heidegger silently calls on man to affirm his fate, as that which is sent as authentic history by the truth of Being? This question contains another, which asks: what, if any, is the relation in Heidegger's thought between letting-be (thinking) and questioning? Do these not intuitively

1. At other times Heidegger talks of thought "letting beings be"; e.g. "Letter on Humanism", trans. cit. p.293 (Wegmarken, p.179). Perhaps Heidegger's thought is that, in letting-be, man allows Being to come to stand in beings.
2. op.cit. p.134
seem to stand opposed? In An Introduction to Metaphysics Heidegger describes the questioning attitude or state of mind as a "willing to know". ¹ How then can questioning so conceived be related to letting-be, which, Heidegger says, "does not belong to the domain of the will".² Yet, for the later Heidegger, non-calculative thinking involves both questioning and letting-be. Clearly then his account of questioning must have altered drastically. We can best approach this change by examining Heidegger's re-interpretation of the notion of resolution, a notion central to the thought of Being and Time, and with this his complete re-assessment of the place of the will in human existence.

For the Heidegger of An Introduction to Metaphysics, resolution is bound intimately to the will, for "to will is to be resolved".³ This particular work, although written in 1935, was not published until 1953. In the period between the writing and the publication Heidegger added some 'clarificatory' material which is placed in square brackets in the text. One such addition concerns the notions of resolution and will. After a section in which the following sentences occur: "To question is to will to know. He who wills, he who puts his whole existence into a will, is resolved", ⁴ Heidegger adds: "[The essence of willing is here carried back to resolve (Entschlossenheit, unclosedness). But the essence of resolve lies in the opening, the coming-out-of-cover (Ent-borgenheit) of human Dasein into the clearing of Being, and not in the storing up of energy for action]".⁵

Heidegger is here playing on the etymology of the word "Entschlossenheit", which is composed of the negative prefix "ent-" (un-) and the past participle of the very "schließen", to close. So, Heidegger claims, to be resolved (entschlossen) is to be un-closed (ent-schlossen), i.e. open to the truth of Being. Thus Heidegger is able to say that the resolution grounded in will is itself grounded in the openness of the truth of Being, which man enters by letting it be. He then writes that "[... its (resolve's) relation to Being is one of letting-be]."

I think that it quite clear that this etymological manoeuvre, though ingenious, does violence to the thought of both Being and Time and An Introduction to Metaphysics. Heidegger wishes to show that there is no essential difference between his earlier and his later conception of resolution, and thus no essential difference between his various conceptions of the role of will in existence: however the stark difference between the tense mood generated by the earlier works and the relaxed, almost joyful mood (despite the undoubtedly overtones of discipline, even of ascetism) of a work such as the "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking", belies Heidegger's claims. (In making this objection, we are referring to Heidegger's own point concerning the disclosive power of moods.)

Now, just as the later Heidegger tries explicitly to ground resolve, and thus willing, in letting-be (even if this should "offend(s) the understanding"), I suggest that he implicitly

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1. See W. Brock (ed.) Existence and Being, p.398, Note 21
2. See Discourse on Thinking, p.81 (Gelassenheit, p.61)
3. An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans.cit. p.21 (EM, p.16)
4. See H.134
5. An Introduction to Metaphysics, p.21 (EM, p.16)
unifies the activities of being and questioning.

We have seen that Heidegger makes it quite clear that the questioning with which he identifies non-calculative thinking does not and cannot lead to answers or explanations of what it questions — that it serves only to make this more open in its question-worthiness.¹ Authentic questioning serves to "... open(s) up the horizon, in order that beings may dawn in ... questionableness";² but it does not itself bring about either the initial manifestness nor the question-worthiness of beings. Caputo, speaking for Heidegger, writes that "questioning merely provides Being with the opportunity to give itself out as what it is. Questioning negatively overcomes the obstacles in Dasein [man] which prevent it [him] from letting Being be. But questioning does not positively produce the result of disclosing Being in its truth. Only Being itself can do that".³

Questioning that does not and cannot lead to answers, to explanations, questioning that continually shows what it questions to be more and more worthy of question, leads to the realization that what it questions can never be reached and made understandable by the question. Thus the question of Being leads to the realization that Being is not an answer to a question, that "... Being will not deliver itself over to the demands of rational interrogation".⁴

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³. "The Rose is Without Why", loc.cit. p.9
⁴. ibid. pp.10,11
Caputo concludes from this that "... questioning is itself surrendered"\(^1\) - but we have seen that this is not so. But, for Heidegger, questioning is no longer a "willing to know", it is no longer a search for grounds or causes; it is now essentially a pointer to the limits of knowledge. Caputo rightly suggests that "the essence of Dasein [man] is seen to lie in a dimension deeper than questioning",\(^2\) but does not see that, for Heidegger, it is through the questioning that continually leads to a deepening of itself that man is pointed towards that which transcends his questioning, to a dimension which his questioning cannot reach.

In the article from which the above quotations come Caputo is concerned to make understandable, within the overall context of Heidegger's thought, certain aspects of the thought of Der Satz vom Grund. Here Heidegger quotes from the German mystical poet Angelus Silesius (Johann Scheffler: 1624-1677):\(^3\)

> Without Why
> The rose is without why: it blossoms because it blossoms;
> It thinks not upon itself, nor does it ask if anyone sees it.

Heidegger then adds what Caputo calls a "surprising commentary", which runs:\(^4\)

> What is unsaid in the said - and everything depends upon this - is that man, in the most hidden ground of his essence, truly is for the first time when he is in his own way like the rose - without why.

It is clear from the text that Heidegger is not merely reporting the view of man which, he claims, is unsaid in the

1. ibid. p.11
2. ibid.
3. Quoted in Caputo, ibid. p.3 (SG, p.68)
4. Also quoted in Caputo, ibid. (SG, pp.72,73)
saying of Angelus Silesius, but is himself advocating this view. But this leads us to ask the question: how can man live "without why" if that thinking in which his distinctiveness lies is a form of questioning? But I think that the analysis of Heidegger's concept of questioning that we have given shows that there is no incompatibility here: man is in his own way like the rose - without why - when his questioning points him to the fact that he can give no explanation of, can find no ground for, Being, but finally see that it is as it is because it is as it is. Man's way to be "without why" is to continually see the inadequacy of the 'why'.

Heidegger expresses his view of the incapacity of human attempts at explanation to touch the world as follows:¹

The world presences by worlding. That means: the world's worlding cannot be explained by anything else nor can it be fathomed through anything else ... causes and grounds remain unsuitable for the world's worlding.

But Heidegger does not only want to point to the unfathomable, "without why" character of the world as a whole, over against the susceptibility to question of what is inner-worldly. For, as one commentator points out, a deep undercurrent of Heidegger's later thought is a concern with "... the inexhaustability of everyday things".²

If the connection that has been drawn here between authentic questioning and living "without why" is accepted, then it can clearly be seen that such questioning is indeed a covert form

¹ "The Thing", trans.cit. pp.179,180 (VA,p.178). Despite the difference of terminology, the similarity with Nietzsche's thought is here unmistakeable. See for example The Twilight of the Idols, trans.cit. "The Four Great Errors", Sec.8
of affirmation (this means, in effect, that it is no longer questioning), for it says that human beings have no way of evaluating the "worlding of their world"; that any attempt at explanation, at evaluation, or assessment "...just does not reach the simpliceness of the simple onefold of worlding". Indeed we find written: "In Heidegger ... one cannot speak of a 'why'. Only the 'that' - that the history of Being is such as it is - can be said".\(^1\) And Being itself - what is Being? Heidegger answers: "It is itself".\(^2\) It is the unfathomable ground of everything that is, but is itself without ground. In this it resembles the highest being of which metaphysics speaks, or the God of Christianity. But whereas such a being is conceived as perfectly intelligible in itself - it being mysterious only from the point of view of the finite human intellect - Being as conceived by Heidegger is, as we have seen, itself as much an expression of unintelligibility (evil) as of intelligibility (good). "The mystery of St. Thomas' God as a groundless ground (uncaused cause) is his surpassing intelligibility; the mystery of Heidegger's Being as a groundless ground is its ingrained, ineradicable obscurity".\(^3\) Heidegger's Being, as ground (Grund), is in itself an abyss (Abgrund).\(^4\)

The abysmal nature of Being as ground is brought sharply into focus with Heidegger's introduction of the concept of play into his thought. He cites with approval the Heraclitean

4. See Der Satz vom Grund, pp.184,185
fragment 42, which runs: "Time is a child playing a game of draughts; the kingship is in the hands of a child."¹ But whereas a game of draughts is purposeful and rule-governed, the play of Being, as depicted by Heidegger, is "... wanton and unpredictable",² it is "... a fluctuating, wavering dance", which merely toys with man.³ For Heidegger, Being, as destiny, "plays because it plays. 'Because' sinks into play. The play is without 'why'. It plays while it plays. There remains only play: the highest and the deepest".⁴ It is for man to 'play-along' with this hyper-serious play of Being⁵ - the relation of man to Being is one of inter-play.⁶ Man is the 'place' where Being plays - to be such a place is, for Heidegger, the true dignity of man. To my mind, it is a belittling of man.

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The disappearance of man as man in Heidegger's later thought is nowhere more evident than in his account of language. For the later Heidegger, "in its essence, language is neither an expression nor an activity of man"; it is not man, but

¹. SG, p.188. trans. Kathleen Freeman, op.cit. p.28. "aion", translated by Freeman as "time", Heidegger translates as "Seinsgeschick", "the destiny of Being".
². Caputo, "Being, Ground, and Play in Heidegger", loc.cit., p.39. As is pointed out by Passmore, the difference between simple play and game-playing is obscured in German, where "to play" is "spielen", and "game" is "das Spiel". See op.cit. p.296, note.
³. ibid. p.38
⁴. Trans. by Caputo in "Being, Ground, and Play in Heidegger", p.39. (SG, p.188)
⁵. SG, p.188. See also Caputo, "Being, Ground, and Play in Heidegger", p.47, Note 66.
language itself, which speaks. ¹ We are told: "to reflect on language thus demands that we enter into the speaking of language in order to take up our stay with language, i.e. within its speaking, not within our own". ²

As we should by now expect, Heidegger is very quick to concede that "no one would dare to declare incorrect, let alone reject as useless, the identification of language as audible utterance of inner emotions, as human activity, as representation by image and by concept. The view of language thus put forth is correct..." ³ But as we have seen, Heidegger sets very little store by what is merely correct. He claims in this instance that these correct ideas about language, viz. that language is a human activity, the expression of ideas and emotions, "...completely ignore the oldest natural cast of language", that "they never bring us to language as language". ⁴

By saying that it is language, not man, that speaks, Heidegger is not just making the point that language is not a malleable tool of thought and speech, but their substance, with its own grammatical structure which leaves the imprint of its form on all thought and speech. For Heidegger, the primary form of language is the individual word, whose resonance can be heard, he intimates, when language is freed, in thought and poetry, from the strictures of a framework of logic and grammar. ⁵

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² ibid. p.190 (US, p.12)
³ ibid. p.193 (US, pp.15,16)
⁴ ibid.
⁵ See "Letter on Humanism", trans.cit. p.271 (Wegmarken, p.146)
Heidegger sees it as the task of thought and poetry to allow language to speak, to which speaking (Sprechen) human speech is a response (Entsprechen).¹

But what is the nature of the speaking of language? Heidegger writes that this speaking can best be thought of as a *saying*, and this saying means "probably the same as 'show' in the sense of: let appear and let shine..."² We are here led to think of Heidegger's characterisation of physis (Being) as appearing, shining forth;³ and thus to see that, for Heidegger, the speaking (saying) of language lets be the process of appearing which is Being itself.

We know that in the Tractatus Wittgenstein distinguishes between what can be said and what can be shown: "there is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical."⁴ And the process of showing is silent. For Wittgenstein this silence is the goal of the (supposedly) senseless saying of the propositions of the Tractatus.

We see that Heidegger does not make such a distinction between saying and showing: authentic saying is showing, in the sense of letting come to light, letting appear. But, like the showing which Wittgenstein contrasts with saying, Heidegger's saying/showing is silent. This means that, for Heidegger, the speaking of language is itself silent. He writes that "language speaks as the peal of stillness [Stille; this can also mean silence] which is "... not anything human."⁵

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3. An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans.cit. p.100 (EM, p.76)
4. 6.522
(saying) of language is silent (though not empty of sound) because it does not refer to anything outside itself. The speaking (saying) of language is a process in which Being manifests/conceals itself; Heidegger writes that "... words and language are not wrappings in which things are packed for the commerce of those who write and speak. It is in words and language that things first come into Being and are". So we find Rosen talking of the ontological priority of silence in Heidegger's account of language.

Rosen argues that it is through its relation to speech that silence gets its significance - that silence arises in those gaps when speaking, i.e. the giving of reasons for, the giving of an account of, what we do and believe, momentarily ceases. Rosen writes that "we can think about silent thinking ( ... ), but through speaking thought ( ... )". Claiming that, for Heidegger, silence has ontological priority, Rosen concludes: if... the significance of speech is in the deepest and final sense relative to silence, then there is no reason for what we say or for whether we speak at all, other than the mere fact, although there is equally no reason to keep silent. The result is absurdism or nihilism.

Heidegger's silent speech is not discursive; it does not mediate between man and things (Being), but its speaking is the very process of Being itself.

1. Adorno writes in criticism that "the expression is sufficient unto itself. It discards as an annoyance the obligation to express a thing other than itself". op.cit. p.85.
2. An Introduction to Metaphysics, p.13 (EM, p.11). And, for Heidegger, the region of the word is "a mysterious region where there is nothing for which to be answerable". (Discourse on Thinking, p.71, Gelassenheit, p.49). Such a region is without doubt "not anything human".
3. op.cit. p.39.
4. Ibid. p.151. Rosen would thus say that the mystic must not follow Wittgenstein's advice: he must not throw away the ladder of speech on which he has climbed to attain his silent vision, for it is the ladder which makes the vision possible. See Tractatus, 6.54.
5. Ibid. p.45.
The immediacy of the experience of the mystic is depicted in metaphors pertaining to vision - this suggests the a-temporal character of the 'object' of mystical vision.¹ For Hiedegger, the sense of hearing is the model for man's relation to Being, for hearing conveys the essentially temporal nature of Heidegger's Being.² But the immediacy of mysticism is still present, though in a disguised form. This suggests that Heidegger's non-propositional, supra-conceptual language is but another form of the silence advocated by the mystic.³

Rosen argues that man has need of mediation between himself and things (Being), that "the act of looking directly at things is in fact an act of looking at speeches about things".⁴ He puts essentially the same point in another way when he writes: "man does not bespeak Being because he is not a god, and hence he must give a reason (...) for what he says." Rosen prefaces this with the sentence: "if there is to be rational speech, one must distinguish radically between the structure of speech and the structure of things, or, more simply, between speech and things".⁵ If the dualism of language and things (Being) is rejected, Rosen suggests, then we are left in a monistic silence with "a process from which things emerge, but whose visibility cannot be explained: and again, an account of

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2. "According to the nature of sound as such it can 'give' only dynamic and never static reality." ibid. p.137.
3. It is worthwhile remembering here that for the Heidegger of Being and Time the call of conscience is silent; "Conscience discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent". H.273. It seems then that the priority of silence spans Heidegger's whole philosophy.
4. op.cit. p.150
5. ibid. p.47
6. Ibid.
process which cannot be justified because there is no way to distinguish the account from the process".¹ Such a position is, he suggests, indistinguishable from a positivistic celebration of "what is the case".²

We can look at this same argument from another angle. Arthur Danto writes that "language is within the world and without the world at once. And in the relevant sense, there is supposed a space between language and the world: when there is language, it is as though a space were opened within the world".³ Heidegger's later thought on the nature of language collapses this space: it thus occasions the disappearance of man as man, for the space between language and the world is the place of human dwelling.

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The 'space' which is the proper human abode can be characterised in many ways: it is the 'space' between language and things, between theory (passivity) and practice (activity), between what is and what ought to be, between response-ability (knowledge) and responsibility (will), between desire (life) and reason, between the finite and the infinite, between nature and history.

We have seen in this last chapter that Heidegger's later thought collapses this 'space' under all of these descriptions (except perhaps the last) — it thus occasions the disappearance of man as man.

¹. ibid. p.48
². ibid. p.41. It must also be said that the later Heidegger's view of language leaves man defenceless against the ontic power of advertising and propaganda.
³."Semantical Theory and the Logical Limits of Nihilism", loc.cit. p.163. This passage says in effect what we have claimed above (p.59), viz. that man himself is within and without the world at once.
So our overall conclusion should by now be clear - it is this. At different stages Heidegger's thought founders on both the Scylla and the Charybdis of which Jonas speaks in the passage with which we began this thesis, and at no stage does Heidegger give anything more than very confused directions for a third road which might lead to where "... the dualistic rift [between man and total reality] can be avoided and yet enough of the dualistic insight saved to uphold the humanity of man".
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