World, Affectivity, Trauma

Heidegger and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis

Robert D. Stolorow

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World, Affectivity, Trauma

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To Julia, Lisa, Ben, Stephanie, and Emily

Philosophy stands in the fundamental attunement of melancholy.

– Martin Heidegger

Philia begins with the possibility of survival [which] is the other name of a mourning.

– Jacques Derrida

Contents

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Human Existence: Implications for Heidegger's Conception of Mitsein (Department of Philosophy, University of California at Riverside, 2007) and in my chapter in *Beyond Postmodernism: New Dimensions in Clinical Theory and Practice* (ed. R. Frie & D. Orange, Routledge, 2009, pp. 143–161). Chapter 9 incorporates and expands an article published in the *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology* (2010, *5*, pp. 429–450). I am grateful to the editors and publishers of these journals and books for granting me permission to include this material in my book.

1

Introduction

Existential Analysis, Daseinanalysis, and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis

The aim of this book is to show how Heidegger's (1927) existential philosophy enriches post-Cartesian psychoanalysis and how post-Cartesian psychoanalysis enriches Heidegger's existential philosophy. It is thus intended as a contribution to both psychoanalysis and philosophy.

Ludwig Binswanger and Medard Boss were two early pioneers who saw the value of Heidegger's analysis of existence for psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. They both proceeded "from the top down"—that is, they started with Heidegger's philosophical delineation of essential existential structures (Being-in-the-world,* care, authenticity-inauthenticity, *das Man*, thrownness, existential anxiety, existential guilt, potentialities-for-Being, etc.) and applied these to clinical phenomena and the therapeutic situation. Although Binswanger's (1946) existential analysis produced some brilliant phenomenological descriptions of the "world-designs" underlying various forms of psychopathology, and Boss's (1963)

* Throughout this book, I follow the convention adopted by Macquarrie and Robinson, translators of *Being and Time*, of referring to the intelligibility or understandability of beings (*Seiendes*) with the term *Being* (*Sein*), with an upper case *B* (see Heidegger, 1927, p. 22, including footnote).

Daseinanalysis freed the psychoanalytic theory of therapy from the dehumanizing causal-mechanistic assumptions of Freudian metapsychology, neither effort brought about a radicalization of psychoanalytic practice itself or of the psychoanalytic process.

The evolution of my collaborators' and my post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective (Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 2002), by contrast, proceeded "from the bottom up." It was born of our studies of the subjective origins of psychoanalytic theories and developed out of our concurrent efforts to rethink psychoanalysis as a form of phenomenological inquiry and to illuminate the phenomenology of the psychoanalytic process itself. Our dedication to phenomenological inquiry, in turn, let us to a contextualist theoretical perspective, and we subsequently found philosophical support in Heidegger's existential analytic for what we had illuminated.

Our post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective highlighted three closely interrelated features of the psychoanalytic method. It is *phenomenological*—its focus is on worlds of emotional experience. It is *hermeneutic*—it seeks interpretively to illuminate the structures of meaning that organize worlds of experience. And it is *contextual*—it grasps experience and its horizons as being constituted within formative contextual systems. In Chapter 2, I show that Heidegger's investigative method in *Being and Time* is also a unique blending of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and contextualism and thus has great potential for providing a philosophical grounding for post-Cartesian psychoanalysis.

Intersubjective-systems theory, the term my collaborators and I coined to name our evolving perspective, is a *phenomenological contextualism*. It is phenomenological, as I said, in that it investigates and illuminates organizations or worlds of emotional experience. It is contextual in that it holds that such organizations of emotional experience take form, both developmentally and in the psychoanalytic situation, in constitutive relational or intersubjective contexts. In Chapter 3, I present an overview of the historical evolution and basic concepts of our phenomenological contextualism.

In Chapter 4, I show how Heidegger's existential analytic can provide a philosophical grounding for an understanding of the phenomenology of emotional trauma. I claim that emotional trauma produces an affective state whose central features bear a close similarity to the central elements in Heidegger's existential interpretation of anxiety, and that it accomplishes this by exposing the traumatized person to a constituent of our existence heretofore concealed—namely, our Being-toward-death. If the painful affective state produced by such exposure can find a relational home in which it can be held and integrated, I suggest, then trauma can eventuate in an enhancement of authentic existing.

Drawing on a clinical vignette, Harry Potter, Friedrich Nietzsche, and my own experience of emotional trauma, I seek in Chapter 5 to rethink the concept of dissociation in terms of the devastating impact of trauma on our experience of temporality. Dissociation, I contend, just is traumatic temporality.

Having illuminated trauma's contextuality and its existentiality, I find in Chapter 6 a path for synthesizing these two themes into a broader unity that can encompass them both. Just as finitude is fundamental to our existential constitution (Heidegger), so too is it constitutive of our existence that we meet each other as "siblings in the same darkness," deeply connected with one another in virtue of our common finitude. Our existential kinship-in-finitude is the condition for the possibility both of the contextuality of emotional trauma and of forming bonds of deep emotional attunement and understanding in which traumatized states can be held, transformed, and integrated.

In Chapter 7, I seek to relationalize Heidegger's conception of finitude by developing the claims that Being-toward-death always includes Being-toward-loss of the other and that death and loss are existentially equiprimordial. The chapter draws on Derrida's work on friendship and mourning to support its claims.

In Chapter 8, I show that our kinship-in-finitude and the relationality of finitude, as disclosed in my investigations of emotional trauma, provide a basis for substantially expanding Heidegger's

conception of authentic Being-with, the existential ground of relationality. This enriched conception of Being-with, I contend, holds significant ethical implications.

In Chapter 9, I present a collaborative psychobiographical study of Heidegger's fall into Nazism, illuminating the salient themes that dominated Heidegger's personal psychological world and how these themes left their imprint on both his philosophy and his version of Nazi ideology. The chapter illustrates the part played by emotional trauma, even madness, in the creation of philosophical and ideological frameworks. The chapter closes with a section, "A Distant Mirror," on the importance of psychobiographical studies for a post-Cartesian grasp of philosophical and theoretical ideas.

In Chapter 10, I conclude that the previous chapters show both how Heidegger's existential philosophy enriches post-Cartesian psychoanalysis and how post-Cartesian psychoanalysis enriches Heidegger's existential philosophy. The discussion draws on Heidegger's (1927) use of the interplay of the ontical and the ontological in *Being and Time*.

2

Heidegger's Investigative Method in *Being and Time*

> This nature of scientific method…consists partly in not being separate from the content.
>
> **– W. F. Hegel**

> [A] bare subject without a world never "is."
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

As I indicated in the first chapter, in our post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective, my collaborators and I (Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 2002) have emphasized three closely interrelated features in our view of psychoanalytic method. It is *phenomenological*; it is *hermeneutic*; and it is *contextual*. I see Heidegger's investigative method in *Being and Time* (1927) as also being a unique blending of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and contextualism and thus as having great potential for providing a philosophical grounding for our psychoanalytic approach. In this chapter I explore Heidegger's investigative method and its relationship to its subject matter, "the question of the meaning of Being" (p. 19). I show that the relationship between his investigative method and its subject matter is a circular one in which the guiding aim of elucidating the meaning of Being leads to an initial formulation of the proper "way of access to it" (p. 26), which results in a beginning

articulation of the kind of Being to be investigated, which in turn brings about a further refinement of the method of investigation, and so on. I also show that the unity of Heidegger's investigative method and its subject matter can be seen to mirror a basic theme of his analytic: the closing of the ontological gap between human Being and its world.

Heidegger (1927) makes the unity of his investigative method and its subject matter quite clear early in the introductory chapter:

> In the question which we are to work out, ***what is asked about*** is Being—that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which entities are already understood [i.e., are intelligible]…The Being of entities "is" not itself an entity…Hence Being, as that which is asked about, ***must be exhibited in a way of its own***, essentially different from the way in which entities are discovered. (pp. 25–26, emphasis added)

As I understand this passage, Heidegger is claiming that because the Being-question pertains not to entities but to the Being of entities—"that on the basis of which entities are already understood"—it requires a method of investigation distinctly different from all of those that merely investigate the entities, neglecting their *intelligibility as* entities. Developing this distinctive investigative method, in turn, "requires us to prepare the way for choosing the right entity for our example, and to work out the genuine way of access to it" (p. 26). We must, that is, choose the right entity to be interrogated as to its Being. Heidegger notes that our ways of investigating are themselves "modes of Being for those particular entities which we, the inquirers, are ourselves" (pp. 26–27).

> ***Thus*** to work out the question of Being adequately, we must make an entity—the inquirer—transparent in his own Being…This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term *Dasein*. If we are to formulate our question explicitly and transparently, we ***must*** first give a proper explication of an entity (Dasein), with regard to its Being. (p. 27, emphasis added)

Before proceeding, I wish to make three points about the foregoing passage. The first concerns the characterization of Dasein as an "entity." The translators of *Being and Time* note that *Seiendes*, the German word they translate as entity or entities, means literally "something which is," and that, contrary to their favored translation, "There is much to be said for translating [it] by the noun 'being' or 'beings'" (p. 22, fn. 1). In my view, there is especially "much to be said" for this latter translation when speaking of Dasein, because "being" does not have the reifying, dehumanizing connotation that "entity" does (at least for me). Thus, I will henceforth substitute "being" for "entity" when quoting from text that refers to Dasein, "the *being* which each of us is himself."

Second, it does not seem to me that the "Thus" and the "must," which I have given in bold italics, are really warranted by what Heidegger has presented so far. Rather, their justification awaits his preliminary characterization of the human kind of Being. Here, Dasein's priority as what is to be investigated has not been demonstrated; it has only "announced itself" (p. 28), in the recognition that investigating what is not fully understood is itself a mode of Dasein's kind of Being. To choose the right being to be interrogated as to its Being, we must inquire into the phenomenon of interrogating or investigating, which means inquiring into the Being of the interrogator or investigator, which is inquiring into the Being of Dasein (William Bracken, personal communication, March, 2005). Dasein's priority as the being to be interrogated as to its Being is thereby announced. Also announcing itself is the "remarkable 'relatedness backward or forward' which what we are asking about (Being) bears to the inquiry itself as a mode of Being of a being" and the "very special" way "in which beings with the character of Dasein are related to the question of Being" (p. 28).

Third, I wish to make note of an ingenious linguistic device that Heidegger employs when he denotes "the being which each of us is himself," the human being, by the term *Dasein* (William Bracken, personal communication, February, 2005). The literal meaning of the German word *Dasein* is "to-be-there" or "there-being." This

literal meaning seems to me always to be present when the term *Dasein* is used. Thus, in Heidegger's usage, the word *Dasein* can serve two distinct linguistic functions simultaneously. In one, in the usual sense of linguistic reference, *Dasein* refers to us human beings as the beings to be interrogated as to our Being. In the other, *Dasein*, with its demonstrative, *da* (there)—which does not refer to anything except in particular contexts of use—serves as a "formal indicator." In this second function, *Dasein* does not refer to or stand for anything; rather, it directs or points the reader in a non-referential way toward what is to be illuminated—the situatedness (*da*) or contextuality of our kind of Being. So, with this linguistic device, Heidegger is able to use one word, *Dasein*, both to refer to the being to be interrogated as to its Being, and to formally indicate non-referentially the kind of Being (to-be-there) to be disclosed by the interrogation.

Heidegger's (1927) initial characterization of the human kind of Being sets the stage for the derivation of his investigative method:

> *Dasein*…is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it…[T]his is a constitutive state of Dasein's Being, and this implies that Dasein, in its Being, has a relationship toward that Being…And this means further that there is some way in which Dasein understands itself in its Being…It is peculiar to this being that with and through its Being, this Being is disclosed to it. (p. 32)

I understand Heidegger to be claiming here (1) that it is constitutive of Dasein's Being that its own Being is an issue for it, (2) that this implies that Dasein, in its Being, comports itself toward that Being, and (3) that this means that Dasein has an understanding of its own Being. Since Dasein's kind of Being is to-be-there or to-be-situated, these three points are claiming that an understanding of this very situatedness is constitutive of that kind of Being, although the "average understanding of Being" remains "vague" and "unillumined" (p. 25)—in other words, prereflective. Heidegger designates this human kind of Being, which "comports itself understandingly toward that Being" (p. 78), by the term

existence, and its not-yet-thematized structures are called its *existentiality* or *existentiales*.

Precisely because an unthematized, "pre-ontological understanding of Being" (p. 33) is constitutive of the human kind of Being, and also because investigating what is vague and unillumined (i.e., not fully understood) is a mode of Dasein's Being, the human being is particularly well suited to serve as "that being which in principle is to be *interrogated*…as to its Being" (p. 35). Because an unarticulated understanding of our Being is constitutive of our kind of Being, we humans can investigate our own kind of Being by investigating our understanding (and lack of understanding) of that Being. Accordingly, if I grasp Heidegger's reasoning correctly, it follows that his investigative method is to be a phenomenological one, in the sense that it is aimed at *illuminating the fundamental structures of our understanding of our Being*: "*Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible*" (p. 60).

Heidegger begins his analytic of Dasein with a phenomenological investigation of our average everyday understanding of our Being, but before turning to this investigation, let us look more closely into the nature of his view of the phenomenological method in general. Following Husserl (1900/1913), he associates phenomenological investigation with the slogan, "To the things themselves!" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 50). This is to be understood, I believe, as "To the phenomena," where "'*phenomenon*' signifies *that which shows itself in itself*, the manifest…[or] what lies in the light of day or ***can be brought to the light***" (p. 51, emphasis added). The words I have given in bold italics are important, because Heidegger makes clear that a phenomenon that initially "shows itself unthematically" (i.e., unarticulatedly), can "be brought thematically to show itself…in itself" (p. 55). Indeed, such thematization, according to Heidegger's view, is the central aim of phenomenological investigation.

Phenomenology, then, for Heidegger, means "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself" (p. 58). This phenomenological "letting-something-be-seen" (p. 56) is no easy task, however. Phenomena cannot

be brought to light simply by beholding or contemplating them (i.e., just by staring at them as they manifest themselves to our everyday sight), because:

> Manifestly, [a phenomenon, in the distinctive sense of phenomenology] is something that proximally and for the most part does *not* show itself at all; it is something that lies *hidden*…but at the same time it is something that belongs to what shows itself, and it belongs to it so essentially as to constitute its meaning and its ground. (p. 59)

Heidegger applies this distinctive sense of phenomena in general to the specific phenomena under study—the ways of Being of entities. Recall that Heidegger begins his search for the Being of entities with an investigation of the human kind of Being, and that phenomenological access to our kind of Being is to be found in our understanding of that Being. However, both in our traditional philosophical and in our average everyday understanding of Being, "Being can be *covered up so extensively* that it becomes forgotten and no question arises about it or about its meaning" (p. 59, emphasis added). Heidegger delineates several "ways in which phenomena can be covered up" (p. 60). In our average everyday understanding, for example, our Being can remain quite *undiscovered* (i.e., prereflective). Having been discovered, it can be *buried over*. Or, most frequently and most dangerously for Heidegger, the covering up of Being may take the form of *disguising* its basic structures. Whether our Being is undiscovered, buried over, or disguised in our understanding of it, we must find a way of "*passage* through whatever is prevalently covering it up" (p. 61). Our Being that is covered up in our understanding of it must be "laid bare," "unconcealed," by means of *interpretation* of that understanding. Such unconcealing need not require aggressivity on the part of the inquirer, who can "listen in" for the Being of what has been understood and thereby "let Dasein interpret itself" (p. 179). Through interpretation, phenomenology penetrates to our Being that is hidden within our understanding of it. Hence: "[T]he meaning of phenomenological description as

a method lies in *interpretation*…The phenomenology of Dasein is a *hermeneutic* in the primordial signification of this word, where it designates this business of interpreting" (pp. 61–62).

In his investigative method, as I have thus far explicated it, Heidegger is able to combine two philosophical traditions—phenomenology and hermeneutics—that prior to Heidegger had largely been kept quite separate (although Husserl, I believe unwittingly, alluded to a connection between them). Heidegger's analytic of Dasein is a hermeneutic phenomenology aimed at disclosing or unconcealing the basic structures of our kind of Being, its existentiality, which lies hidden within our understanding of it.

Let us look more closely at the nature of Heidegger's hermeneutic of Dasein, his interpretive penetration of our understanding of our kind of Being. To do so, we must first consider his conception of interpretation in general. For Heidegger, interpretation is a further development of understanding (e.g., of our vague and unthematized average everyday understanding of Being). Interpretation is "the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding" (p. 189). It is through interpretation that what is understood "comes *explicitly* into the sight which understands" (p. 189). Further, "that which is *explicitly* understood…has the structure of *something as something*," wherein the *as* "makes up the structure of the explicitness of something that is understood [and thereby] constitutes the interpretation" (p. 189). Interpreting what is understood means explicitly articulating, making intelligible, laying out, unveiling, or thematizing its "as-structure" (p. 190).

Heidegger claims that in every case "interpretation is grounded in *something we have in advance*—in a *fore-having*" (p. 191), in other words, in an unthematized understanding we already have, which is appropriated by interpretation. This fore-having of understanding, Heidegger argues, accounts for its inevitably circular movement. Furthermore:

> When something is understood but is still veiled, it becomes unveiled [interpretively]…***under the guidance of a point of view***, which fixes that with regard to which what is understood is to be interpreted. In every case interpretation is grounded in *something we see in advance*—in a *fore-sight*. (p. 191, *bold* emphasis added)

Because interpretation is grounded in a fore-sight, it is always from a particular perspective. Finally, anything understood in our fore-having "becomes conceptualizable through the interpretation [and] the interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving it…it is grounded in *something we grasp in advance*—in a *fore-conception*" (p. 191). Thus, against Husserl: "Whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be founded essentially upon fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception. An interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us" (pp. 191–192). Interpretation could never be presuppositionless because "All interpretation…operates in the fore-structure" (p. 194). Heidegger calls "the totality of these 'presuppositions'…the 'hermeneutical Situation'" (p. 275). Here Heidegger anticipates his student, Gadamer (1975), who emphasizes that interpretation is always from a *perspective* (i.e., an "as-structure") that the interpreter brings to the act of interpretation from his or her relationship to the historical matrix of tradition.

Heidegger, it seems to me, arrives at his own interpretive perspective through a relationship with tradition that I would characterize as *contrapuntal*. That is, his perspective seems to crystallize contrapuntally from his ongoing *dialogue* with the philosophers of traditional ontology and epistemology—Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Husserl. Although Heidegger's posing of the question of the meaning of Being can be seen as reactive against the stagnancy of Aristotle's substance ontology (Frede, 1993), and against Husserl's severe restriction of phenomenological inquiry to the domain of "pure immanence," the conversation-partner whose presence I sense most prominently throughout *Being and Time* is Descartes.

Descartes's (1641) metaphysics divided the finite world into two distinct basic substances—*res cogitans* and *res extensa*—thinking substances (minds) with no extension in space and extended substances (bodies and other material things) that do not think. This metaphysical dualism concretized the idea of a complete separation between mind and world, between subject and object. What, after all, could be more separate than two realms of Being constituted by two completely different substances? Descartes's vision can be characterized as a radical decontextualization of both mind and world. Mind, the "thinking thing," is isolated from the world in which it dwells, just as the world is purged of all human significance. Both mind and world are stripped of all contextuality with respect to one another, as they are beheld in their bare thinghood or occurrentness (Dreyfus, 1991), their pure presence-at-hand, as Heidegger would say. The ontological gap between mind and world, between subject and object, is bridged only in a relationship of thinking, in which the "worldless subject" somehow forms ideas that more or less accurately represent or correspond to transcendent (i.e., mind-independent) objects in an "unworlded world."

The interpretive perspective that I see as developing contrapuntally from Heidegger's engagement with such ideas, and that seems to me to guide his hermeneutic-phenomenological method, I designate by the term *contextualism*, although, to my knowledge, Heidegger did not himself use this word (in general being wary of such "isms," which readily devolve into calcified traditions). In his hermeneutic of Dasein, Heidegger seeks interpretively to re-find the unity of our Being, split asunder in the Cartesian bifurcation. Thus, what he calls the "destruction" of traditional ontology is a clearing away of its concealments and disguises, in order to unveil the primordial contextual whole that it has been covering up. In my view, it is Heidegger's adoption of a contextualist interpretive perspective that makes possible the "radicalization of Husserlian phenomenological method" that Critchley (2000, p. 101) sees as Heidegger's central contribution to philosophy.

Heidegger's contextualism is formally indicated early on, in his designation of the human being as Dasein, to-be-there or to-be-situated, a term that already points to the unity of the human kind of Being and its context. This initially indicated contextualization is to be further fleshed out as Heidegger focuses his hermeneutic-phenomenological inquiry, with its contextualist interpretive perspective, on our average everyday understanding of our kind of Being. His aim is to "lay bare a fundamental structure in Dasein: Being-in-the-world" (1927, p. 65), also described as Dasein's "basic state" [constitution] or "constitutive state" (p. 78). In introducing the idea of Being-in-the-world, Heidegger makes clear both that he has arrived at it through hermeneutic inquiry and that his interpretive perspective is a contextualist or holistic one: "In the *interpretation of Dasein*, this structure is something '*a priori*'; it is not pieced together, but is *primordially and constantly a whole*" (p. 65, emphasis added).

With the hyphens unifying the expression *Being-in-the-world* (*In-der-Welt-sein*), Heidegger indicates that in his interpretation of Dasein the traditional ontological gap between our Being and our world is to be definitively closed and that, in their indissoluble unity, our Being and our world "primordially and constantly" always contextualize one another. I conclude this chapter by showing how Heidegger's contextualist perspective guides his further thematization of two constitutive elements in the unitary structure of Being-in-the-world: namely, *Being-in* and *worldhood*.

Heidegger makes crystal clear that by *Being-in* he does not mean a categorial relationship in which one present-at-hand entity is spatially contained inside another present-at-hand entity. Rather, Being-in is an existentiale, an *a priori* structure of the human kind of Being. Being-in means "'I reside' or 'dwell alongside' [amid] the world, as that which is familiar to me" (p. 80). It can sometimes derivatively mean "being absorbed in the world" (p. 81). Heidegger specifies further that "Dasein's facticity [the "there" into which one has already been delivered over] is such that its Being-in-the-world has always dispersed itself or even split

itself up into definite ways of Being-in," and that all these ways of engaging with or comporting toward the world "have *concern* as their kind of Being" (p. 83). Heidegger's formulation of concern as an existentiale also "announces" the concept of *care*, which he will later "make visible" as the supraordinate exisentiale or most fundamental structure of Being-in-the-world that points the way to temporality as the meaning or ground of the human kind of Being. For my purposes here, however, I wish only to emphasize that Being-in as concern denotes the structure of our kind of Being whereby we are already primordially engaged with and amid the world. The vision of knowing, derived from the Cartesian tradition and embedded in the theoretical or scientific attitude, "as a 'relation between subject and Object'" (p. 87), wherein an interior, worldless *cogito* forms and keeps in storage representations of an external, transcendent object, Heidegger claims to be a derivative "mode of Dasein founded upon Being-in-the-world" and its "*primordial Being-in*" (p. 90).

For me, two of Heidegger's descriptions of the primordial structure of engagement, Being-in, capture especially beautifully the contextualist perspective that he develops contrapuntally against the Cartesian detached, isolated, decontextualized, worldless subject:

> Proximally [in our everyday concern], this Being-already-alongside [-amid] is not just a fixed staring at something that is purely present-at-hand. Being-in-the-world, as concern, is *fascinated by* the world with which it is concerned. (p. 88)
>
> When Dasein directs itself towards something and grasps it, it does not somehow first get out of an inner sphere in which it has been proximally encapsulated, but its primary kind of Being is such that it is always "outside" alongside [amid] entities which it encounters and which belong to a world already discovered. (p. 89)

Just as his formulation of *Being-in* recontextualizes the Cartesian worldless subject, so too does Heidegger's conception of *worldhood* recontextualize the correspondingly denuded world. It must be remembered that, for Heidegger, "'world' is not a way of

characterizing those entities which Dasein essentially is *not*; it is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself" (p. 92). World, in other words, is a "constitutive item" of the primordial contextual unity, Being-in-the-world, and *worldhood* refers to this item's structure. Worldhood is thus an *existentiale*, an *a priori* character of the human kind of Being. Dasein has "worldly" kind of Being, Being-in-a-context. If, as in the Cartesian tradition, "one fails to see Being-in-the-world as a state of Dasein, the phenomenon of worldhood likewise gets *passed over*," and one interprets the world in terms of "entities which are present-at-hand" (p. 93), "unworlded" things.

Heidegger (1927) proceeds to bring to light the phenomenon of worldhood as it is manifest "within the horizon of average everydayness" (p. 94), as the worldhood of our everyday environment, the environment encountered in our concernful dealings with entities that we put to use. In this investigation, he seeks to make thematically explicit "that understanding of Being which belongs already to Dasein and which 'comes alive' in any of its dealings with entities" (p. 96).

Heidegger designates "those entities which we encounter in concern '*equipment*'" (p. 97), and "the kind of Being which equipment possesses…[he calls] '*readiness-to-hand*'" (p. 98)—availability for use (Dreyfus, 1991). "Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to....'" (p. 97), and every such "in-order-to" is embedded prereflectively in larger systems or contexts of assignment or reference—to other in-order-to's and to an array of interconnected "toward-which's," "for-which's," "in-which's," "with-which's," and so on. The character of Being that belongs to the ready-to-hand in virtue of its embeddedness in such a referential system Heidegger calls *involvement*, and the relational totality of such signifying involvements he calls *significance*. It is significance, in turn, which "makes up the structure of the world" (p. 120). The system "of assignments or references…as significance, is constitutive for worldhood" (p. 121). Worldhood, the structure of the world, is unveiled as a context of human significance.

Consider Heidegger's example of the shoemaker's workshop as a totality of equipment—hammers, needles, and the like. The *in-order-to* "is constitutive for the equipment" (p. 98)—the hammer *is* to hammer, the needle *is* to sew. Furthermore, equipment "always is *in terms of* its belonging to other equipment" (p. 97) and the latter's constitutive in-order-to's—the needle is to sew, so that what has been sewn can be hammered. The *toward-which* of the equipment is the "work to be produced" (p. 99), in this case, shoes. "In the work, there is also a reference or assignment to 'materials'" (p. 100) on which the equipment depends—the leather, the thread, the nails. The work "also has an assignment to the person who is to use it" (p. 100), the person who will wear the shoes. Along with the shoes, "we encounter the world in which [shoe-] wearers…live" (p. 100). Hence, the work "is ready-to-hand not only in the domestic world of the workshop but also in the *public world*" (p. 100). I picture an indefinite series of nested referential systems of increasing inclusiveness, the most encompassing being the matrix of significance shared by all who inhabit the same broad cultural-historical-linguistic context.

One last point about worldhood. Heidegger (1927) explains that any such referential system of in-order-to's, toward-which's, and so on is anchored in a "primary 'toward-which' [which] is a 'for-the-sake-of-which'" (p. 116), and that the "for-the-sake-of" always pertains to some possibility of Dasein, some "potentiality-for-Being" of the human being. For example, the work-world of the workshop is *for-the-sake-of* the shoemaker's Being a shoemaker. Thus, just as the worldhood of the world is constitutive of the human kind of Being, so too are the goals and purposes of the human being constitutive of the worldhood of the world. Such is the circle of reciprocal contextualizations that Heidegger's analytic of Dasein illuminates.

In conclusion, I have shown that, once Heidegger establishes that his phenomenology of Being is to be a hermeneutic of Dasein, the stage is set for the contextualist interpretive perspective that pervades *Being and Time*. His investigative method, with its

unique blending of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and contextualism, as applied to our average everyday understanding of our Being, unveils the basic structure of our human kind of Being as a rich contextual whole, Being-in-the-world, in which human Being is saturated with the world in which we dwell, and the world we inhabit is drenched in human meanings and purposes. The unity of Heidegger's investigative method and its subject matter—investigating-a-subject-matter—in which each constituent ongoingly contextualizes the other, can be seen to mirror the contextual whole whose basic structure as Being-in-the-world he unveils. As we will see in the next chapter, it is in a similar recognition of the unity of the inquirer and his or her subject matter that the origin of our post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective can be found.

3

Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis as Phenomenological Contextualism

> [M]an is in the world and only in the world does he know himself.
>
> **– Maurice Merleau-Ponty**

As I indicated in the introductory chapter, intersubjective-systems theory, the name of my collaborators' and my (Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 2002) post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective, is a *phenomenological contextualism*. It is phenomenological in that it investigates and illuminates worlds of emotional experience. It is contextual in that it holds that such organizations of emotional experience take form, both developmentally and in the psychoanalytic situation, in constitutive intersubjective contexts.

Developmentally, recurring patterns of intersubjective transaction within the developmental system give rise to principles (thematic patterns, meaning-structures) that unconsciously organize subsequent emotional and relational experiences. Such organizing principles are unconscious, not in the sense of being repressed but in being prereflective; they ordinarily do not enter the domain of reflective self-awareness. These intersubjectively-derived, prereflective organizing principles are the basic building blocks of personality development. They show up in the psychoanalytic situation in the form of transference, which intersubjective-systems

theory conceptualizes as unconscious organizing activity. The patient's transference experience is co-constituted by the patient's prereflective organizing principles and whatever is coming from the analyst that is lending itself to being organized by them. A parallel statement can be made about the analyst's transference. The psychological field formed by the interplay of the patient's transference and the analyst's transference is an example of what we call an *intersubjective system*. Psychoanalysis is a dialogical method for bringing this prereflective organizing activity into reflective self-awareness.

Freud's psychoanalysis expanded the Cartesian mind, Descartes's (1641) "thinking thing," to include a vast unconscious realm. Nonetheless, the Freudian mind remained a Cartesian mind, a self-enclosed worldless subject or mental apparatus containing and working over mental contents and radically separated from its surround. Corresponding to its Cartesianism is traditional psychoanalysis's objectivist epistemology. One isolated mind, the analyst, is claimed to make objective observations and interpretations of another isolated mind, the patient.

A phenomenological contextualism concerns emotional experience and its organization, not reified mind-entities, and it reunites the Cartesian isolated mind with its world, its context. Correspondingly, intersubjective-systems theory embraces a perspectivalist epistemology, insisting that analytic understanding is always from a perspective shaped by the organizing principles of the inquirer. Accordingly, there are no objective or neutral analysts, no immaculate perceptions (Nietzsche, 1892), no God's-eye view (Putnam, 1990) of anyone or anything.

I hope it is already clear to the reader that our phenomenological emphasis does not in any way entail abandonment of the exploration of unconsciousness. Going back to the father of philosophical phenomenology, Edmund Husserl (1900/1913), phenomenological inquiry has never been restricted to mere description of conscious experiences. Phenomenological investigation has always been centrally concerned with the structures that prereflectively

organize conscious experience. Whereas philosophical phenomenologists are concerned with those structures that operate universally, a psychoanalytic phenomenologist seeks to illuminate those principles that unconsciously organize individual worlds of experience and, in particular, those that give meaning to emotional and relational experiences. Such principles include, importantly, those that dictate what emotional experiences must be prevented from coming into full being (i.e., those that must be dynamically repressed) because they are prohibited or too dangerous. Intersubjective-systems theory emphasizes that all such forms of unconsciousness are constituted in relational contexts. Indeed, as I will elaborate in what follows, from an intersubjective-systems perspective, all clinical phenomena with which psychoanalysis has been traditionally concerned are seen as taking form within systems of interacting, differently organized, mutually influencing emotional worlds. Phenomenology led us inexorably to contextualism.

HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The beginnings of our phenomenological-contextualist perspective hark back to a series of psychobiographical studies conducted in the early and mid-1970s by George Atwood and myself, of the personal, subjective origins of the theoretical systems of Freud, Jung, Reich, and Rank, studies that formed the basis of our first book, *Faces in a Cloud: Subjectivity in Personality Theory* (Stolorow & Atwood, 1979), which was completed in 1976. From these studies, we concluded that since psychological theories derive to a significant degree from the subjective concerns of their creators, what psychoanalysis and personality psychology needed was a theory of subjectivity itself—a unifying framework capable of accounting not only for the psychological phenomena that other theories address but also for the theories themselves.

In the last chapter of *Faces* we outlined a set of proposals for the creation of such a framework, which we called *psychoanalytic*

phenomenology. Influenced by the work of George Klein (1976), we envisioned this framework as a depth of the psychology of personal experience, purified of the mechanistic reifications of Freudian metapsychology. Our framework took the experiential world of the individual as its central theoretical construct. We assumed no impersonal psychical agencies or motivational prime movers in order to explain the experiential world. Instead, we assumed that this world evolves organically from the person's encounter with the critical formative experiences that constitute his or her unique life history. Once established, it becomes discernible in the distinctive, recurrent patterns, themes, and invariant meanings that prereflectively organize the person's experiences. Psychoanalytic phenomenology entailed a set of interpretive principles for investigating the nature, origins, purposes, and transformations of the configurations of self and other pervading a person's experiential world. Importantly, our dedication to illuminating personal phenomenology had led us from mind to world and thus from mental contents to relational contexts, from the intrapsychic to the intersubjective.

FROM MIND TO WORLD: INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Although the concept of *inter*subjectivity was not introduced in the first edition of *Faces*, it was clearly implicit in the demonstrations of how the personal, subjective world of a personality theorist influences his or her understanding of other persons' experiences. The first explicit use of the term *intersubjective* in our work appeared in an article (Stolorow, Atwood, & Ross, 1978), also completed in 1976, which Lewis Aron (1996) credited with having introduced the concept of intersubjectivity into American psychoanalytic discourse. There we conceptualized the interplay between transference and countertransference in psychoanalytic treatment as an intersubjective process reflecting the mutual interaction between the differently organized subjective worlds of patient and analyst, and we examined the impact on the therapeutic process of unrecognized correspondences and disparities—intersubjective

conjunctions and disjunctions—between the patient's and analyst's respective worlds of experience.*

Our contextualist perspective significantly deepened and expanded in consequence of Bernard Brandchaft's and my investigation in 1980 of so-called borderline phenomena. We found that when a very vulnerable, archaically organized patient is treated according to the theoretical ideas and technical recommendations offered by Otto Kernberg (1975), that patient will quickly display all the characteristics Kernberg ascribed to borderline personality organization, and the pages of Kernberg's books will come alive right before the clinician's eyes. On the other hand, when such a patient is treated according to the theory and technical stance proposed by Heinz Kohut (1971), that patient will soon show the features Kohut attributed to narcissistic personality disorder, and Kohut's books will come alive. In the chapter that resulted from our investigation (Brandchaft & Stolorow, 1984), we contended that borderline states take form in an intersubjective field, coconstituted by the patient's psychological structures and the way these are understood and responded to by the therapist. Thus began a series of collaborative studies (see Stolorow, Brandchaft, & Atwood, 1987) in which Atwood, Brandchaft, and I extended our intersubjective perspective to a wide array of clinical phenomena including development and pathogenesis, transference and resistance, emotional conflict formation, dreams, enactments, neurotic symptoms, and psychotic states.† In each instance, phenomena

* Our use of the term *intersubjective* has never presupposed the attainment of symbolic thought, of a concept of oneself as a subject, of intersubjective relatedness in Stern's (1985) sense, or of mutual recognition as described by Benjamin (1995). Nor have we confined our usage to the realm of unconscious nonverbal affective communication, as Ogden (1994) seems to do. We use *intersubjective* very broadly, to refer to any psychological field formed by interacting worlds of experience, at whatever developmental level those worlds may be organized. For us, *intersubjective* denotes neither a mode of experiencing nor a sharing of experience, but the contextual precondition for having any experience at all. In our vision, intersubjective fields and experiential worlds are equiprimordial, mutually constituting one another in circular fashion.

† See also Stolorow, Atwood, and Orange (2002, Chapter 8) for an explication of the phenomenology of psychotic states.

that had traditionally been the focus of psychoanalytic investigation were understood not as products of isolated intrapsychic mechanisms but as forming at the interface of interacting experiential worlds. The intersubjective context, we contended, plays a constitutive role in all forms of psychopathology, and clinical phenomena cannot be comprehended psychoanalytically apart from the intersubjective field in which they crystallize. In psychoanalytic treatment, the impact of the observer was grasped as intrinsic to the observed.

Traditional Freudian theory is pervaded by the Cartesian "myth of the isolated mind" (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992, Chapter 1). Descartes's (1641) philosophy bifurcated the experiential world into inner and outer regions, severed both mind from body and cognition from affect, reified and absolutized the resulting divisions, and pictured the mind as an objective entity that takes its place among other objects, a "thinking thing" that has an inside with contents and that looks out on an external world from which it is essentially estranged. As I said earlier, the Freudian psyche is fundamentally a Cartesian mind in that it is a container of contents (instinctual energies, wishes, etc.), a thinking *thing* that, precisely because it is a thing, is ontologically decontextualized, fundamentally separated from its world.

Within philosophy, perhaps the most important challenge to Descartes's metaphysical dualism was mounted by Heidegger (1927), whose analysis of human existence holds great promise in providing philosophical grounding for our phenomenological contextualism. As I elaborated in the previous chapter, Heidegger sought to re-find the unity of our Being, split asunder in the Cartesian bifurcations, by unveiling the constitutive structure of our existence as a primordial contextual whole—Being-in-the-world. In Heidegger's vision, our Being and our world in their indissoluble unity "primordially and constantly" (see p. 14) contextualize one another. In light of this fundamental contextualization, Heidegger's consideration of affectivity is especially noteworthy.

Heidegger's term for the existential ground of affectivity (feelings and moods) is *Befindlichkeit*, a characteristically cumbersome noun he invented to capture a basic dimension of human existence. Literally, the word might be translated as "how-one-finds-oneself-ness." As Gendlin (1988) has pointed out, Heidegger's word for the structure of affectivity denotes both how one feels and the situation within which one is feeling, a felt sense of oneself in a situation, prior to a Cartesian split between inside and outside. *Befindlichkeit* is disclosive of our always already having been delivered over to the situatedness in which we find ourselves.

Heidegger's claim that *Befindlichkeit* is equiprimordial with understanding (*Verstehen*) and discourse (*Rede*) as a mode of disclosing Being-in-the-world is a definitive answer to criticisms of his supposed neglect of the body in *Being and Time* (Aho, 2009). This is so because *Befindlichkeit* always shows up in lived experience in the form of a mood (*Stimmung*) and moods always include an experienced bodily component that is more or less integrated with language.

For Heidegger, *Befindlichkeit*—disclosive affectivity—is a mode of Being-in-the-world, profoundly embedded in constitutive context. Heidegger's concept underscores the exquisite context-dependence and context-sensitivity of emotional experience—a context-embeddedness that takes on enormous importance in view of intersubjective-systems theory's placing of affectivity at the motivational center of human psychological life.

FROM DRIVE TO AFFECTIVITY

It is a central tenet of intersubjective-systems theory that a shift in psychoanalytic thinking from the motivational primacy of drive to the motivational primacy of affectivity moves psychoanalysis toward a phenomenological contextualism and a central focus on dynamic intersubjective systems. Unlike drives, which are claimed to originate deep within the interior of a Cartesian isolated mind, affect—that is, subjective emotional experience—is something

that from birth onward is co-constituted within ongoing relational systems. Therefore, locating affect at its motivational center automatically entails a radical contextualization of virtually all aspects of human psychological life.

My own systematic focus on affectivity began with an early article written with my late wife, Daphne Socarides Stolorow (Socarides & Stolorow, 1984/1985), attempting to integrate our evolving intersubjective perspective with the framework of Kohutian self psychology. In our proposed expansion and refinement of Kohut's (1971) selfobject concept, we suggested that "selfobject functions pertain fundamentally to the integration of affect" into the organization of self-experience, and that the need for selfobject ties "pertains most centrally to the need for [attuned] responsiveness to affect states in all stages of the life cycle" (p. 105). Kohut's discussions of the longing for mirroring, for example, were seen as pointing to the role of appreciative attunement in the integration of expansive affect states, whereas his descriptions of the idealizing yearning were seen as indicating the importance of attuned emotional holding and containment in the integration of painful reactive affect states. Emotional experience was grasped in this early article as being inseparable from the intersubjective contexts of attunement and malattunement in which it was felt. Comprehending the motivational primacy of affectivity—*Befindlichkeit*—enables one to contextualize a wide range of psychological phenomena that have traditionally been central in psychoanalytic theory, including psychic conflict, trauma, transference and resistance, unconsciousness, and the therapeutic action of psychoanalytic interpretation.

In the early article on affects and selfobject functions (Socarides & Stolorow, 1984/1985), we alluded to the nature of the intersubjective contexts in which psychological conflict takes form: "An absence of steady, attuned responsiveness to the child's affect states leads to…significant derailments of optimal affect integration and to a propensity to dissociate or disavow affective reactions" (p.106). Psychological conflict develops when central affect states of the

child cannot be integrated because they evoke massive or consistent malattunement from caregivers (Stolorow, Brandchaft, & Atwood, 1987, Chapter 6). Such unintegrated affect states become the source of lifelong emotional conflict and vulnerability to traumatic states because they are experienced as threats both to the person's established psychological organization and to the maintenance of vitally needed ties. Defenses against affect thus become necessary.

From this perspective, developmental trauma is viewed not as an instinctual flooding of an ill-equipped Cartesian container, as Freud (1926) would have it, but as an experience of unbearable affect. Furthermore, the intolerability of an affect state cannot be explained solely, or even primarily, on the basis of the quantity or intensity of the painful feelings evoked by an injurious event. Traumatic affect states can be grasped only in terms of the relational systems in which they are felt (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992, Chapter 4). Developmental trauma originates within a formative intersubjective context whose central feature is malattunement to painful affect—a breakdown of the child-caregiver interaffective system—leading to the child's loss of affect-integrating capacity and thereby to an unbearable, overwhelmed, disorganized state. Painful or frightening affect becomes traumatic when the attunement that the child needs to assist in its tolerance, containment, and integration is profoundly absent.

From the claim that trauma is constituted in an intersubjective context wherein severe emotional pain cannot find a relational home in which it can be held, it follows that injurious childhood experiences in and of themselves need not be traumatic (or at least not lastingly so) or pathogenic, provided that they occur within a responsive milieu. *Pain is not pathology.* It is the absence of adequate attunement to the child's painful emotional reactions that renders them unendurable and thus a source of traumatic states and psychopathology. This conceptualization holds both for discrete, dramatic, traumatic events and the more subtle "cumulative traumas" (Khan, 1963) that occur continually throughout childhood. Whereas Khan (1963) conceptualized cumulative trauma

as the result of recurring "breaches in the mother's role as a protective shield" (p. 46), we understand such ongoing trauma more in terms of the failure to respond adequately to the child's painful affect once the "protective shield" has been breached. A parent's narcissistic use of the child, for example, may preclude the recognition of, acceptance of, and attuned responsiveness to the child's painful affect states.

One consequence of developmental trauma, relationally conceived, is that affect states take on enduring, crushing meanings. From recurring experiences of malattunement, the child acquires the unconscious conviction that unmet developmental yearnings and reactive painful feeling states are manifestations of a loathsome defect or of an inherent inner badness. A defensive self-ideal is often established, representing a self-image purified of the offending affect states that were perceived to be unwelcome or damaging to caregivers. Living up to this affectively purified ideal becomes a central requirement for maintaining harmonious ties to others and for upholding self-esteem. Thereafter, the emergence of prohibited affect is experienced as a failure to embody the required ideal, an exposure of the underlying essential defectiveness or badness, and is accompanied by feelings of isolation, shame, and self-loathing. In the psychoanalytic situation, qualities or activities of the analyst that lend themselves to being interpreted according to such unconscious meanings of affect confirm the patient's expectations in the transference that emerging feeling states will be met with disgust, disdain, disinterest, alarm, hostility, withdrawal, exploitation, and the like, or will damage the analyst and destroy the therapeutic bond. Such transference expectations, unwittingly confirmed by the analyst, are a powerful source of resistance to the experience and articulation of affect. Intractable repetitive transferences and resistances can be grasped, from this perspective, as rigidly stable "attractor states" (Thelen & Smith, 1994) of the patient-analyst system, in which the meanings of the analyst's stance have become tightly coordinated with the patient's grim expectations and fears, thereby exposing the patient

repeatedly to threats of retraumatization. The focus on affect and its meanings contextualizes both transference and resistance.

A second consequence of developmental trauma is a severe constriction and narrowing of the horizons of emotional experiencing (Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 2002, Chapter 3), so as to exclude whatever feels unacceptable, intolerable, or too dangerous in particular intersubjective contexts. My collaborators' and my ideas about the horizons of experiencing have developed over the course of more than two decades from our attempts to delineate the intersubjective origins of differing forms of unconsciousness (see Stolorow & Atwood, 1992, Chapter 2). Our evolving theory rested on the assumption that the child's emotional experience becomes progressively articulated through the validating attunement of the early surround. Two closely interrelated but conceptually distinguishable forms of unconsciousness were pictured as developing from situations of massive malattunement. When a child's emotional experiences are consistently not responded to or are actively rejected, the child perceives that aspects of his or her affective life are intolerable to the caregiver. These regions of the child's emotional world must then be sacrificed in order to safeguard the needed tie. Repression was grasped here as a kind of negative organizing principle, always embedded in ongoing intersubjective contexts, determining which configurations of affective experience were not to be allowed to come into full being. In addition, we argued, other features of the child's emotional experience may remain unconscious, not because they have been repressed but because in the absence of a validating intersubjective context, they simply were never able to become articulated. With both forms of unconsciousness, the horizons of experiencing were pictured as taking form in the medium of the differing responsiveness of the surround to different regions of the child's affectivity. This conceptualization can be seen to apply to the psychoanalytic situation as well, wherein, as I noted in the preceding paragraph, the patient's resistance can be shown to fluctuate in concert with

perceptions of the analyst's varying receptivity and attunement to the patient's emotional experience.

During the preverbal period of infancy, the articulation of the child's affective experience is achieved through attunements communicated in the sensorimotor dialogue with caregivers. With the maturation of the child's symbolic capacities, symbols (words, for example) gradually assume a place of importance alongside sensorimotor attunements as vehicles through which the child's emotional experience is validated within the developmental system. Therefore, we argued, in that realm of experience in which consciousness increasingly becomes articulated in symbols, unconscious becomes coextensive with unsymbolized. When the act of symbolically (linguistically, for example) articulating an affective experience is perceived to threaten an indispensable tie, repression can now be achieved by preventing the continuation of the process of encoding that experience in symbols. Repression keeps affect nameless.

The focus on affect contextualizes the very boundary between conscious and unconscious. Unlike the Freudian repression barrier, viewed as a fixed intrapsychic structure within an isolated Cartesian container, the limiting horizons of emotional experiencing are conceptualized here as emergent properties of ongoing dynamic intersubjective systems. Forming and evolving within a nexus of living systems, the horizons of experiencing are grasped as fluid and ever-shifting, products both of the person's unique intersubjective history and of what is or is not allowed to be felt within the intersubjective fields that constitute his or her current living. *Befindlichkeit* includes both feeling and the contexts in which it is or is not permitted to come into being.

Like constricted and narrowed horizons of emotional experiencing, expanding horizons too can only be grasped in terms of the intersubjective contexts within which they take form. This claim holds important implications for conceptualizing the therapeutic action of psychoanalytic interpretation.

There has been a long-standing debate in psychoanalysis over the role of cognitive insight versus affective attachment in

the process of therapeutic change. The terms of this debate are directly descended from Descartes' philosophical dualism, which sectioned human experience into cognitive and affective domains. Such artificial fracturing of human subjectivity is no longer tenable in a post-Cartesian philosophical world. Cognition and affect, thinking and feeling, interpreting and relating—these are separable only in pathology, as can be seen in the case of Descartes himself, the profoundly isolated man who created a doctrine of the isolated mind (Gaukroger, 1995), of disembodied, unembedded, decontextualized *cogito*.

The dichotomy between insight through interpretation and affective bonding with the analyst is revealed to be a false one once we recognize that the therapeutic impact of analytic interpretations lies not only in the insights they convey but also in the extent to which they demonstrate the analyst's attunement to the patient's affective life. I have long contended that a good (that is, a mutative) interpretation is a relational process, a central constituent of which is the patient's experience of having his or her feelings understood. Furthermore, it is the specific transference meaning of the experience of being understood that supplies its mutative power, as the patient weaves that experience into the tapestry of developmental longings mobilized by the analytic engagement. Interpretation does not stand apart from the emotional relationship between patient and analyst; it is an inseparable and, to my mind, crucial dimension *of* that relationship. In the language of intersubjective-systems theory, interpretive expansion of the patient's capacity for reflective awareness of old, repetitive organizing principles occurs concomitantly with the affective impact and meanings of ongoing relational experiences with the analyst, and both are indissoluble components of a unitary therapeutic process that establishes the possibility of alternative principles for organizing experience whereby the patient's emotional horizons can become widened, enriched, more flexible, and more complex. For this developmental process to be sustained, the analytic bond must be able to withstand the painful and frightening affect states

that can accompany cycles of destabilization and reorganization. Clearly, a clinical focus on affective experience within the intersubjective field of an analysis contextualizes the process of therapeutic change in multiple ways.

The following clinical vignette (a fictionalized composite) illustrates many of the ideas developed in this section.

> A young woman who had been repeatedly sexually abused by her father when she was a child began an analysis with a female analyst-in-training whom I was supervising. Early in the treatment, whenever the patient began to remember and describe the sexual abuse or to recount analogously invasive experiences in her current life, she would display emotional reactions that consisted of two distinctive parts, both of which seemed entirely bodily. One was a trembling in her arms and upper torso, which sometimes escalated into violent shaking. The other was an intense flushing of her face. On these occasions, my supervisee was quite alarmed by her patient's shaking and was concerned to find some way to calm her.
>
> I had a hunch that the shaking was a bodily manifestation of a traumatized state and that the flushing was a somatic form of the patient's shame about exposing this state to her analyst, and I suggested to my supervisee that she focus her inquiries on the flushing rather than the shaking. As a result of this shift in focus, the patient began to speak about how she believed her analyst viewed her when she was trembling or shaking: Surely her analyst must be regarding her with disdain, seeing her as a damaged mess of a human being. As this belief was repeatedly disconfirmed by her analyst's responding with attunement and understanding rather than contempt, both the flushing and the shaking diminished in intensity. The traumatized states actually underwent a process of transformation from being exclusively bodily states into ones in which the bodily sensations came to be united with words. Instead of only shaking, the patient began to speak about her terror of annihilating intrusion.
>
> The one and only time the patient had attempted to speak to her mother about the sexual abuse, her mother shamed her severely, declaring her to be a wicked little girl for making up such lies about her father. Thereafter, the patient did not tell any other human being about her trauma until she revealed it to her analyst, and both the flushing of her face and the restriction of her

experience of terror to its nameless bodily component were heirs to her mother's shaming. Only with a shift in her perception of her analyst from one in which her analyst was potentially or secretly shaming to one in which she was accepting and understanding could the patient's emotional experience of her traumatized states shift from an exclusively bodily form to an experience that could be felt and *named* as terror.

THE CONTEXTUALITY AND EXISTENTIALITY OF EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

In my experience, a consistently phenomenological approach has been especially fruitful in the effort to grasp emotional trauma. Over the course of the two decades during which I have been investigating and writing about trauma (Stolorow, 2007), two interweaving central themes have crystallized—trauma's context-embeddedness and its existential significance. Having already discussed the first theme, trauma's contextuality, I turn in the next chapter to the second, its existentiality.

The phenomenology of emotional trauma provides an important psychological bridge between post-Cartesian psychoanalysis and existential philosophy, illustrating my characterization of my collaborators' and my reaching for existential philosophy from the clinical bottom up rather than proceeding from the philosophical top down. In this way, our method resembles that of Heidegger (1927), who used the ontical (psychological) phenomenon of existential anxiety as a starting point for investigating and illuminating authentic existing. Trauma as a psychological bridge runs in both directions. On the one hand, as we shall see, Heidegger's existential philosophy provides invaluable philosophical grounding for an understanding of trauma's existential significance. On the other hand, the experience of emotional trauma, like that of existential anxiety, is ontologically revelatory—it discloses a fundamental constituent of authentic existence.

4

Existential Anxiety, Finitude, and Trauma

> When one is alone and it is night and so dark and still that one hears nothing and sees nothing but…the slow irresistible approach of the wall of darkness which will eventually engulf everything you love, possess, wish, strive, and hope for—then all our profundities about life slink off to some undiscoverable hiding place, and [dread] envelops the sleepless one like a smothering blanket.
>
> **– C. G. Jung**

> Anxiety may be compared with dizziness. He whose eye happens to look down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy.
>
> **– Søren Kierkegaard**

> Under the ascendancy of falling and publicness, "real" anxiety is rare.
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

In his analysis of anxiety, Freud (1926) makes two critically important distinctions. One is between fear, which "has found an [external] object," and anxiety, which "has a quality of indefiniteness and lack of object" (p. 165). The second is between traumatic anxiety and signal anxiety. For Freud, traumatic anxiety is a state of "psychical helplessness" (p. 166) in the face of overwhelming instinctual tension (I would say, overwhelming painful affect). Signal anxiety, by contrast, anticipates the danger

of a (re)traumatized state by repeating it "in a weakened version" (p. 167), so that protective measures can be taken to avert it. I find it useful clinically to picture a continuum of anxiety, with traumatic anxiety and signal anxiety constituting the two extremes. Where a particular experience of anxiety falls along this continuum will depend on contextual factors, such as the extent to which trauma is merely imagined, is felt to be impending, or is actually materializing, and the extent to which there is someone available who can provide a relational home wherein the anxiety can be held, understood, articulated, and integrated. As I will show in this chapter, Heidegger's (1927) conception of anxiety provides extraordinarily rich understanding of states of anxiety at the traumatic extreme of the anxiety spectrum and, in so doing, points the way to a recognition that the possibility of emotional trauma is inherent to the basic constitution of human existence.

ANXIETY

Heidegger (1927) makes a sharp distinction between fear and anxiety, similar in some ways to Freud's. Whereas, according to Heidegger, that in the face of which one fears is a definite "entity within-the-world" (p. 231), that in the face of which one is anxious is "completely indefinite" (p. 231), "is nothing and nowhere" (p. 231), and turns out to be "Being-in-the-world as such" (p. 230). The indefiniteness of anxiety "tells us that entities within-the-world are not 'relevant' at all" (p. 231): "The totality of involvements [that constitute the significance of the world] is, as such, of no consequence; it collapses into itself; the world has the character of completely lacking significance" (p. 231).

As Bracken (2005) persuasively argues, Heidegger (1927) makes clear that it is the significance of the average everyday world, the

world as constituted by the public interpretedness of the "they,"* whose collapse is disclosed in anxiety: "The 'world' can offer nothing more and neither can the Dasein-with of Others.† Anxiety thus takes away from Dasein the possibility of understanding itself…in terms of the 'world' and the way things have been publicly interpreted" (p. 232).

Insofar as the "utter insignificance" (p. 231) of the everyday world is disclosed in anxiety, anxiety includes a feeling of uncanniness, in the sense of "not-being-at-home" (p. 233). In anxiety, the experience of "Being-at-home" (p. 233) in one's tranquilized "everyday familiarity" (p. 233) with the publicly interpreted world collapses, and "Being-in enters into the existential 'mode' of the 'not-at-home'…[i.e., of] 'uncanniness'" (p. 233).

ANXIETY AND AUTHENTIC BEING-TOWARD-DEATH

So far, I have briefly summarized Heidegger's (1927) interpretation of anxiety, which, as descriptive phenomenology, is in my opinion unsurpassed in the psychoanalytic literature. But he also presents a complex ontological *account* of anxiety. The aspect of his account on which I will initially focus grounds anxiety in one of the two interrelated basic dimensions of authenticity—authentic (non-evasively owned) "Being-toward-death" (p. 277).‡ Heidegger claims that "as a basic state-of-mind§ of Dasein, [anxiety] amounts

* The "they" or the "anyone" (*das Man*) is Heidegger's term for the impersonal normative system that governs what "one" understands and what "one" does in one's everyday activity as a member of society and occupant of social roles. The "they" is thus a normative authority external to one's own selfhood. "Falling" into identification with the "they" is a flight from or disowning of one's own individual selfhood.

† The Being-there-with-us of others.

‡ The other dimension, which Heidegger terms *resoluteness*, will be discussed in a later section.

§ "State-of-mind" is a misleading translation of *Befindlichkeit*, Heidegger's term for the existential structure of disclosive affectivity (i.e., affectivity that discloses our situatedness). Anxiety discloses the impact of our existential situation of having been thrown into Being-toward-death.

to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exists as thrown* Being toward its end [death]" (p. 295). I have set myself the task in this section of drawing out how the central features in Heidegger's description of anxiety—the collapse of everyday significance and the resulting feeling of uncanniness—can be seen to be grounded in authentic Being-toward-death.

Why does everyday significance collapse in the wake of authentic Being-toward-death? Significance or worldhood, for Heidegger, is a system or context of "involvements" (p. 115)—of interconnected "in-order-to's," "toward which's," "for-which's," "in-which's," "with-which's," and so on that govern our practical dealings with entities within-the-world. Any such referential system is anchored in a "for-the-sake-of-which" (i.e., in some possibility of Dasein, some potentiality-for-Being). Within "the horizon of average everydayness" (p. 94), these potentialities-for-Being are prescribed by the "they"—actualizing publicly defined goals and social roles, for example. In authentic Being-toward-death, all such publicly defined potentialities-for-Being are nullified. In order to grasp why this is so, we must examine Heidegger's existential analysis of Being-toward-death.

Existentially, death is not simply an event that has not yet occurred or that happens to others. Rather, according to Heidegger, it is a distinctive possibility, into which we have been "thrown," that is constitutive of our kind of Being ("existence"†). As such, death always already belongs to our existence as a central constituent of our intelligibility to ourselves in our futurity and finitude. In Being-toward-the-end, "Dasein…is already its end…" (p. 289):

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* By the term *thrownness* Heidegger designates our already having been delivered over to a situatedness ("facticity") and kind of Being that are not of our choosing or under our control.

† Heidegger designates the human kind of Being, which "comports itself understandingly toward that Being" (p. 78), by the term *existence*. In Being as existing, we project ourselves understandingly upon our possibilities, our potentiality-for-Being. In existing, Dasein "is primarily Being-possible…[I]t is its possibility" (p. 183). Heidegger's existential analytic seeks the basic structures (existentiales) that make existing possible.

"In Being-toward-death, Dasein comports itself toward itself as a distinctive potentiality-for-Being" (p. 296).

Authentic Being-toward-death has several features, all of which bear upon the collapse of everyday significance in anxiety. First, "we must characterize Being-toward-death as a Being toward a possibility—indeed, toward a distinctive possibility of Dasein itself" (p. 305). In a crucial passage, Heidegger explains:

> The more unveiledly [authentically] 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 "actualized," nothing which Dasein, as actual, could itself be. It is the possibility of the impossibility of every way of comporting oneself toward anything, of every way of existing. (p. 307)

Thus, authentic Being-toward-death as a possibility of Dasein strips everyday significance of the for-the-sake-of-which's that anchor it. In death as possibility, no potentiality-for-Being can be actualized. Everyday significance, which presupposes such actualization, collapses.

Additionally, "Death is Dasein's ownmost possibility" (p. 307): "Being toward this possibility discloses to Dasein its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, in which its very Being is the issue. Here it can become manifest to Dasein that in this distinctive possibility of its own self, it has been wrenched away from the 'they'" (p. 307).

Similarly, the "ownmost possibility is non-relational [in that] death lays claim to [Dasein] as an individual Dasein" (p. 308), nullifying all its relations with others*: "This individualizing…makes manifest that all Being-alongside [-amid] the things with which we concern ourselves, and all Being-with-Others [and thus all

* A careful reading reveals that Heidegger demonstrates persuasively only that it is relating to others in the inauthentic mode governed by *das Man* that is nullified in authentic Being-toward-death. Authentic Being-toward-death, according to Heidegger, frees us from the grip of de-individualizing conventional interpretedness.

everyday public interpretedness], will fail us when our ownmost potentiality-for-Being [death] is the issue" (p. 308).

The referential system of everyday significance is for-the-sake-of the "they." Heidegger points out that, in this way of Being, "representability" is constitutive for our being with one another: "Here one Dasein can and must…'be' another Dasein" (p. 284). Insofar as we are actualizing publicly defined roles, any Dasein can substitute for any other. However, in the face of the ownmostness and non-relationality (unsharability) of the possibility of death, the intersubstitutability characteristic of the "they" "breaks down completely" (p. 284): "No one can take the Other's dying away from him…Dying is something that every Dasein itself must take upon itself…By its very essence, death is in every case mine…[M]ineness…[is] ontologically constitutive for death" (p. 284). In authentic Being-toward-death, we are utterly and completely alone. By disclosing our non-substitutability, authentic Being-toward-death tears us out of our absorption in the "they," revealing everyday publicly interpreted worldly possibilities to be irrelevant and useless.

A further feature of authentic Being-toward-death contributes to pulling Dasein out of its absorption in everyday significance. The "ownmost, non-relational possibility is not to be outstripped" (p. 308); "the possibility of nullity…is not to be outstripped" (p. 379): "Anticipation* [of death] discloses to existence that its uttermost possibility lies in giving itself up, and thus it shatters all one's tenaciousness to whatever [everyday] existence one has reached" (p. 308).

Lastly, death as a possibility is both certain and "indefinite as regards its certainty" (p. 310) (i.e., its "when"), and it therefore always impends as a constant threat: "[Death is] a potentiality-for-Being which is certain and which is constantly possible…In anticipating the indefinite certainty of death, Dasein opens itself to a constant threat arising out of its 'there' [disclosedness]. In this

* *Anticipation* is Heidegger's term for authentic Being-toward-death.

very threat Being-toward-the-end must maintain itself" (p. 310). Here Heidegger makes vividly clear how this constant threat is disclosed in anxiety:

> [T]he state-of-mind which can hold open the utter and constant threat to itself arising from Dasein's ownmost individualized Being, is anxiety. In this state-of-mind, Dasein finds itself face to face with the "nothing" of the possible impossibility of its existence…Being-toward-death is essentially anxiety. (p. 310)
>
> The "nothing" with which anxiety brings us face to face, unveils the nullity by which Dasein, in its very basis, is defined. (p. 356)

Everyday significance is anchored in some publicly defined for-the-sake-of-which, a goal or role whose actualization the referential system of significance is designed to make possible. Such actualizing presupposes some span of going-on-Being in which the actualization can occur. But authentic Being-toward-death is Being toward the constant possibility of the impossibility of existing and, hence, of actualizing anything, a threat that always impends. Authentic Being-toward-death thus annihilates any actualizable potentiality-for-Being that might stably anchor everyday significance. It follows, then, that anxiety, which discloses the constantly impending possibility of the impossibility of existing, should be experienced as a collapse of everyday significance and as a corresponding feeling of uncanniness. But there is a much stronger reason that this should be the case.

Falling into identification with the "they," becoming absorbed in the publicly interpreted everyday world of its practical concerns, is the principle way in which "Dasein covers up its ownmost Being-toward-death, fleeing in the face of it" (p. 295). In the public interpretedness of everydayness, death is understood merely as an event "not yet present-at-hand" (p. 297): "Death gets passed off as always something 'actual'; its character as a possibility gets concealed…This evasive concealment in the face of death dominates everydayness…In this manner the "they" provides a constant tranquillization about death" (pp. 297–298).

The "they" transforms anxiety in the face of death "into fear in the face of an upcoming event" (p. 298). In an important passage, Heidegger explains how absorption in the everyday practical world serves as defensive evasion of authentic Being-toward-death:

> Everydayness forces its way into the urgency of concern…Death is deferred to "sometime later"…Thus the "they" covers up what is peculiar in death's certainty—that it is possible at any moment… Everyday concern makes definite for itself the indefiniteness of certain death by interposing before it those urgencies and possibilities which can be taken in at a glance, and which belong to the everyday matters that are closest to us. (p. 302)

The appearance of anxiety indicates that this fundamental defensive purpose of absorption in the everyday world of public interpretedness has failed, and that authentic Being-toward-death has broken through (analogously to Freud's 1939 "return of the repressed," p. 124) the evasions and "Illusions of the 'they'" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 311) that conceal it. Losing this defensive for-the-sake-of-which is a principal way in which the everyday world loses its significance in the anxiety that discloses authentic Being-toward-death. Dasein feels uncanny—no longer safely at home in an everyday world that now fails to evade the anxiety of authentic Being-toward-death.

ANXIETY, AUTHENTIC BEING-TOWARD-DEATH, AND TRAUMA

My thesis in this section is that emotional trauma produces an affective state whose features bear a close similarity to the central elements in Heidegger's description of anxiety, and that it accomplishes this by plunging the traumatized person into a form of authentic Being-toward-death. I begin with a description, drawn from an earlier work (Stolorow, 2007), of a traumatized state that I experienced at a conference in 1992, at which I relived the terrible loss of my late wife, Dede, who had died 20 months earlier*:

* In the next chapter, I elaborate on the context in which this reliving took form.

> There was a dinner at that conference for all the panelists, many of whom were my old and good friends and close colleagues. Yet, as I looked around the ballroom, they all seemed like strange and alien beings to me. Or more accurately, I seemed like a strange and alien being—not of this world. The others seemed so vitalized, engaged with one another in a lively manner. I, in contrast, felt deadened and broken, a shell of the man I had once been. An unbridgeable gulf seemed to open up, separating me forever from my friends and colleagues. They could never even begin to fathom my experience, I thought to myself, because we now lived in altogether different worlds. (pp. 13-14)

Note how closely my description of my traumatized state resembles Heidegger's depiction of anxiety. The significance of my everyday professional world had collapsed into meaninglessness. The conference and my friends and colleagues offered me nothing; I was "deadened" to them, estranged from them. I felt uncanny—"like a strange and alien being—not of this world."*

In the years following that painful experience at the conference dinner, I was able to recognize similar feelings in my patients who had suffered severe traumatization. I sought to comprehend and conceptualize the dreadful sense of alienation and estrangement that seemed to me to be inherent to the experience of emotional trauma. The key that I found that for me unlocked the meaning of trauma was what I came to call "the absolutisms of everyday life" (Stolorow, 2007, p. 13), which bear a remarkable similarity to what Heidegger characterizes as the tranquilizing illusions of the "they":

> When a person says to a friend, "I'll see you later," or a parent says to a child at bedtime, "I'll see you in the morning," these are statements…whose validity is not open for discussion. Such absolutisms are the basis for a kind of naïve realism and optimism that allow one to function in the world, experienced as stable and predictable. It is in the essence of emotional trauma that it

* Lear (2006) similarly describes and vividly illustrates how the world can lose its significance and intelligibility in consequence of the collapse of a communal way of life (i.e., of collective trauma on a cultural scale). *See also* Stolorow (2010) for a further discussion of the impact of collective trauma.

> shatters these absolutisms, a catastrophic loss of innocence that permanently alters one's sense of Being-in-the-world. Massive deconstruction of the absolutisms of everyday life exposes the inescapable contingency of existence on a universe that is random and unpredictable and in which no safety or continuity of being can be assured. Trauma thereby exposes "the unbearable embeddedness of Being."…As a result, the traumatized person cannot help but perceive aspects of existence that lie well outside the absolutized horizons of normal everydayness. It is in this sense that the worlds of traumatized persons are fundamentally incommensurable with those of others, the deep chasm in which an anguished sense of estrangement and solitude takes form. (p. 16)

Trauma shatters the absolutisms of everyday life, which, like the illusions of the "they," evade and cover up the finitude, contingency, and embeddedness of our existence and the indefiniteness of its certain extinction. Such shattering exposes what had been heretofore concealed, thereby plunging the traumatized person, in Heidegger's terms, into a form of authentic Being-toward-death and into the anxiety—the loss of significance, the uncanniness—through which authentic Being-toward-death is disclosed. Trauma, like authentic Being-toward-death, individualizes us, but in a manner that manifests in an excruciating sense of singularity and solitude.

Before she died, Dede had, in a certain sense, been my "world." In dying, she "abandoned our 'world' and left it behind" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 282). Her death tore me from the illusion of our infinitude ("I will love you forever," we would often say to each other), and my world collapsed. The particular form of authentic Being-toward-death that crystallized in the wake of her death I would characterize as a Being-toward-loss. (My son, Ben, who is no stranger to trauma and who spent his teenage years with me in the aftermath of Dede's death, refers to this form of Being-toward-death as "skeletal consciousness.") Loss of loved ones constantly impends for me as a certain, indefinite, and ever-present possibility, in terms of which I now always understand myself and my world. In loss, as possibility, all potentialities-for-Being in relation

to a loved one are nullified. In that sense, Being-toward-loss is also a Being-toward-the-death of a part of oneself—toward existential death, as it were. It seems likely that the specific features that authentic Being-toward-death assumes will bear the imprint of the nature of the trauma that plunges one into it.

TRAUMA AND ANTICIPATORY RESOLUTENESS

In trauma, a potential dimension of authenticity—authentic Being-toward-death—is unveiled but not freely chosen; on the contrary, it is forced upon the traumatized person, and the accompanying anxiety can be unendurable, making dissociative retreats from the traumatized states—retreats into forms of inauthenticity—necessary. In some instances, however, trauma can actually bring about an enhancement of a second dimension of authenticity, which Heidegger terms "resoluteness" (p. 314).

Heidegger works his way toward resoluteness through an analysis of "the call of conscience" (p. 314), in which a particular Dasein can attest its authentic potentiality-for-Being—in other words, its "ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self" (p. 314). The call of conscience achieves this by summoning Dasein from its lostness in the publicness of the "they" "to its ownmost Being-guilty" (p. 314). For Heidegger, existential guilt, which is a condition for the possibility of ordinary moral guilt, is something like being answerable or accountable to oneself for oneself—a taking responsibility for oneself, which Heidegger also calls "Being-the-basis for" (p. 329) oneself. More specifically, Being-guilty is a "Being-the-basis for a Being which has been defined by a 'not'—that is to say, as 'Being-the-basis of a nullity'" (p. 329). What can this mean?

Dasein's Being—that is, its intelligibility to itself—is defined by a "not" in three senses, corresponding to the three dimensions of what Heidegger calls care*: "facticity (thrownness), existence

* *Care* is Heidegger's term for the totality of the structural whole or unity constituted by the basic characteristics of Dasein's Being. It can be grasped as a kind of primordial engagement with oneself and one's world.

(projection [of possibilities]), and falling [into the 'they']" (p. 329). With regard to thrownness: "As…something that has been thrown, [Dasein] has been brought into [delivered over to] its 'there,' but not of its own accord…This 'not' belongs to the existential meaning of 'thrownness'" (pp. 329–330).

In Being-guilty, Dasein "must take over Being-a-basis" (p. 330) into its own existence, by "project[ing] itself upon [the] possibilities into which it has been thrown" (p. 330). But as existing (i.e., in having a potentiality-for-Being), Dasein "always stands in [projects upon] one possibility or another: It is constantly not other possibilities, and it has waived these in its…projection" (p. 331). Here we see the second sense in which Dasein's intelligibility to itself is defined by a "not"—every projection of possibility is also a projection of impossibility (i.e., a death of possibility), and thus "projection…is itself essentially null" (p. 331). This nullity of projection alludes also to the nullity of one's uttermost potentiality-for-Being (i.e., to authentic Being-toward-death).

A third sense of Dasein's nullity is the nullity of falling. In its lostness in the "they," Dasein is "not as itself" (p. 330); it is not for-the-sake-of itself but for-the-sake-of the "they." Thus Dasein's Being—its intelligibility to itself—"is permeated with nullity through and through" (p. 331). The call of conscience summons Dasein to its existential responsibility—to take over this threefold nullity into its own existence: "The appeal [of conscience]…calls Dasein forth to the possibility of taking over, in existing, even that thrown entity which it is…" (p. 333). Moving closer to his conception of authenticity, Heidegger explains: "Understanding the call is choosing…What is chosen is having-a-conscience as Being-free for one's ownmost Being-guilty. 'Understanding the appeal' means 'wanting to have a conscience [wanting to be answerable to oneself for oneself]'" (p. 334).

In understanding the call, one chooses to take responsibility for oneself and for the nullity that permeates one's Being. Understanding the call exposes our lostness in the "they" (our "debt" to owned selfhood) and allows this lostness to matter to us in such a way that

we can choose not to be lost but to exist for-the-sake-of ourselves, our own potentiality-for-Being. In understanding the call, we are summoned from lostness to our own selfhood, "which has been individualized down to itself in uncanniness and been thrown into the 'nothing'" (p. 322) of the world. The words *uncanniness* and *the nothing* point to a deep connection between existential guilt and the anxiety that discloses authentic Being-toward-death:

> Understanding the call discloses one's own Dasein in the uncanniness of its individualization. The uncanniness which is revealed in understanding [is] disclosed by the state-of-mind of anxiety… The fact of the anxiety of conscience, gives us phenomenal confirmation that in understanding the call Dasein is brought face-to-face with its own uncanniness. Wanting-to-have-a-conscience becomes a readiness for anxiety. (p. 342)

This "self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety [Heidegger calls] 'resoluteness'" (p. 343), which is "authentic Being-one's-Self" (p. 344). In the Being-guilty embodied in resoluteness, one seizes upon or takes hold of possibilities into which one has been thrown, making these possibilities one's own.

Having delineated authentic Being-toward-death, also termed *anticipation* (p. 349), and resoluteness as two dimensions of authentic existing, Heidegger now seeks to establish their unity by showing that resoluteness achieves its "ownmost authentic possibility" only as an "anticipatory resoluteness" (p. 349). "When resoluteness has been 'thought through to the end'" (p. 352), Heidegger claims, it leads us to authentic Being-toward-death:

> Dasein is essentially guilty [responsible for itself]…To project oneself upon this Being-guilty, which Dasein is as long as it is, belongs to the very meaning of resoluteness…Being-guilty is understood as something constant. But this understanding is made possible only insofar as Dasein discloses to itself its potentiality-for-Being, and discloses it "right to its end." Existentially, however, Dasein's "Being-at-an-end" implies a Being-toward-the-end. As Being-toward-the-end which understands—that is to say, as anticipation of death—resoluteness becomes authentically what it can be.

> Resoluteness…harbours in itself authentic Being-toward-death… (p. 353)
>
> [O]nly as anticipating [authentic Being-toward-death] does resoluteness become a primordial Being toward Dasein's own-most potentiality-for-Being. (p. 354)
>
> When Dasein is resolute, it takes over authentically in its existence the fact that it is the null basis of its own nullity…[This nullity] is revealed to Dasein itself in authentic Being-toward-death.* (p. 354)
>
> Resoluteness is authentically and wholly what it can be, only as anticipatory resoluteness. (p. 356)

The word *wholly* in the last of the foregoing quotations suggests that, for Heidegger, authentic resoluteness is a matter of degree. The more we understand all of our possibilities in terms of the constantly possible "limit-Situation" (p. 356) of death (i.e., as finite), the more authentic is our resoluteness with respect to those possibilities.

Recall that "Being-toward-death is essentially anxiety" (p. 310), and that in anxiety the significance of the everyday world collapses. As Bracken (2005) makes clear, however, "anxiety, as Heidegger understands it, discloses significant [and authentic] possibilities beyond the possibilities rendered insignificant by anxiety's disclosure" (p. 545). As Heidegger (1927) puts it:

> Anxiety discloses an insignificance of the [everyday] world; and this insignificance reveals the nullity of that with which one can concern oneself—or, in other words, the impossibility of projecting oneself upon a potentiality-for-Being which belongs to existence and which is founded primarily upon one's objects of concern. The revealing of this impossibility, however, signifies that one is letting the possibility of an authentic potentiality-for-Being be lit up. (p. 393)
>
> Anxiety…brings one into the mood for a possible resolution… Anxiety liberates [one who is resolute] from possibilities which

* Heidegger goes on to show how authentic Being-toward-death as one's ownmost, non-relational, uttermost, certain, and indefinite possibility highlights and illuminates the corresponding characteristics of authentic resoluteness and its finite "can-be." In anticipatory resoluteness, Dasein understands itself with regard to its own can-be "right under the eyes of Death" (p. 434).

> "count for nothing," and lets him become free for those which are authentic. (pp. 394–395)

I have contended that trauma brings one into a form of authentic Being-toward-death, manifested in a traumatized state exhibiting the central features that Heidegger attributes to anxiety. Does such a traumatized state, then, bring one into the mood for a possible resolution, as Heidegger claims of anxiety? Does trauma free one for possibilities that are authentic? At first glance the answer would seem obviously to be negative, since, as Freud (1926) recognized, the most immediate impact of trauma is to feel overwhelmed and powerless—hardly in the mood for a possible resolution. Yet, as the smoke begins to clear a bit, traumatized people sometimes feel they have gained "perspective," a sense of what "really matters." In some such instances, what "really matters" may not be something "ideal and universal [but]…that which has been currently individualized and which belongs to that particular Dasein" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 326), the particular traumatized person.

Some 6 months after Dede's death, I took hold of my experience of traumatic loss—my thrownness into loss—and embarked upon a project of attempting to grasp and conceptualize the nature of emotional trauma. This project has occupied me now for more than 20 years, resulting first in a chapter of the book (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992, Chapter 4) that was delivered to the conference in 1992,* and then in a series of articles that eventually became chapters in a book (Stolorow, 2007). Indeed, I continue this project even now, as I complete the present book. Might this enduring project exemplify an authentic resoluteness brought forth in me by my seizing upon my experience of traumatic loss and the particular form of authentic Being-toward-death that accompanied it?

According to Heidegger (1927), persisting resoluteness is constitutive of constancy of selfhood: "The constancy of the Self, in the double sense of steadiness and steadfastness, is the authentic

* See Chapter 5, page 59.

counter-possibility to the non-Self-constancy which is characteristic of irresolute falling. Existentially, 'Self-constancy' signifies nothing other than anticipatory resoluteness" (p. 369). My ongoing effort to conceptualize emotional trauma, a project so dear to my ownmost heart, has indeed been a source of self-continuity for me, unprecedented in my career as a psychoanalytic author. What has enabled me to remain resolutely devoted to this project rather than succumbing to various forms of dissociative numbing (although at times I have done this too)? For one thing, staying rooted in one's own genuine painful emotional experiences had been something that Dede and I had valued, worked on together, and written about, so my project has been a way of affirming my connection with her and keeping it alive. Additionally, key family members and close friends have shown consistent acceptance and understanding of my painful states, thereby providing them with a relational home wherein I have been able to live in them, articulate them, and think about them, rather than evade them.

In the first paragraph of this chapter, I suggested that we picture a continuum of anxiety, with traumatic anxiety and signal anxiety constituting the two extremes. I further suggested that where a particular state of anxiety falls along this continuum will depend on contextual factors, including the extent to which there is an available relational home for the anxiety in which it can be held and integrated. These two suggestions can be generalized to all painful emotional states. In a sense, in the context of an affect-integrating relational home, traumatized states can cease to be traumatic, or at least cease to be enduringly so. Within such a relational home, traumatized states are in a process of becoming less severely traumatic (i.e., of becoming less overwhelming and more bearable), thus making dissociative and other evasive defenses less necessary. Thus, within a holding relational home, the traumatized person may become able to move toward more authentic (non-evasive) existing. Anticipatory resoluteness as a possibility in the wake of trauma, I am proposing, is embedded in a broader contextual whole within which traumatized states can

evolve into painful emotional experiences that can be more fully felt and articulated, better tolerated, and eventually integrated. Authentic existing presupposes a capacity to dwell in the emotional pain (e.g., the existential anxiety) that accompanies a nonevasive recognition of finitude, and this capacity, in turn, requires that such pain find a relational context in which it can be held. I search in Chapter 6 for the existential ground for such an affect-integrating contextual whole. First, I turn, in the next chapter, to the impact of trauma on our experience of temporality.

5

Worlds Apart

Dissociation, Finitude, and Traumatic Temporality

> The dimension of time has been shattered.
>
> **– Italo Calvino**

> The fragile walls of your isolation…will have served only to reflect for an instant the flash of those universes in the heart of which you never ceased to be lost.
>
> **– George Bataille**

> I am merely my father once more.
>
> **– Friedrich Nietzsche**

> Everybody's changing, and I don't feel right.
>
> **– Keane**

Coined by Pierre Janet in his investigations of hysteria, the term *dissociation* has taken on a variety of not-always-compatible meanings and usages in contemporary psychoanalytic theory and practice. Donnel Stern (1997), for example, defines dissociation as a "refusal to interpret" (p. xii) experience, a defensive "avoidance of verbal [symbolic] articulation" (p. 114)—a formulation that, interestingly, comes very close to the way Atwood and I (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992) conceive of the process of repression. Bromberg (2003), in contrast, views dissociation as

> a defense against trauma…[that] reduces what is in front of someone's eyes to a narrow band of perceptual reality…Its key quality is its ability to retain the adaptational protection afforded by the hypnoid separateness of incompatible self-states, so that each can continue to play its own role, unimpeded by awareness of the others. (p. 561)

Bromberg's conception of dissociation bears a similarity to Kohut's (1971) description of a "vertical split in the psyche" (p. 176). Like Bromberg, I think of defensive dissociation phenomenologically as a kind of "tunnel vision"—a narrowing of one's experiential horizons so as to exclude the terrifying, the prohibited, and the emotionally unbearable. Unlike Bromberg, however, I would emphasize the keeping apart not just of incompatible self-states but, more broadly, of incommensurable emotional worlds. In this chapter, I seek to rethink the concept of dissociation in terms of the devastating impact of emotional trauma on our experience of temporality.* Dissociation, I will try to show, is traumatic temporality, and traumatic temporality is the condition for the possibility of the defensive use of dissociation.

A patient of mine (discussed in Stolorow, 2007) with a long, painful history of traumatic violations, shocks, and losses arrived at her session in a profoundly fragmented state. Shortly before, she had seen her psychopharmacologist for a 20-minute interview. In an apparent attempt to update her files, this psychiatrist had required the patient to recount her entire history of traumatization with no attention given to the emotional impact of this recounting. The patient explained to me that with the retelling of each traumatic episode, a piece of herself broke off and relocated to the time and place of the original trauma. By the time she reached my office, she said, she was completely dispersed along the time dimension of her crushing life history. Upon hearing this, I spoke just three words: "Trauma destroys time." The patient's eyes grew wide; she smiled and said, "I just came together again."

* By *temporality* I mean the lived experience of time.

I use the term *portkey*, which I borrowed from Harry Potter (Rowling, 2000), to capture the profound impact of emotional trauma on our experience of time. Harry was a severely traumatized little boy, nearly killed by his parents' murderer and left in the care of a family that mistreated him cruelly. He arose from the ashes of devastating trauma as a wizard in possession of wondrous magical powers, and yet never free from the original trauma, always under threat by his parents' murderer. As a wizard, he encountered portkeys—objects that transported him instantly to other places, obliterating the duration ordinarily required for travel from one location to another.* Portkeys to trauma return one again and again to an experience of traumatization. As shown dramatically in the foregoing paragraph, the experience of such portkeys can fracture and even obliterate one's sense of unitary selfhood, of Being-in-time.

Trauma devastatingly disrupts the ordinary, average-everyday linearity and "ecstatical unity of temporality" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 416), the sense of "stretching-along" (p. 426) from the past to an open future. Experiences of emotional trauma become freeze-framed into an eternal present in which one remains forever trapped, or to which one is condemned to be perpetually returned through the portkeys supplied by life's slings and arrows. In the region of trauma, all duration or stretching along collapses; past becomes present, and future loses all meaning other than endless repetition. In this sense it is trauma, not, as Freud (1915) would have it, the unconscious that is timeless.

Because trauma so profoundly modifies the universal or shared structure of temporality, the traumatized person quite literally lives in another kind of reality, an experiential world felt to be incommensurable with those of others. This felt incommensurability, in turn, contributes to the sense of alienation and estrangement from other human beings that typically haunts the traumatized

* My wife, Dr. Julia Schwartz, first brought this imagery of portkeys to my attention nearly a decade ago, as a metaphor that captures the impact of trauma on the experience of temporality.

person. Torn from the communal fabric of being-in-time, trauma remains insulated from human dialogue.

The phenomenology of traumatic temporality was beautifully captured by Friedrich Nietzsche (1882) in his famous doctrine of "the eternal return of the same":

> *The greatest burden.*—What would happen if one day or night a demon were to steal upon you in your loneliest loneliness and say to you, "You will have to live this life—as you are living it now and have lived it in the past—once again and countless times more; and there will be nothing new to it, but every pain and every pleasure, every thought and sigh, and everything unutterably petty or grand in your life will have to come back to you, all in the same sequence and order…The eternal hourglass of existence turning over and over—and you with it, speck of dust!"…If that thought ever came to prevail in you, it would transform you, such as you are, and perhaps it would mangle you. (quoted in Heidegger, 1954, pp. 19–20)

The poetic language of the thought of eternal return seems beautifully to capture the nullity and groundlessness of our existence—"you…speck of dust!"—endlessly recurring, with no divine goal or purpose, no preordained order or meaningfulness: "God is dead"; "The collective character of the world is…to all eternity—chaos" (Nietzsche, 1882; quoted in Heidegger, 1954, pp. 66, 91). Nietzsche will provide my third "clinical" illustration of traumatic temporality.

In Nietzsche's metaphysical vision, entities as a whole are represented as being interwoven in one vast nexus of chaos, flux, and perpetual becoming—a representation of all there is that was supposed to achieve an inversion of Platonism, a definitive expunging of the suprasensory, the eternal, the permanent, and the unchanging from Western philosophy. But does not the thought of the eternal return of the same—that is, the idea of *permanent* becoming—undo this very achievement? As Heidegger (1954) put it, "The thought of eternal return of the same fixates by determining how the world essentially is" (p. 129); it "freezes the eternal flow" (p. 145) by stamping it with the "emblem of eternity" (p. 201),

thereby achieving no less than a "permanentizing of becoming" (p. 156).

What would lead a thinker to adopt the permanentizing of becoming, the eternalizing of change, as his fundamental metaphysical position? Such a doctrine would seem to combine an embracing of finitude with a flight from the very finitude that has been embraced. Heidegger (1954), like Nietzsche before him, stresses "the essential involvement of the thinker in the thought" (p. 98), so let us look very briefly at Nietzsche's life history and personal emotional world for some clues.

Arnold and Atwood (2005) have elaborated an elegant psychobiographical account of the interweaving themes that circulated throughout Nietzsche's emotional life and philosophical work, eventuating finally in his madness. According to their account, the watershed event in his development was the death of his beloved father, a revered Protestant clergyman, when Nietzsche was four years old. The death of his father was a trauma that shattered the young Nietzsche's emotional world and left him in a state of psychological chaos and fragmentation prefiguring his later psychosis, much as, according to the philosopher Nietzsche, the death of God had left Europe in a dangerous state of nihilism and groundlessness. As a boy, Nietzsche strove to overcome his emotional devastation by trying to be his lost father, adopting the father's sermonic manner. This restitutive movement, in which his emotional world became enveloped in an image of his dead father, is vividly captured in a dream that he dreamt soon after his father's funeral and which he reported in a youthful autobiography (Nietzsche, 1858):

> I dreamt that I would hear the same organ-sound as the one at the burial. While I was looking for the reason for this, suddenly a grave opens and my father, dressed in his shroud, climbs out of it. He rushes into the church and after a short while he returns with a little child [obviously the young Nietzsche] in his arms. The grave opens, he enters, and the cover sinks down again on the opening. (p. 12)

Arnold and Atwood (2005) aptly describe the world of Nietzsche's dream as "a curved space surrounding a black hole in being" (p. 245). Nietzsche's restorative effort to be his father continued throughout his life, always circling back to the nothingness of traumatic loss that he was trying to overcome. In his later autobiography, *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche (1908) wrote tellingly:

> My father died at the age of thirty-six…In the same year in which his life went downward, mine, too, went downward: at thirty-six, I reached the lowest point of my vitality—I still lived, but…like a shadow. (p. 122)
>
> I am merely my father once more, and, as it were, his continued life after an all-too-early death. (p. 228)

His father's all-too-early death confronted young Nietzsche prematurely with the finitude of human existence and the indefinite certainty of death and traumatic loss. Nietzsche's restorative movement was to permanentize his dead father in his own selfhood, but, tragically, in so doing, he recurrently and endlessly circled back to his own psychological annihilation. The thematic parallel to his doctrine of the eternal return of the same, the countermovement through which he sought to overcome European nihilism, is striking. The permanentizing of transience, the infinitizing of finitude, the circular ordering of chaos, the ending that goes on forever—does not the doctrine of eternal recurrence poetize a crypto-Platonic evasion of human finitude probably as old as humankind's capacity for abstract thought? Nietzsche's fundamental metaphysical position gives us a compelling metaphorical window into the phenomenology of the traumatic temporality of human finitude and of the endless human struggle to overcome it.

For my fourth and final example, I will draw on my own experiences of portkeys to trauma. There is an annual conference, usually taking place in October, which my late wife, Dede, and I attended together every year. At that conference in 1991, eight months after Dede had died, my dear friend, the late John Lindon, presented a

paper memorializing her. Upon hearing his paper, I fled from the conference auditorium in a state of uncontrollable sobbing.

When my book *Contexts of Being* (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992) was first published in October of 1992, an initial batch of copies was sent "hot off the press" to the display table at this same annual conference, at which I experienced the traumatized state described in the previous chapter. I picked up a copy and looked around excitedly for Dede, who would be so pleased and happy to see it. She was, of course, nowhere to be found, having died some 20 months earlier. I had awakened the morning of February 23, 1991 to find her lying dead across our bed, four weeks after her metastatic cancer had been diagnosed. Spinning around to show her my newly published book and finding her gone was a portkey that instantly transported me back to that devastating moment in which I found her dead. I spent the remainder of that conference in 1992 remembering and grieving, consumed with unbearable feelings of horror and sorrow over what had happened to Dede and to me.

A decade or so later, Dr. Z and her husband, who had been friends of mine for about five years, revealed something to me that they had never before disclosed: that they had attended the memorial gathering following Dede's death some eleven years before. Dr. Z began telling me of the sadness she had seen in my two children. In a flash, the intervening years vanished into nothingness and I was transported back to that sad event. I saw again the sadness in my children's faces and felt the soft touch of my daughter, Stephanie's, head resting sweetly on my shoulder, and, nearly eleven years later, I was once again consumed with overwhelming sorrow.

In May of 2009, I saw a lengthy critical attack on my book on emotional trauma (Stolorow, 2007)—a book born of the tragedy of Dede's death—that had been accepted for presentation in October at the same annual conference at which Dede had been memorialized in 1991 and to which my earlier book had been delivered in 1992. Seeing this attack plunged me into a (re)traumatized state.

How was learning of the attack a portkey to trauma? Just before Dede and I learned of her cancer, we had decided to have a child. She wanted a girl and had already named her Lauren. During the period of retraumatization following my seeing the critical attack, I had a nightmare:

> I am lying down holding a pregnant young woman in my arms. Suddenly she gives birth, and the baby is born dead. I see that she is dead too, and I try to scream to revive her, but can make no sound. I wake up screaming.

When I awakened, the meaning of this nightmare was apparent to me. I was experiencing the anticipated attack on my book as a portkey back to the death of Dede and her cancer's virtual killing of Lauren.

In June of 2010 I had a preliminary appointment with my ophthalmologist in preparation for cataract surgery. I had been severely near-sighted since I was five years old, and the surgery promised to restore me to perfect distance vision without glasses for the first time in sixty-two years, a very exciting prospect for me. Yet, after the appointment, I sank into a state of lethargy and ennui and remained there for several hours. Finally I remembered the ophthalmology appointment I had in October of 1990 at which my cataracts were first discovered when I was only forty-eight years old. During that appointment I inquired about some headaches with auras that Dede had been experiencing, and my doctor told me they sounded like migraines. They turned out to be headaches caused by metastatic tumors already growing in her brain. That appointment in 1990 signaled the beginning of the end, and my recent appointment instantly transported me back to it, although the portkey registered only as a vague state of lethargy and ennui.

In October of 2008, I attended the same annual conference I have been discussing. One night after a social event at which I felt particularly alienated, much as I had felt at the conference in 1992, I had a dream:

> I am at a party with Dede, and she is trying to decide whether to be with me or with a younger man. I conclude that she wants to be with the younger man, so I go outside. She comes out too, still undecided.

Upon awakening I recognized the younger man in the dream as myself, the forty-eight-year-old me whom Dede had chosen and who had lost her more than seventeen years before. That forty-eight-year-old is long gone now, as is the emotional world in which he had dwelled with Dede. I am the one who remains "undecided," divided between the lost world of forty-eight-year-old me and the current world of sixty-eight-year-old me, forever circling between them. When a portkey, like feeling alienated at the conference in 2008, transports me back to the loss that shattered my world, I am once again forty-eight, the intervening time collapses into nothingness, and I can't believe that so many years have passed. Dissociation just is traumatic temporality.

The eternal return of emotional trauma is ensured by the finitude of our existence and the finitude of all those with whom we are deeply connected. Authentic temporality, insofar as it owns up to human finitude, is traumatic temporality. "Trauma recovery" is an oxymoron—human finitude with its traumatizing impact is not an illness from which one can recover. "Recovery" is a misnomer for the constitution of an expanded emotional world that coexists alongside the absence of the one that has been shattered by trauma. The expanded world and the absent shattered world may be more or less integrated or dissociated, depending on the degree to which the unbearable emotional pain evoked by the traumatic shattering has become integrated or remains dissociated defensively, which depends in turn on the extent to which such pain found a relational home in which it could be held. This is the essential fracturing at the heart of traumatic temporality. Authentic existing that seizes and affirms its own nullity must bear the agony of thinking the eternal return of the same and feeling the dark foreboding that accompanies it as the signature affect of traumatic temporality. However, in contrast with

Nietzsche's Zarathustrean vision, I have contended (Stolorow, 2007) that the mangling and the darkness can be enduringly borne, not in solitude, but in relational contexts of deep emotional attunement and understanding.

6

Our Kinship-in-Finitude

I'll be with you when the deal goes down.

– Bob Dylan

Two central, interweaving themes have crystallized in my investigations of emotional trauma. One pertains to the context-embeddedness of emotional life in general and of the experience of emotional trauma in particular. Emotional experience is inseparable from the contexts of attunement and malattunement in which it is felt. Painful emotional experiences become enduringly traumatic in the absence of an intersubjective context within which they can be held and integrated. The second theme, which draws on Heidegger's (1927) existential analytic, pertains to the recognition that emotional trauma is built into the basic constitution of human existence. In virtue of our finitude and the finitude of all those with whom we are deeply connected, the possibility of emotional trauma constantly impends and is ever present. In Heidegger's vision, we are always already traumatized, to the degree that we exist non-evasively, outside the sheltering illusions of *das Man*.

In this chapter, I seek a synthesis of these two central themes—a more encompassing unity in which both the contextuality and existentiality of emotional trauma can be shown to be grounded. A pathway to such a synthesis can be found in an unexpected

source—certain critiques of Heidegger's philosophy that followed upon the exposure of the depth of his commitment to the Nazi movement (Wolin, 1991).

A number of commentators perceive a certain impoverishment characteristic of Heidegger's conception of "Being-with" (*Mitsein*), his term for the existential structure that underpins the capacity for relationality. Authentic Being-with is largely restricted in Heidegger's philosophy to a form of "solicitude" that welcomes and encourages the other's individualized selfhood, by liberating the other for his or her own authentic possibilities. At first glance (I will take a much closer look in Chapter 8), such an account of authentic relationality would not seem to include the treasuring of a particular other, as would be disclosed in the mood of love. Indeed, I cannot recall ever having encountered the word *love* in the text of *Being and Time*, although references to other ontically experienced, disclosive affect states—such as fear, anxiety, homesickness, boredom, and melancholy—are scattered throughout this book and others written during the same period. Authentic selfhood for Heidegger seems, from this critical vantage point, to be found in the non-relationality of death, not in the love of another. As Lacoue-Labarthe (1990) puts his version of this claim: "'Being-with-one-another,' as the very index of finitude, ultimately remains uninvestigated, except in partial relations which do not include the great and indeed overarching division of love and hatred" (p. 108). Within such a limited view of relationality, traumatic loss could only be a loss of the other's selfhood-liberating function, not a loss of a deeply treasured other.

Vogel (1994) moves me toward the synthesis I have been seeking, by elaborating what he claims to be a relational dimension of the experience of finitude. Just as finitude is fundamental to our existential constitution, so too is it constitutive of our existence that we meet each other as "brothers and sisters in the same dark night" (p. 97), deeply connected with one another in virtue of our common finitude. Thus, although the possibility of emotional trauma is ever present, so too is the possibility of forming bonds of

deep emotional attunement within which devastating emotional pain can be held, rendered more tolerable, and, hopefully, eventually integrated. Our existential kinship-in-the-same-darkness is the condition for the possibility both of the profound contextuality of emotional trauma and of what my soul-brother, George Atwood, calls "the incomparable power of human understanding" (personal communication). It is this kinship-in-finitude that thus provides the existential basis of the synthesis for which I have been searching.

In his final formulation of his "psychoanalytic psychology of the self," Kohut (1984) proposes that the longing for experiences of "twinship" is a prewired developmental need that in a proper milieu unfolds maturationally according to a predetermined epigenetic design. In contrast, I regard longings for twinship or emotional kinship as being reactive to emotional trauma, with its accompanying feelings of singularity, estrangement, and solitude. When I have been traumatized, my only hope for being deeply understood is to form a connection with a brother or sister who knows the same darkness. Twinship longings are ubiquitous, not because they are preprogrammed, but because the possibility of emotional trauma is constitutive of our existence and of our Being-with one another in our common finitude.

Loss can be an emotional trauma for which it is especially difficult to find a relational home. In a recent autobiographical piece (Stolorow, 2004), I wrote of the immediate emotional aftermath of Dede's death: "The person whom I would have wanted to hold my overwhelming grief was the very same person who was gone. I felt that only George [Atwood], whose own world had been shattered by loss when he was a boy, really grasped my emotional devastation" (p. 552). George's experience of traumatic loss is chronicled in a chapter on therapeutic impasse (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992):

> [The therapist, George] had grown up in a family that had been profoundly affected by the sudden death of his mother when he was eight years old. She had been the emotional center of family life, and her loss had been utterly shattering to all the family

> members. The therapist had as a child responded to this massive upheaval in part by forming an identification with his mother and assuming aspects of her nurturant, supporting role in relation to his grieving father and siblings. (p. 118)

A "Grief Chronicle" that I composed on the ninth anniversary of Dede's death (Stolorow, 1999) conveys something strikingly similar:

> It was a little scary
> when I visited her last night,
> shimmering midnight moon
> lighting up the black, rocky home
> where nine years she lay scattered,
> pummeled by crashing, high-tide waves.
> On the walk back to my car
> after our yearly conversation
> I figured out my life:
> In its remains
> I would give to others
> the gift Dede gave to me.
> Through me
> her loving smile
> will warm and brighten
> those I love,
> lifting us both
> from the dark world of death
> into the glow of life.

Small wonder that George and I began calling each other "my brother-in-darkness" long before I encountered the corresponding phrase in Vogel's work.

7

Relationalizing Heidegger's Conception of Finitude

> *Philia* begins with the possibility of survival. Surviving—that is the other name of a mourning whose possibility is never to be awaited.
>
> **– Jacques Derrida**

> Be ahead of all parting, just as if it lay behind you like a passing season.
>
> **– Rainier Maria Rilke**

> I am nothing without you.
>
> **– Vienna Teng**

In the previous chapter I explored our kinship-in-finitude. Critchley (2002) points the way toward a second, and to my mind essential, dimension of the relationality of finitude, placing in question what Heidegger sees as its non-relational character:

> I would want to oppose [Heidegger's claim about the non-relationality of death] with the thought of the fundamentally relational character of finitude, namely that death is first and foremost experienced as a relation to the death or dying of the other and others, in Being-with the dying in a caring way, and in grieving after they are dead…With all the terrible lucidity of grief, one watches the person one loves—parent, partner or child—die and become a

> lifeless material thing.* That is, there is a thing—a corpse—at the heart of the experience of finitude. This is why I mourn…[D]eath and finitude are fundamentally relational…constituted in a relation to a lifeless material thing whom I love and this thing casts a long mournful shadow across the self. (pp. 169–170)

Authentic Being-toward-death entails owning up not only to one's own finitude, but also to the finitude of all those we love. Hence, I am contending here, authentic Being-toward-death always includes Being-toward-loss as a central constituent. Just as, existentially, we are "always dying already" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 298), so too are we always already grieving. Death and loss are existentially equiprimordial (Agosta, 2010). Existential anxiety anticipates both death and loss.

Recently I encountered unexpected support for my claim about the equiprimordiality of death and loss in some works by Derrida.† In *Politics of Friendship* (Derrida, 1997), for example, he contended that the "law of friendship" dictates that every friendship is structured from its beginning, *a priori*, by the possibility that one of the two friends will die first and that the surviving friend will be left to mourn. In *Memoirs for Paul de Man* (1989), he similarly claimed that there is "no friendship without this knowledge of finitude" (p. 28). Finitude and the possibility of mourning are constitutive of every friendship. Derrida (2001) makes this existential claim evocatively and movingly in *The Work of Mourning*:

> To have a friend, to look at him, to follow him with your eyes, to admire him in friendship, is to know in a more intense way, already injured, always insistent, and more and more unforgettable, that one of the two of you will inevitably see the other die. One of us, each says to himself, the day will come when one of the two of us will see himself no longer seeing the other…That is

* When I found Dede dead, I could not touch her, because I was terrified that her body would feel cold and inert, a stark and uncanny antithesis to her warmth and emotional aliveness. Recently, during the period of this writing (a portkey, as described in Chapter 5), I awakened from a nightmare capturing the horror of this experience: I dreamed of Dede becoming possessed by a demon and transforming into a walking dead.

† I am grateful to Iain Thomson for calling these works to my attention.

> the…infinitely small tear, which the mourning of friends passes through and endures even before death… (p. 107)
>
> [This is] the mourning that is prepared and that we expect from the very beginning… (p. 146)
>
> From the first moment, friends become…virtual survivors. Friends know this, and friendship breathes this knowledge…right up to the last breath. (p. 171)

Consider, with regard to the relationality of finitude, the emotional impact of collective trauma, such as the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 (see Stolorow, 2010). As we watched the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapse right before our eyes and witnessed the instant death of more than 3,000 people, did we experience terror only about our own finitude and the possibility of our own deaths? Or were we terrified as well, or even primarily, for the lives of those we loved—our children for example?

It might be objected that Being-toward-loss cannot be a form of Being-toward-death because, whereas the uttermost possibility of death is "the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 307), loss does not nullify the entirety of one's possibilities for Being. Yet, I would counter, in loss as possibility, all possibilities for Being in relation to the lost loved one (other than imaginary and symbolic possibilities) are extinguished. Thus, Being-toward-loss, as I suggested in Chapter 4, is also a Being-toward-the-death of a part of oneself—toward a form of existential death. Traumatic loss shatters one's emotional world, and, insofar as one dwells in the region of such loss, one feels eradicated. Derrida (2001), once again, captures this claim poignantly and poetically:

> [T]he world [is] suspended by some unique tear…reflecting disappearance itself: the world, the whole world, the world itself, for death takes from us not only some particular life within the world, some moment that belongs to us, but, each time, without limit, someone through whom the world, and first of all our own world, will have opened up… (p. 107)

> [A] stretch of [our] living self…a world that is for us the whole world, the only world…sinks into an abyss. (p. 115)

In the aftermath of Dede's death, my world collapsed, and possibilities that were central to my existence were annihilated. In that temporally sequestered (Chapter 5) sector of my world governed by my experience of traumatic loss, I "died" existentially—I became a walking dead—and that "death" was a relational one through and through. The nullification of central possibilities of Being in the experience of traumatic loss may be seen as an analogue pointing to the grasping of death proper as the possibility of the impossibility of any existing at all.

My effort to relationalize Heidegger's conception of Being-toward-death is captured in my poem, "Finitude" (Stolorow, 2009):

> If we're not self-lying,
> we're always already dying.
> If we're not self-deceiving,
> we're always already grieving.
> The answer to the existential quiz?
> "Good-bye" is all there is.

8

Expanding Heidegger's Conception of Relationality

Ethical Implications

i am through you so i.

– e. e. cummings

Being-in is Being-with Others.

– Martin Heidegger

Having explored the relationality of finitude in the context of my investigation of emotional trauma, I return now to Heidegger's conception of Being-with. Specifically, I will explore the question of whether Heidegger's conception of solicitude can be shown to entail the existential kinship-in-finitude that I have claimed is constitutive of our Being-with one another. (This philosophical question must be distinguished from the psycho-biographical question of why Heidegger did not himself flesh out those implications.) I begin this exploration with a discussion of the criticisms of Heidegger's existential analytic offered by two additional commentators—Lévinas and Binswanger.

In the early essay "Is Ontology Fundamental?" (1951), Lévinas presents explicit criticism of Heidegger's ontology for reasons that persist throughout Lévinas's later writings. Against Heidegger's

emphasis on the primordiality of structures of Being (intelligibility), here as in his later works Lévinas seeks an ethical relation anterior and irreducible to understanding—a "relation with the other [that] overflows comprehension [understanding]" and that requires "sympathy or love" (pp. 5–6):

> The other is not an object of comprehension first and an interlocutor second. The two relations are intertwined…To comprehend a person is already to speak with him…Speech delineates an original relation [which is] the condition of any conscious grasp. (p. 6)
>
> In comprehending [a human] being I simultaneously tell this comprehension to this being…In every attitude in regard to the human there is a greeting…A being as such…can only be in a relation where we speak to this being. A being is a human being and it is as a neighbor that a human being is accessible—as a face. (pp. 7–8)

Lévinas seems to regard his dialogical philosophy as a "contestation of [Heidegger's claim for] the primacy of ontology" (p. 10): "Reflection offers only the tale of a personal adventure, of a private soul, which returns incessantly to itself, even when it seems to flee itself. The human only lends itself to a relation…" (p. 10).

I found Lévinas's essay unsatisfying and unconvincing as a critique of Heidegger. Heidegger's ontology is not a philosophy of the human being as an isolated adventurer. For Heidegger (1927), Being-in-the-world is always already "Being-with others" (p. 155), and solicitude toward others (*Fursorge*) is an existentiale—a constitutive structure of human existence. Furthermore, discourse (*Rede*) for Heidegger is a mode of disclosedness equiprimordial with understanding (*Verstehen*) and affectivity (*Befindlichkeit*). There is no lack of originary relationality in Heidegger's ontology: "Being-with is an existential constituent of Being-in-the-world…So far as Dasein is at all, it has Being-with-one-another as its kind of Being" (p. 163). The question I am raising is whether Heidegger's vision of originary relationality is sufficiently rich and inclusive to encompass or entail the deep bonds of attunement and understanding

that are essential to the integration of the traumatizing impact of human finitude.

In the context of his efforts to ground psychiatry and psychotherapy in existential phenomenology, Binswanger (1993) mounted a critique of Heidegger's account of authentic existence. (I rely here on Frie's 1997 rendering of Binswanger's critique, as the latter has not been translated into English; Anna Binswanger-Healy, personal communication, May 5, 2007.) Binswanger takes exception both to Heidegger's claim that authentic existence as Being-toward-death is the condition for authentic Being-with others, and to Heidegger's conception of authentic Being-with others as emancipatory solicitude or leaping ahead of the other. Such leaping ahead, according to Binswanger, does not allow for the mutuality of the reciprocal love relationship. Accordingly, emancipatory solicitude does not engage the other directly and results in the dissolution of direct relations between Dasein and the other. There is no path, according to Binswanger, leading from Heidegger's authentic self to friendship and love (Frie, 1997, pp. 79–84).

In his Zollikon seminar of November 23, 1965, Heidegger responds to Binswanger's attempt to "supplement" fundamental ontology with a theory of primordial love:

> In *Being and Time* it is said that Da-sein is essentially an issue for itself. At the same time, this Da-sein is defined as originary Being-with-one-another. Therefore, Da-sein is also always concerned with others. Thus, the analytic of Da-sein has nothing whatsoever to do with solipsism or subjectivism. But Binswanger's misunderstanding consists not so much of the fact that he wants to supplement "care" with love, but that he does not see that care has an existential, that is, ontological sense. Therefore, the analytic of Da-sein asks for Da-sein's basic ontological (existential) constitution and does not wish to give a mere description of the ontic phenomena of Da-sein… (2001, p. 116)

Heidegger is surely right that, whereas his existential analytic is concerned with interpreting ontological structures, including the primordial existentiale, Being-with, Binswanger is largely occupied

with describing and theorizing about ontical (i.e., psychological) phenomena—such as an originary love presumed to be the source, developmentally, of authentic selfhood. But Heidegger does not, in his rather dismissive response to Binswanger's criticisms, spell out (1) how authentic Being-toward-death is the condition for the possibility of authentic solicitude, or (2) how authentic solicitude might indeed entail something like friendship or love, in the form of deep bonds of emotional attunement.

Let us first consider point (2), beginning with Heidegger's (1927) distinction between two modes of solicitude—inauthentic and authentic. With regard to solicitude in the inauthentic mode:

> It can, as it were, take away "care" [our existentially constitutive engagement with ourselves and our world] from the Other and put itself in his position in concern; it can leap in for him. This kind of solicitude takes over for the Other that with which he is to concern himself…In such [inauthentic] solicitude the Other can become one who is dominated and dependent… (p. 158)
>
> In contrast to this, there is also the possibility of a kind of [authentic] solicitude which does not so much leap in for the Other as leap ahead of him in his existential potentiality-for-Being, not in order to take away his "care" but rather to give it back to him authentically as such for the first time. This kind of solicitude pertains essentially to authentic care—that is, to the [authentic] existence of the Other, not to a "what" with which he is concerned; it helps the Other…to become free for [his authentic care]…[Authentic solicitude] frees the Other in his freedom for himself…[It] leaps forth and liberates. (pp. 158–159)

The mode of discoursing favored in such authentic solicitude Heidegger calls *reticence*, a silent, receptive listening that contrasts sharply with both the intrusiveness of leaping in and the vacuousness of "idle talk" (the mode of discourse of the "they"). In the mode of reticence, we listen in silently to the authentic possibilities of the other, much as we listen quietly to the soundless call of conscience that summons us "to become still" (p. 343). "As a mode of discoursing, reticence gives rise to a potentiality-for-hearing which is genuine, and to a Being-with-one-another which

is transparent" (p. 208)—that is, in which we are transparent to ourselves and to one another in our authentic possibilities.

Reticent, authentic solicitude, in Heidegger's account, frees the other for his or her authentic care—that is, to exist authentically, for the sake of his or her ownmost possibilities of Being.* But recall that, for Heidegger, being free for one's ownmost possibilities also always means being free for one's uttermost possibility—the possibility of death—and for the existential anxiety that discloses it. So if we are to leap ahead of the other, freeing him or her for his or her ownmost possibilities of Being, we must also free him or her for an authentic Being-toward-death and for a readiness for the anxiety that discloses it. Therefore, according to my claims about the contextuality of emotional life, we must Be-with—that is, attune to—the other's existential anxiety and other painful affect states disclosive of his or her finitude, thereby providing these feelings with a relational home in which they can be held, so that he or she can seize upon his or her ownmost possibilities in the face of them. Is not such attunement to the other's emotional pain a central component of friendship or love? Authentic solicitude can indeed be shown to entail one of the constitutive dimensions of deep human bonding, in which we value the alterity of the other as it is manifested in his or her own distinctive affectivity; it "lets the other be as other" (Raffoul, 2002, p. 217).

Let us now turn to point (1). Heidegger (1927) describes the connection between resoluteness (one of the two constituents of authenticity) and solicitude as follows:

> Resoluteness, as authentic Being-one's-Self…pushes [the self] into solicitous Being with Others. In light of the "for-the-sake-of-which" of one's self-chosen potentiality-for-Being, resolute Dasein frees itself for its world. Dasein's resoluteness toward itself is what first makes it possible to let the Others who are with it

* *Being and Time* itself may be read as a prime example of authentic solicitude, in which Heidegger points his readers toward the possibility of authentic existing, helping them to become free for it.

> "be" in their ownmost potentiality-for-Being, and to co-disclose this potentiality in the solicitude which leaps forth and liberates. When Dasein is resolute, it can become the "conscience" of Others. Only by authentically Being-their-selves in resoluteness can people authentically be with one another—not by…talkative fraternizing in the "they"… (pp. 344–345)

Resoluteness, authentic Being-one's-self, makes authentic solicitude possible. But recall that, as discussed in Chapter 4, for Heidegger resoluteness achieves its "ownmost authentic possibility" only as an "anticipatory resoluteness" (p. 349)—a resoluteness that "harbours in itself authentic Being-toward-death" (p. 353); we seize our ownmost can-be "right under the eyes of Death" (p. 434). The authentic Being-toward-death harbored within anticipatory resoluteness singularizes us and lays bare our separateness and self-responsibility, thereby making authentic Being-with one another as separate beings, or authentic solicitude, possible.

Let us look more closely at how authentic Being-toward-death is a condition for the possibility of authentic solicitude. Olafson's (1998) work on the ethical implications of Heidegger's conception of *Mitsein* can help us here. Olafson aptly characterizes Heidegger's *Mitsein* as a "relation of reciprocal presence" (p. 9)—we are reciprocally present to one another as being in the same world together, disclosing both other entities and ourselves. It is Olafson's central thesis that "implicit in this reciprocity, there is a kind of partnership among human beings and that this partnership carries with it a binding character of a specifically ethical kind" (p. 11). Olafson's characterization of Heidegger's *Mitsein* in terms of our world-disclosing partnership with one another is quite illuminating:

> [T]he first understanding we have of one another is…routed through the world…[T]he relation in which we stand to one another [is] rout[ed] through the world as a domain of truth… [W]e are all entities that are in the world in the mode of having a world—the same world—and…we are, as such, sharers in a common truth…[*Mitsein* entails] the reciprocity of presence between beings who are in the world as a domain of truth. (pp. 28–32)

Heidegger's *Mitsein* can thus be understood in terms of "a relation of co-disclosure of the world" (p. 45). Olafson cannot find in Heidegger's unexpanded conception of *Mitsein* a similar "complementarity among human beings in the domain of choice and action" (p. 40), and he seeks to extend Heidegger's account to this domain so that it can encompass ethical obligation to and responsibility for others.

Rather than emphasizing complementarity in choice and action, I wish to flesh out Heidegger's conception of *Mitsein* as a relation of co-disclosure of the world in a somewhat different direction—as it pertains to the theme of kinship-in-finitude that was illuminated in my investigation of emotional trauma. Recall that the world that we co-disclose together as a domain of common truth includes us, ourselves, along with others with whom we share the same, human kind of Being (existence). When we disclose the world, we also disclose our own kind of Being, our existence. When we exist authentically, we disclose our Being-toward-death, and we disclose the finitude of our existence in our anxiety. Authentic solicitude requires that we have the ability to comport ourselves authentically toward our finitude and to bear the anxiety of such comportment, because only then are we able to understandingly Be-with—to attune to and be a relational home for—the other's anxiety, as we help free him or her for his or her ownmost and uttermost possibilities of Being. Furthermore, it is the other's authentic solicitude toward us, and the other's attunement to and holding of our existential anxiety that helps us to exist authentically. Authentic Being-toward-death is a condition for the possibility of authentic solicitude because it makes possible a reciprocal co-disclosure of our common finitude*—the existential

* There is also a reciprocal co-disclosure of our different finitude, insofar as the possibility of death singularizes us and, existentially, "death is in every case mine" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 284). In showing that authentic existing discloses both our common finitude and our different finitude, Heidegger points us toward an enigmatic quality of human existence—toward the recognition that it is constitutive of our finite existence to be both radically relational and radically isolated.

ground of what I have called our emotional kinship in the same darkness.* Such emotional kinship, in turn, must surely, as Vogel (1994) suggests, have significant ethical implications insofar as it motivates us, or even obligates us, to care about and for our brothers' and sisters' existential vulnerability and emotional pain. And is not such caring the *sine qua non* of friendship or love, or of a psychoanalytic or psychotherapeutic attitude?

I close this chapter on a Kantian note. Kant's (1785) "categorical imperative," which he claimed to be the ground of all binding ethical precepts, enjoined, "Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law" (p. 73). Applying Kant's criterion to the ethical maxim to which I alluded in the preceding paragraph, imagine a world in which the obligation to attune to and provide a relational home for others' existential vulnerability and pain (i.e., for the potentially traumatizing emotional impact of our finitude) has become a universal law. In such a world, human beings would be much more capable of living in their existential anxiety, rather than having to revert to the defensive, destructive, de-individualizing evasions of it that have been so characteristic of human history. A new form of individual identity would become possible, based on owning rather than covering up our existential vulnerability. Vulnerability that finds a hospitable relational home could be seamlessly and constitutively integrated into whom we experience ourselves as being. A new form of human solidarity would also become possible, rooted not in shared ideological illusion but in shared recognition and understanding of our common human finitude. If we can help one another bear the darkness rather than evade it, perhaps one day we will be able to see the light—as individualized, finite human beings, finitely bonded to one another.

* Such reciprocal co-disclosure and emotional kinship are perhaps implied in Heidegger's conception of reticence as a silent mode of discoursing characterized by "a Being-with-one-another which is transparent" (p. 208).

9

Heidegger's Nazism and the Hypostatization of Being

A Distant Mirror[*]

> It has long been known that ancient ontology works with "Thing-concepts" and that there is a danger of "reifying consciousness"… Why does this reifying always keep coming back to exercise its dominion?
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

> I work concretely and factically out of my "I am," out of my intellectual and wholly factic origin, milieu, life-contexts, and whatever is available to me from these as a vital experience in which I live.
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

> Heidegger…was a man stamped by Catholicism who…sought God his entire life.
>
> **– Hans-Georg Gadamer**

> It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy has heretofore been: a confession on the part of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir.
>
> **– Friedrich Nietzsche**

---

[*] This chapter was written in collaboration with George E. Atwood and Donna M. Orange.

We regard Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927) as one of the most important philosophical works of the twentieth century, particularly in its devastating challenge to the Cartesian doctrine of the isolated mind. Indeed, in a number of previous publications (e.g., Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 2002), as well as in the present book, we have sought to illuminate the relevance and value of Heidegger's analysis of existence for a post-Cartesian, contextualist perspective in psychoanalysis. Following the publication of *Being and Time*, however, Heidegger's conception of Being underwent a process of progressive reification seen vividly in his attempt to materialize it in the political sphere by merging it with the Nazi movement, and then, as he distanced himself from the Nazis and increasingly withdrew into isolation, in his hypostatizing Being into something of the nature of a divine force or energy.

This chapter, in which we explicate and attempt to account for this process of hypostatization, may be seen as part of a larger project of contextualizing post-Cartesian philosophical thought itself, of which we consider our own psychoanalytic viewpoint to be representative. Thus, the chapter serves as a case study and "clinical" example of post-Cartesian thinking, but it is much more than that. An essential feature of post-Cartesian psychoanalysis is that it is self-reflexive; in other words, it examines the formative personal contexts in which its ideas originate and develop, so that the perspective itself is part of the empirical domain to be investigated. This is why psychobiography is so important to post-Cartesian inquiry. Instead of our doing a psychobiography of ourselves (an impossible task), here we offer a partial psychobiography of Heidegger—whose thinking has deeply influenced ours—that gives a psychological account of both his fall into Nazism and aspects of his post-Cartesian philosophizing.

In the concluding chapter of a book written by two of us (Atwood & Stolorow, 1993) examining the personal, subjective origins of the metapsychological reifications central to four psychoanalytic theories, we wrote:

> Through such reifications, each theorist's solutions to his own dilemmas and nuclear crises became frozen in a static intellectual system that, to him, was an indisputable vision of objective reality. His personal difficulties were justified, and his solutions to them strongly fortified against potential challenges, in that both were believed to reflect impersonal entities and events that universally determine the human condition. (p. 175)

One of us (Atwood, 1983, 1989) has conducted studies suggesting that such generalizations may hold with equal force for philosophical systems as well.

SOME RELEVANT THEMES IN *BEING AND TIME*

In recent debate about a possible connection between *Being and Time* and Heidegger's Nazism, it is typically asked whether there are aspects of his philosophy in *Being and Time* that led to his embrace of Nazism (e.g., Critchley, 2002; Habermas, 1988; Harries, 1990; Lacoue-Labarthe, 1990; Wolin, 1991). In contrast, ours is an investigation of the salient themes that dominated Heidegger's personal psychological world, including the theme of emotional trauma, and of how these themes left their imprint on both his philosophy and his version of Nazism. In this section, we highlight two thematic features of *Being and Time* that point suggestively to the central organizing themes of Heidegger's psychological world. The first such thematic aspect is found in his discussions of authentic and inauthentic existence; the second, in his accounts of authentic relationality or "Being-with."

The Authentic-Inauthentic Polarity

As we have seen, the central polarity in Heidegger's analytic is that between authentic or owned existence and inauthentic or unowned existence. Let us briefly locate this polarity in the overall philosophical trajectory of *Being and Time* and its guiding aim of elucidating the meaning of Being—that is, of the Being of beings. By "the Being of beings" Heidegger means their *intelligibility as* or

understandability as the kind of beings they are. For example, our Being is our intelligibility as distinctively human beings.

Heidegger denotes the human being by the term *Dasein*, the literal meaning of which is "to-be-there" or "there-being." Heidegger's use of this term directs us to the fundamental situatedness or contextuality of our kind of Being. This situatedness is fleshed out in his account of Dasein's basic constitution as Being-in-the-world, a term whose hyphens indicate an indissoluble contextual whole.

In addition to its irreducible contextuality, what is also distinctive about Dasein is that "in its very Being, that Being is an issue for it" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 32). Accordingly, claims Heidegger, Dasein always has an understanding of its own Being, of its own intelligibility as a human. In other words, an understanding of our own Being is constitutive of our kind of Being. Heidegger designates this uniquely human, self-interpreting kind of Being by the term *existence*. *Being and Time* approaches the question of the meaning of Being by way of an analysis of the fundamental structures of existence (called *existentiales*), of the human kind of Being. Because the human kind of Being is self-interpreting, the investigation can proceed phenomenologically (see Chapter 2), by bringing to light the basic structures grounding our understanding of our own existence.

Heidegger delineates two basic modes of existence—the authentic and the inauthentic—and this central polarity provides the organizing structure of the book. The first half (Division I) is devoted primarily to an elucidation of the inauthentic mode of Being-in-the-world, which, according to Heidegger, dominates our "average everyday" understanding of our existence. The second half (Division II) is devoted to authentic existence and its relationship to our temporal constitution and historicality.

Our average everyday understanding of our Being-in-the-world, claims Heidegger, is characterized by what he calls *falling*—the adoption of the public interpretedness of the "they" (*das Man*). The "they" is Heidegger's term for the impersonal normative system

that governs what "one" understands and what "one" does in one's everyday activity as a member of a society and an occupant of social roles. The "they" is a normative authority external to one's own selfhood. Falling into identification with the public interpretedness of the "they" is thus an inauthentic or unowned mode of understanding existence, whereby Dasein, for the most part, is not itself.

Authentic existing for Heidegger has two dimensions—resoluteness and anticipation. In resoluteness, one appropriates, seizes upon, or takes hold of possibilities into which one has been "thrown" or delivered over, including those prescribed by one's social situatedness, and makes these chosen possibilities one's own. Anticipation is Heidegger's term for authentic "Being-toward-death"—the understanding of death as a constantly impending possibility that is constitutive of our existence, of our futurity and finitude. Authentic anticipation of death as our "ownmost" possibility, which is also utterly "non-relational," individualizes us, tearing us out of our identification with the "they." Such authenticity or owned existence is disclosed in a mood of anxiety and uncanniness (homelessness).

The prominence of the authentic-inauthentic polarity in *Being and Time* is in itself highly suggestive of its corresponding prominence in Heidegger's own psychological world. This suggestion gains further support from the shifting primordiality of the two terms of this polarity in the unfolding of the text.

In Division I, Heidegger portrays the "they-self" as fundamental and essential (i.e., primordial), with authentic selfhood being only a derivative or modification of inauthentic selfhood:

> Authentic Being-one's-Self [is but a] modification of the "they"—of the "they" as an essential existentiale. (p. 168)
>
> [A]uthentic existence…is only a modified way in which [falling] everydayness is seized upon…Falling [into the "they"] reveals an essential ontological structure of Dasein itself…[I]t constitutes all Dasein's days in their everydayness. (p. 224)

In contrast, in Division II it is authenticity that tends to be primordial, with inauthenticity being derivative:

> [I]nauthenticity is based on the possibility of authenticity. (p. 303)
>
> [T]he they-self [is a] modification of the authentic self. (p. 365)

In still other contexts, Heidegger seems to portray authenticity and inauthenticity as "equiprimordial," conceiving of both, for example, as basic existential possibilities rooted in Dasein's temporality (p. 401).

Ciaffa (1987) has suggested that the "problem child" (p. 50) responsible for such apparent inconsistencies is Heidegger's ambiguous concept of falling. We suggest, in particular, that Heidegger's concept conflates two distinctively different meanings. As an existentiale (i.e., as a necessary and universal structure of existence), falling into inauthenticity pertains to our inescapable embeddedness in a context of social customs, practices, and normativity with which we identify. It is in this sense that we are always already falling. In contrast, Heidegger also uses the term *falling* to denote a motivated, defensive, tranquilizing flight into the inauthentic illusions of the "they" in order to evade the anxiety and uncanniness inherent in authentic Being-toward-death. As I noted in Chapter 4, Heidegger's discussions of such retreats from existential anxiety closely resemble clinical descriptions of the covering over of traumatized states.

This conflation of meanings—falling as an *a priori* universal and falling as motivated flight*—is quite unusual for Heidegger, whose use of language in *Being and Time* is for the most part extraordinarily precise and rigorous. This suggests that the authenticity-inauthenticity polarity was a notably problematic one in his own psychological world (i.e., that the struggle for individualized selfhood was an emotionally significant issue for him). A similar inference may be drawn from the enigmatic character, noted by Critchley (2002), of certain expressions that Heidegger

* The term *falling* is strongly suggestive of Heidegger's Catholic heritage, and the distinction between *a priori* falling and motivated falling parallels the distinction between original sin and actual sin.

uses to describe our kind of Being: Dasein is thrown projection; Dasein is factical existing. These enigmatic expressions suggest that we *both* have been thrown or delivered over into a factical situatedness over which we have no control *and* are the masters of our existence as we project ourselves futurally upon possibilities and seize them as our own. Dasein, for Heidegger, is at one and the same time radically determined and radically agentic, once again suggesting that the search for individualized, agentic selfhood was an enormous issue for him. Can it be that the enigma at the heart of Dasein—the enigma of thrown projection, of determined agency, of unowned existence owned—is a mirror of the enigmaticity of Heidegger himself, the philosopher who contributed so much to liberating our view of humanity from the prevailing rule of dehumanizing objectification but who also gave himself over to a ghastly mass political movement unmatched in history for its de-individualizing and annihilating objectifications?

Authentic Relationality

As noted in Chapter 6, a number of commentators (Critchley, 2002; Lacoue-Labarthe, 1990; Vogel, 1994) have perceived that Heidegger's conception of authentic relationality seems quite impoverished, being largely restricted to two aspects of what he calls *Being-with*, which he regards as an existentiale. The first involves what he terms *solicitude*, which he discusses rather cursorily (and which is expanded upon in the previous chapter). In authentic solicitude, we welcome and encourage the other's individualized selfhood, liberating him or her for his or her "ownmost" authentic possibilities, rather than taking over for the other for our own purposes.

Heidegger (1927) proposes another aspect of authentic relationality in the context of his explication of authentic "historizing" in which Dasein understands itself as "stretched along" between birth and death (p. 427)—that is, in terms of its finitude or what he calls its fate:

> But if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with Others, its historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as destiny. This is how we designate the historizing of the community, of a people [*Volk*]…Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our [shared] resoluteness for definite possibilities. Only in communicating and struggling does the power of destiny become free. Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its "generation" goes to make up the full authentic historizing of Dasein. (p. 436)

In this brief but chilling description of the second aspect of authentic Being-with, authenticity as individualized selfhood, suddenly and without Heidegger's usual rigor, becomes transformed into the unity of a people in a common, resolute struggle to achieve its collective destiny. Equally chillingly, three paragraphs later authenticity becomes "the struggle of loyally following in the footsteps" (p. 437) of a chosen hero. What we wish to emphasize here is that, at first glance,* neither of the two aspects of authentic relationality that Heidegger postulates seems to include the authentic treasuring of a particular other, as would be disclosed in the mood of love. Indeed, none of us can recall ever encountering the word *love* in the text of *Being and Time*. Such a limited conception of authentic Being-with is highly suggestive of an impoverishment in his personal relational experiences.†

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* A closer look (Chapter 8) reveals that Heidegger's conception of authentic solicitude can be shown to entail a much richer account of relationality, but what is important for our purposes here is that he did not himself flesh out these implications.

† As we shall see, in certain other contexts, both personal and philosophical, Heidegger (1929) did write quite eloquently of love. However, the "love" of which he wrote seems a wholly narcissistic affair, concerned more with the enhancement of selfhood than with the valuing or even the recognizing of the other. From the perspective of Heidegger's conception of both authentic solicitude and love, traumatic loss could only be a loss of the other's selfhood-enhancing function, not a loss of a deeply treasured other. As shown below, it was primarily the loss of such a function that Heidegger experienced when he lost his relationship with his lover and muse, Hannah Arendt.

DEVELOPMENTAL THEMES

We have found little written about Heidegger's early childhood and formative developmental experiences. Despite this handicap, we have been able to infer that individualized selfhood was an emotionally powerful and problematic issue for him, as shown with particular clarity in his conflictual struggles to separate himself from, and maintain continuity with, the Catholic Church and his family's Catholic heritage.

Heidegger's father was a sexton at St. Martin's Catholic church in the small provincial town of Messkirch where the family lived "under the Church's care" (Safranski, 1998, p. 7). Indeed, Heidegger's boyhood life was pervaded by the customs and practices of the Catholic Church. Safranski, his biographer, writes:

> The "sexton's lads," Martin and his younger brother, Fritz, had to help with the church services. They were servers, they picked flowers to decorate the church, they ran errands for the priest, and they rang the bells. (p. 7)
>
> Their parents were believers, but without fanaticism…according to Fritz. Catholic life had so much become part of their flesh and blood that they had no need to defend their faith or assert it against others. They were all the more aghast when their son Martin turned away from the "right road," the one that was simply the most natural to them. (p. 9)

Heidegger's lower-middle-class parents did not have the means to support their children's higher education, and he was able to attend seminary only with the help of financial aid from the Church. His increasingly ambivalent attachment to the Church was thus complicated by his financial dependence on it, which continued over a thirteen-year period. In consequence of his exposure to philosophy, his thinking began to stray from the Catholic world of ideas. This straying, along with the barrier to individualization posed by the required conformity to Catholic doctrine, are vividly highlighted in a passage, drenched in sarcasm, from a letter he wrote to Engelbert Krebs in 1914:

> The *motu proprio* on philosophy [most likely referring to a papal edict requiring Catholic priests and teachers to sign a loyalty oath renouncing Modernist ideas] was all we needed. Perhaps you, as an "academic," could propose a better procedure, whereby anyone who feels like having an independent thought would have his brain taken out and replaced with an Italian salad. (quoted in Ott, 1993, p. 81)

After citing this letter, Ott comments: "We can readily imagine the inner dilemma in which the young Heidegger must have found himself: the child of humble parents, dependent once again on the Catholic Church for financial support…well aware that he was expected to toe the line" (p. 82). Safranski (1998) further elaborates: "Heidegger remained dependent on the Catholic world beyond the time when, in his mind, he had already begun to break clear of the Church. He had to adapt, and that made him ashamed…" (p. 10).

Heidegger's growing conflict about his attachment to the Catholic Church was, in the end (but only temporarily), resolved psychosomatically. Only two weeks after entering the Society of Jesus as a novice, he was dismissed for medical reasons because he had complained of "heart trouble." When these pains recurred two years later, he discontinued his training as a priest. It seems evident to us that his emotional conflict about differentiating himself from the Church, and thus from his family of origin, was so wrenchingly intense that his growing unhappiness with Catholicism could only be experienced somatically as a physical heartache and that he could only seize ownership of his spiritual existence by means of a psychosomatic symptom.

HEIDEGGER AND ARENDT

An important part of the context of Heidegger's completing his 1927 masterwork *Being and Time* was a passionate love affair with his student, Hannah Arendt. We agree with Safranski (1998, p. 140) that Arendt served as a sustaining emotional support and

muse for Heidegger during the period of his greatest creativity. We also believe that her eventual disengagement from their intimacy and emotional withdrawal from him contributed greatly to a psychological disaster for him with lifelong consequences.

Arendt, then eighteen years old, met Heidegger in 1924, attending his philosophy seminar at Marburg University. Their affair commenced shortly after Heidegger had invited her to visit him during his office hours. He was seventeen years her senior, and married with two sons. His encounter with her, which he later described as "the passion of his life" (Safranski, 1998, p. 136), was from its inception experienced as magically transforming his previously solitary intellectual explorations. He wrote to Arendt of how he was taking her very Being into his work, how her presence was dramatically breaking into his life and immeasurably enriching and expanding it, and how their fates had become inextricably intertwined.

> [F]rom now on you shall be part of my life and it shall grow with you. (*Letters*,* p. 3)
>
> You will live in my work. (p. 16)
>
> I am coming to my work with a great deal of energy. You have a part in that. (p. 31)
>
> You and your love are a part of work and existence for me. (p. 37)

Heidegger's various reactions to Arendt, in addition to showing her function for him in expanding his own sense of self, also reflect his view of himself as serving her need to realize her authenticity, to develop fully and express her "innermost womanly essence" (p. 4). Looking back later on his initial meeting with her during his office hours, he wrote: "I daydream about the young girl who, in a raincoat, her hat low over her quiet, large eyes, entered my office for the first time, and softly and shyly gave a brief answer to each question…" (p. 9). This shy young girl he increasingly came to see as someone standing on the threshold of developing and expressing her own true nature, ready to transform the

* *Letters: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, 1925–1975* (Ludz, 2004).

"longing, blossoming, and laughter of girlhood" into a source of "beauty [and] of unending womanly giving" (p. 5). He explicitly and repeatedly formulated his own place in this work of helping Arendt in the emergence of what he saw as the most essential part of her nature as a woman:

> [M]y loyalty to you shall only help you remain true to yourself… [You are finding] your way to your innermost, purest feminine essence. (p. 3)
>
> I can take care that nothing in you shatters [and] that what is foreign to you…yields. (p. 5)

Thus we can see in the letters vivid signs of the interweaving of the two themes that pervaded his experience of his relationship to Arendt. One was his reliance on her to mirror his expanding sense of selfhood, and the other was his view of her as replicating his own journey toward authenticity and of himself as assisting her in this journey of actualizing her own essential nature as a woman.

The love affair followed a set of rules dictated by Heidegger. There was strict secrecy maintained. His wife was not to learn of their closeness, nor was anyone in the academic community. They used cryptic notes, coded light signals, and secret rendezvous points. Approximately one year into their relationship, with all its difficult arrangements, Arendt sent Heidegger a passage from one of her diaries, a statement of only a few pages that she entitled "Shadows." In this little essay, she disclosed features of her experience that had not been a part of her communications with him before: a sense of an inward detachment, an aloofness removing her from direct contact with her surroundings and with other people. She spoke of how in her life she had been thrown back upon herself and how she was unable to gain access to her wholeness, having an insurmountable "double nature" (p. 13). She also described an abiding sense of being hunted, of pain and despair, of madness, joylessness, and annihilation. Although these experiences may have been magnified in part by the stress

of maintaining a secret affair with her beloved teacher, we believe they also reflect longstanding themes of Arendt's emotional life arising originally from the tragic conditions of her early youth.* In sending her diary entry to Heidegger, we believe, Arendt was trying to open up to him a darker side of her nature and her life, a side involving deeply troubled feelings that were the legacy of her early childhood struggles. What was Heidegger's response to this important communication, one that reflected more of the whole person Arendt actually was? Upon reading her dark musings about herself, he answered:

> There are shadows only where there is sun [!]. And that is the foundation of your soul. You have come straight from the center of your existence to be close to me, and you have become a force that will influence my life forever. (pp. 16-17)
>
> I would not love you if I were not convinced that those shadows were not you but distortions and illusions produced by an endless self-erosion that penetrated from outside. (p. 17)
>
> Your startling admission will not undermine my belief in the genuine, rich impulses of your existence. (p. 17)

Heidegger's reaction to learning of the "shadows" in Arendt's life was to say such darkness could only be present where "there is sun" (i.e., he needed to specifically deny that what she was revealing was in any way defining of who she was). He wanted to think of her as "sparkling and free," as someone leaving him "dazed by the splendor of [her] human essence" (p. 17), as a "sunshine girl" in the depths of her Being. Believing he had gained contact with the "innermost and purest part of [her] soul," he also affirmed, in spite of the specific descriptions in her journal entry, that "an unbroken certainty and security resid[ed] in [her] life" (p. 18).

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* Arendt's biographer, Young-Bruehl (1982), describes these conditions, involving her beloved father becoming ill (syphilis) when she was two years of age, and over the next five years her witnessing his gradual mental and physical deterioration and finally, after great suffering, his death. The trauma involved in this distressing family situation was largely disavowed and dissociated, as Arendt's developing identity crystallized around an outward style of joy and optimism, a "sunshine girl" who never showed any grief or pain in relation to the family's tragedy.

As noted above, Heidegger's idealizations of Arendt included the notion that it had become his responsibility to shepherd the unrealized possibilities of her Being and assist in the realization of her hopes and dreams. It is difficult to avoid an impression that Heidegger needed to deny the chronic feelings of depression Arendt had disclosed, in such a way as to preserve his picture of her as a shining essence in the process of sloughing off externally derived foreign influences and actualizing its truth in a radiant splendor of authenticity. Continuing in a state of elation, he expressed his particular happiness in what he believed was a shared experience of the two of them together "being who we are" (p. 19). Love, as he experienced and described it at this time, was a state that forces the person into his or her "innermost existence" (p. 21)—shared love is a matter of each partner in the romance wanting and helping the other to be who he or she is. Heidegger in subsequent letters to Arendt affirmed again and again that he experienced her as "magically relaxed and entirely [herself]" and in a state of "genuine self-liberation" (p. 23). His picture of her appears relentlessly to be that of a being who has come to herself, who is liberated to be herself, who is throwing off external, penetrating influences causing self-erosion. "[W]e could only say the world is now no longer mine and yours–but ours–only that what we do and achieve belongs to you and me but to us" (p. 19). Heidegger expressly communicated his philosophy of love:

> Only such faith—which as faith in the other is love—can really accept the "other" completely. When I say my joy in you is great and growing, that means I also have faith in everything that is your story. I am not erecting an ideal [!]—still less would I be tempted to educate you…you—just as you are…that's how I love you. (p. 25)

Heidegger summarized his impression of the impact of his love for Arendt by describing how he had helped her come into contact with her own authentic selfhood: "[T]he new peace spreading across your face is like the reflection not of a free-floating bliss—but of the steadfastness and goodness in which you are wholly

you" (p. 26). His need for Arendt to replicate and mirror his own struggle with the issue of authenticity led him to turn away from the intensely personal communication she was trying to give him in sending the little essay on "Shadows." This turn, together with the continuing stress of the severe limitations he placed on their relationship, led her in late 1926 to begin to withdraw from him. In the ensuing years Arendt informed him of love affairs with others, and entered her first marriage in 1929.

Although Heidegger gave no overt sign of distress at Arendt's withdrawal from their intimacy, we believe the loss of his muse and lover had a significant impact on his ability to sustain a sense of his own individual selfhood and faith in his own lifework. Let us turn now to a reconstruction of his emotional situation in the years following this loss.

THE CRISIS OF PERSONAL ANNIHILATION

Arendt's withdrawal from Heidegger roughly coincided with his completion of *Being and Time* in 1927, a work he described to her as having been so consuming that it was as if "one's heart is ripped from one's body" (p. 40).* What was his experience of the reception of his book by the larger world in this period? He told Arendt in 1932 that his book "had been met by hopeless incomprehension" (p. 53). Safranski (1998) in addition reports a poignant episode in which Heidegger placed a just-published copy of *Being and Time* on his mother's deathbed. Shortly thereafter, she died in a state of deep turmoil and disappointment at her son's having fallen away from the Catholic Church. In view of his mother's inability to grasp and appreciate even the most basic aspects of her son's masterwork, we view the leaving of the book for her as a last effort,

* During the period of writing *Being and Time*, Heidegger looked into the abyss of nothingness, but he had his sustaining muse at his side as he looked. After he lost her, he was left confronting the abyss unbearably alone, without a relational home for his existential *Angst*.

futile and pathetic, to justify his existence and find acceptance of the distinctive path to which his life of thinking had led him.

Two themes appeared in Heidegger's philosophical writings during the period bounded on the one side by the loss of Arendt and on the other by his fall into the enthusiasm he came to feel for Nazism. These themes express the tensions of his struggle in the midst of a deepening crisis of personal annihilation. The first is that of "the nothing," developed in his essay, "What is metaphysics?" (Heidegger, 1929). In the introductory section of this work, Heidegger poses a question about that from which all positively existing beings are distinguished: nothing. The question is an inquiry into the nature of this nothing from which one distinguishes all things that are. As his essay develops, the nothing begins to acquire a strange existence as an entity in its own right, being described as something we can "encounter," something possessing its own independent life and properties, and finally achieving the status of being the precondition for the manifestation of the Being of beings. What could it mean, for him personally, that Heidegger, two years following on the loss of his beloved Arendt, occupied himself with such thoughts? A hint as to the emotional context of his thinking he provides himself, in talking about the conditions under which Dasein—the human being—may discover itself as a being among beings and the contrary circumstance in which the nothing is encountered. According to his argument, the revelation of one's existence as a being among beings appears in the joy of knowing another person whom we love. Such love provides an experience "in which we 'are' one way or another which determines us through and through, lets us feel ourselves among beings as a whole" (p. 102). This statement mirrors, we believe, the exhilarating experience Heidegger had in loving Arendt: a sense of being at home and an intensified correlated feeling of his own Being. Contrast this with Heidegger's account of the conditions under which the nothing is encountered: the mood of anxiety. This mood, to be distinguished from any common fear of a specific object or situation, concerns nothing in particular, no

identifiable object. It belongs to the mood of anxiety, according to this account, that there is nothing one can focus on. Heidegger goes on then to say that in this undefined, unidentifiable state of becoming anxious the nothing itself reveals itself to us:

> Anxiety leaves us hanging because it induces the slipping away of beings as a whole. This implies that we ourselves—we men who are in Being—in the midst of beings slip away from ourselves… Anxiety robs us of speech. Because beings as a whole slip away, so that the nothing crowds round, in the face of anxiety all utterance of the "is" falls silent…With the fundamental mood of anxiety we have arrived at that occurrence in human existence in which the nothing is revealed… (pp. 103-104)

Love makes possible the revelation of oneself as a being among beings, radiantly alive and participating in a world shared with the beloved. Anxiety suspends the person in midair, the world of beings falls away, and Dasein enters into a "bewildered calm" (p. 105) in which it falls away even from itself. Could these two states—love and anxiety—mirror Heidegger's own changing emotional experiences as he underwent the loss of Arendt, the love of his life? Did Heidegger become fully aware of the selfhood-sustaining power of Arendt's love for him only as he was in the process of losing it? As Arendt pulled away from him and gave herself to other relationships, as the prodigious effort to complete *Being and Time* came to an end and the work met incomprehension, as his mother died in a state of bitter disappointment in and estrangement from him, did Heidegger feel the world itself pulling away from him and a slipping away of his own identity as well?

The second theme in Heidegger's thought in the period being discussed pertains to an increasingly active role he began to envision for philosophy in shaping society and history as a whole. Drawing inspiration from renewed studies of Plato's thought, he distinguished between two sorts of philosophizing: (1) philosophy that is an empty chattering, having no real effect on life and the world, that has to endure "its own essence to become null and powerless" (as cited in Safranski, 1998, p. 221); and

(2) authentic philosophy, which triggers a "truth happening" that, in the proper historical moment, may reach powerfully into "the sphere of prevailing matter-of-courseness" (p. 222). What was needed, he thought, was for philosophy to become "in control" of its time, an efficacious entity empowered to become an agent of profound change in the human future. We discern in such ideas a reifying trend, wherein philosophical thinking breaks out of its status as a territory of reflection and acquires a causal power to act directly on society in time and space. Such reification, also present in the development of the concept of the nothing as noted earlier, reflects an unbearable tenuousness in Heidegger's experience, a sense of the advancing danger of becoming "null and powerless" to the point of ceasing to exist as a person. It was within the context of such feelings of self-loss and world-loss that the glory of National Socialism was found. It is our belief that by embracing Nazi ideology and, if only briefly during a period in 1933 and 1934, supporting Nazi policies, Heidegger was attempting to resurrect himself and recover a sense of his own empowered individuality as a person in control of his own destiny. Paradoxically, this attempt also embodied its own opposite, for in joining the Nazi party and representing Nazi interests in the academic world, he was also becoming the pawn of a dictatorial, de-individualizing authority.

HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM AS RESURRECTIVE IDEOLOGY

At the turn of 1931–1932, Heidegger became interested in the National Socialist party believing, reportedly (Safranski, 1998, p. 227), that the Nazis were the only alternative to a takeover in Germany by the Communists. Once Hitler became Chancellor in 1932, assuming absolute power in early 1933, Heidegger was electrified, understanding the advent of the National Socialist revolution in Germany as a "Dasein-controlling event" unprecedented in world history. Assimilating the rise of the Nazis to his own philosophical preoccupations, Heidegger believed the resurrection of

Germany under their leadership also included a call to action for philosophy. His idea that philosophy must be "in control of its time" fit well with the opportunity he now saw to participate in the revolutionary changes sweeping over his country. Heidegger agreed to serve as rector of Freiburg University in 1933, formally joining the Nazi party and repeatedly expressing his allegiance to Hitler's rule. The famous Rector's Address, titled "The Self-Assertion of the German University" (1933) and delivered upon his assuming that office, is dominated by imagery pertaining to the preservation and emergence of authentic, individualized selfhood. We believe that in his address Heidegger was identifying himself with both the German university and the German nation as a whole.

Although Heidegger expressly supported the Nazi power structure during his tenure as rector, a close reading of his comments reveals an almost dreamlike imagining on his part of what the Nazi revolution actually concerned. Indeed, he seems to have understood as little of the actual reality of the Nazi movement as he did of his beloved Hannah Arendt. Assimilating the political upheavals that were occurring to philosophical themes, he interpreted the Nazi takeover of Germany as a "Dasein-controlling event," an upsurge of Being itself manifesting in historical reality. What he saw as the reassertion of national power and pride brought by the Nazis thus became conflated with the "primal demand" of all Being "that it should retain and save its own essence" (Safranski, 1998, p 260). Heidegger envisioned the possibility of an epochal second beginning in the history of humanity—the first having been that of the ancient Greeks—and he pictured the role of the universities as one of constructing a new intellectual and spiritual world for the German nation and for all humanity.*

* Thomson (2005) has commented on the grandiose and authoritarian aspects of Heidegger's call for university reform, embodying his ambitions to become the "spiritual leader of the university, and, thus, the nation" and "to restore philosophy to her throne as the queen of the sciences" (p. 116).

We agree with Safranski's conclusion that Heidegger essentially transposed to the national stage what formerly he had understood as a matter of pure ontology. Supporting the German plebiscite in 1933 for withdrawing from the League of Nations, Heidegger regarded that withdrawal as a movement into national authenticity. Like the German university, his country was "asserting itself," being true to its inner essence, and thereby bringing into the human world a concentrated burst of Being itself. The essence of the individual person within this dream is not to be found in an experience of self-authenticating "mineness" (*Jemeinigkeit*), as had earlier been described in *Being and Time*. Salvation is rather to be found in joining with others in a collectively shared vision of a glorious future. We again see a paradox and an irony in such formulations, which ultimately depict a pathway toward self-realization involving a surrender to the "We" constituting a totalitarian movement.

Heidegger resigned the rectorship of Freiburg University in 1934, because he thought the Nazi movement was insufficiently revolutionary in its policies, betraying its own "inner truth and greatness" (quoted in Safranski, 1998, p. 289). It appears that even after he withdrew from active political participation, he continued to associate his nation's political revolution with the dream of Being, with the notion that Being itself in the 1930s was trying to break upon the world as it had not done since the ancient Greeks. Such an idea, we contend, was a form of madness that crystallized Heidegger's own struggle to resurrect his own distinctive selfhood in the midst of an extended crisis of personal annihilation.*

* After the war, according to Safranski (1998), apparently in reaction to facing the Denazification Committee and being barred from university teaching, Heidegger "had a physical and mental breakdown…and underwent psychosomatic treatment" (p. 351). Were Heidegger's deplorable silence and lack of contrition about his participation in the Nazi movement an effort to protect his crumbling selfhood from further annihilation by the critical attacks being leveled at him?

THE HYPOSTATIZATION OF BEING IN HEIDEGGER'S LATER PHILOSOPHY

After resigning his rectorship and disengaging from political involvement, Heidegger largely withdrew into a life of solitary philosophical reflection, what he called his "cabin existence." In turning away from politics and back toward spirituality in his effort to restore himself, Heidegger also turned away from his political hero, Hitler, toward a new hero, the poet Holderlin, as his guide to a spiritual reawakening. Concomitantly, the "turn" in Heidegger's philosophizing (Young, 2002) gained momentum, and his conception of Being became transformed. Instead of referring, as it did in *Being and Time*, to the intelligibility or understandability of beings, Being became something like a divine force or power. *Sein* became *Seyn*.

In the poetry of Holderlin, Heidegger found the powerful theme of returning—returning to Being-at-home or being homely, to hearth and home, and to the holy and the gods that had disappeared (Heidegger, 1984). In Heidegger's adoption of this imagery we see a vivid expression of his longing to restore the ties lost in his pursuit of individualized selfhood—such as those with his mother and the Catholic family of his childhood.* In this context, Being (*Seyn*) became increasingly theologized, characterized by such terms as "the Origin," "the Source," "the holy," "the divine radiance," "the unknown God" (Young, 2002).

The title of his lecture, "Time and Being" (1968), in reversing the word order of *Being and Time*, concretizes the turn in Heidegger's later philosophizing. In this lecture Heidegger repeatedly uses the expressions, "It gives presence," "It gives Being," and "It gives time," wherein the "It" refers to a mysterious "event of Appropriation" (*Ereignis*) that somehow determines Being, time, and their unity. Man is characterized as "the constant receiver of

* This longing seems already to have been motivating Heidegger's philosophizing in a lecture course on metaphysics that he gave in 1929-1930, in which he wrote, "Philosophy, metaphysics, is a homesickness, an urge to be at home everywhere" (1983, p. 6).

the gift given by the 'It gives presence [Being]'" (p. 12), a characterization strikingly reminiscent of the Catholic doctrine of grace. Being (*Seyn*) has become a kind of divine energy, "sent," as in Catholic mysticism, to the properly receptive human being in a revelatory manner. We believe that the progressive reification and even deification of Being in Heidegger's later philosophy served as an antidote to the annihilating aloneness into which his quest for authentic selfhood had led him. This move from nonbeing to a reification of Being, which becomes God, is also a distinctively Catholic one. The turn in Heidegger's later philosophizing was thus actually a re-turn to the Catholic heritage of his childhood, a self-restorative dream of returning to Being-at-home once again.

A DISTANT MIRROR: PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY AND POST-CARTESIAN INQUIRY

It seems to us that the psychological vulnerabilities that contributed to Heidegger's fall into Nazism and to his progressive hypostatization of Being also contributed to the rich, ground-breaking insights of his earlier philosophizing. *Only* someone for whom differentiated Being was such a monumental, preoccupying issue could have come up with the understandings of the foundational structures of our intelligibility to ourselves that pervade the pages of *Being and Time*. His very conception of Being-in-the-world as a primordial contextual whole—a cornerstone of post-Cartesian philosophical thought—can be understood as providing him with reassurance against the constant threat of annihilating isolation which, for him, was built into the quest for authentic selfhood. Both in Heidegger's personal emotional world and in the philosophy of *Being and Time*, authenticity and homelessness, ownmost selfhood and radical non-relationality, were inextricably intertwined.

Over the course of some 35 years, our work has been centrally devoted to liberating psychoanalytic theory and practice from various forms of Cartesian, isolated-mind thinking en route to

a post-Cartesian psychoanalytic perspective. We have characterized the essence of a post-Cartesian psychoanalytic framework as being a phenomenological contextualism (Chapter 3) devoted to investigating and illuminating worlds of emotional experience and the constitutive relational contexts in which they take form.

If the task of a post-Cartesian psychoanalysis is understood as one of exploring the patterns of emotional experience that organize subjective life, one can recognize that this task is pursued within a framework of delimiting assumptions concerning the ontology of the person. As we suggested earlier, psychobiographical studies are important for post-Cartesian psychoanalysis in that these delimiting assumptions must themselves be contexualized by identifying the constitutive personal contexts within which they took form. By psychologically contextualizing philosophical assumptions, we hope to make progress toward discerning the particularization of scope that may be associated with these assumptions and hence to begin a further opening of the horizons of understanding that inevitably encircle psychoanalytic inquiry.

A truly post-Cartesian theory is concerned not only with the phenomena of experience and conduct that have always been the province of psychoanalysis, but also with its own philosophical premises and their psychological foundations. The tasks of self-analysis and self-reflection, formative in psychoanalysis since its inception in the life and work of Sigmund Freud, thus acquire a new centrality in our enterprise as we make a lasting commitment to exploring the conscious and unconscious assumptions of our work. This journey of self-reflection is a matter of both the philosophy of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalysis of philosophy. We seek to raise the underlying premises of psychoanalytic inquiry into explicit awareness, and to understand as well how it is that our philosophical and theoretical assumptions embody who we are as individual persons.

In studying the psychological sources of philosophical ideas, we go against a pervasive opinion in contemporary intellectual circles that is rooted in Cartesianism. This opinion, perhaps surprising in

its prevalence so long after the life and death of Descartes, arises from a continuing belief—one could almost say a mystical faith—in the autonomy of the life of the mind. The products of the mind are in this view to be treated as independent, self-sufficient creations, verified, falsified, or otherwise evaluated according to criteria that exist apart from the personal contexts out of which they arise. Any attempt to bring considerations of origin to bear on the understanding and development of intellectual works is seen to exemplify the unforgivable fallacy of *ad hominem* reasoning. It is therefore said that the study of the individual details of a thinker's life, although perhaps of some limited interest as simple biography, can in principle have no relevance to the broader enterprise of the development or evaluation of that thinker's work in its own terms. Intellectual constructions are claimed to have a life of their own, freely subsisting in the realm of public discourse, above and beyond the historical particularities of specific contributors' personal life circumstances.

Seemingly well-founded cautions about the fallacy of *ad hominem* reasoning are sometimes accompanied by a view that reinserting intellectual works into the lives of their creators inevitably diminishes those works, by "reducing" their actual or potential significance to the terms of mere individual biography. Let us regard this separation of creative constructions from their personal contexts of origin as a form of madness—a Cartesian madness—that splits asunder the unbroken, organic unity of life and thought. Let us also imagine that a seeing of a work in its full context, wholly embedded in the life it expresses, would add to our appreciation of that work and assist in its understanding, evaluation, and further development. The madness of isolating thought from life thus itself can be seen to diminish the works that become its victim, draining them of their lifeblood. Whence comes the idea of this separating in the first place? What purpose can be discerned in the insulating of thought from Being, of establishing a barrier between the thinker and the products of his or her labor? We believe this purpose is widely one of solidifying

the identification of the creator completely with the creation, so that he or she then becomes able to live vicariously on a kind of ethereal plane beyond the personal limits of his or her situation as an individual (cf. Rank, 1932). Who the creator has been prior to the work— that sad, mortal, perhaps deeply devalued or even despised human being—is overcome, transcended, and jettisoned. The identity of the creator has thus undergone a transformation and reinvention, and he or she may even imagine that the escape has been total as the work completely supplants the life from which it grew. Such an image inevitably turns out to be illusory, however, since traces of the conditions of the creation of any idea inevitably adhere to the idea and are carried forward into each of its applications and extensions. Moreover, to the extent that the rift between work and life becomes profound, the work necessarily must become too abstract, stilted, and bloodlessly intellectual. What finally eventuates is a sense of despair and fragmentation as the pull of all that has been disavowed begins to reassert itself. A circular movement comes into being in which the exhilarating identification with one's creations alternates with an intensifying, disturbing feeling of inner disunity.

Post-Cartesian psychoanalysis forever reminds us of our own finitude, challenging us at every stage to understand how the structures of our personal worlds reappear in our theories. The effort to achieve a forgetfulness of individual existence through identification with one's work is thus undercut, and we are driven instead to remember, to re-involve ourselves with our histories, to become aware of how our discoveries in the psychoanalytic study of human existence are inevitably also rediscoveries of ourselves. Psychoanalysis is the most personal of the sciences and it belongs to its nature to include its theorists and all of their ideas within its own empirical domain. In our work as therapists, it has long been recognized that the power of the analytic experience is increased by the analyst's concurrent reflection on the involvement of his or her own personal reality in every stage of the treatment. We are saying that a parallel reflection is necessary at the level of theory

construction and in the laying down of the philosophical foundations of our discipline.

In the history of psychoanalysis, the areas of self-analysis and self-reflection have often been sources of the most fruitful theoretical ideas. This is shown in the early stages of our field in the self-analyses conducted by Freud and Jung, lifelong explorations to which their most significant innovations were intimately tied. One could point as well to Jung's (1921) theory of psychological types, which developed out of considerations regarding subjective factors coloring the early conceptual frameworks of Freud and Adler. The value of such reflection is also illustrated by the development of our intersubjective viewpoint in psychoanalysis, which emerged from studies of the personal subjectivity of various systems of personality theory (Atwood & Stolorow, 1993). Our thesis here is that the task of self-analysis must be extended to the philosophical premises underlying psychoanalytic inquiry, which like all specific theoretical ideas in the field, also necessarily embody the analyst's personal forms of Being. Our approach to this great task is to study the individual worlds of selected post-Cartesian philosophers, in this case Heidegger, with the aim of comprehending the psychological sources of each thinker's specific repudiation of Cartesian doctrines. We hope to use the insights gained in the present study as a distant mirror to which we may turn for a clarifying glimpse of how our own departures from the Cartesian view also reflect the patterns of our specific personal worlds. It is our additional faith that such an undertaking of self-reflection carries with it the possibility of opening up new pathways of inquiry for our discipline and of enriching psychoanalytic practice, keeping us ever phenomenological, ever contextual, and ever perspectival, open to understandings yet to be discovered.

10

Conclusions

The Mutual Enrichment of Heidegger's Existential Philosophy and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis

> Thinking begins only when we have come to know that reason, glorified for centuries, is the most stiff-necked adversary of thought.
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

> The lucid courage for essential anxiety assures us the enigmatic possibility of experiencing Being. For close by essential anxiety as horror of the abyss dwells awe.
>
> **– Martin Heidegger**

A dual aim guiding the writing of this book has been to show both how Heidegger's existential philosophy enriches post-Cartesian psychoanalysis (Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5) and how post-Cartesian psychoanalysis enriches Heidegger's existential philosophy (Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9). Post-Cartesian psychoanalysis and Heidegger's existential philosophy are both forms of phenomenological inquiry. Post-Cartesian psychoanalysis is an ontical discipline; it investigates and illuminates the structures that prereflectively organize the lived emotional worlds of actual particular persons, along with the specific relational contexts in which these structures take form (Chapter 3). Heidegger's existential analytic,

by contrast, is an ontological inquiry; it lays bare the necessary and universal structures (existentiales) that, *a priori*, constitute the human kind of Being (existence; i.e., our intelligibility to ourselves as human beings). I have shown in Chapter 4 that a post-Cartesian psychoanalytic understanding of emotional trauma is greatly enriched by an encounter with Heidegger's elucidation of the structures of authentic existing. How did Heidegger view the role of ontical phenomena in the illumination of ontological or existential structures and how can grasping the interplay of the ontical and the ontological contribute to an enrichment of Heidegger's existential philosophy by post-Cartesian psychoanalysis?

Answers to these questions, I believe, can be found in the central role that Heidegger (1927) gives to moods (affectivity) in the disclosure of our Being-in-the-world: "[O]ntologically mood is a primordial kind of Being for Dasein, in which Dasein is disclosed to itself *prior to* all cognition and volition, and *beyond* their range of disclosure" (p. 175). In Heidegger's conception, mood is disclosive in three ways: (1) it discloses Dasein's "'thrownness'…into its 'there'" (p. 174), into its situatedness; (2) it discloses "Being-in-the-world as a whole" (p. 176); and (3) it discloses how "what [Dasein] encounters within-the-world can '*matter*' *to* it" (p. 176) in a particular way.

Elkholy (2008) makes the case for the centrality of mood in Heidegger's view of Dasein's disclosedness aptly and persuasively:

> Arguably, Heidegger's most important contribution to the history of philosophy, in addition to entrenching the subject in its world and thereby overcoming the subject/object dualism, is the primacy that he accords to mood in his analysis of human existence. Through mood humans gain access to their world, to themselves and to their relations with others in the world in a manner that is prereflective and unthematic…[M]ood, especially the mood of *Angst*, has the power to reveal the whole: the whole of how one is in the world and the whole of the world at large. (p. 4)

Thus for Heidegger, ontical experiences of mood, or of certain moods, are ontologically revelatory. According to Elkholy,

Heidegger thereby displaces the traditional, excessively cognitivist "metaphysics of reason" with a "metaphysics of feeling" (p. 6)—a move well designed to warm my post-Cartesian psychoanalytic heart. Anxiety, in particular, is grasped as "a bridge to the truth of Being" (p. 7; see Chapter 4), from the ontical or psychological to the ontological.

In his 1929-1930 lecture course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger (1983) gives a particularly powerful statement of his metaphysics of feeling. Referring to ontologically revelatory moods as "fundamental attunements" or "ground moods" (*Grundstimmungen*), he makes a truly remarkable claim: "*Philosophy in each case happens in a fundamental attunement* [ground mood]. Conceptual philosophical comprehension is grounded in our being gripped, and this is grounded in a fundamental attunement" (p. 7). In the lecture course, Heidegger discusses a number of such ground moods that make philosophizing possible. For example, in addition to anxiety, there is "homesickness," "turbulence," "boredom," and "melancholy." Capobianco (2010) traces how Heidegger's privileging of anxiety in *Being and Time* gave way in his later work to an emphasis on other ontologically revelatory ground moods, such as awe, wonder, and astonishment.

In certain contexts, Heidegger (1927) alludes to the role of mood in "the disclosedness of the 'they'" (p. 210). The mood of "curiosity," for example, can, along with "idle talk" and "ambiguity," disclose "Dasein's falling into the 'they' [and] 'fleeing' in the face of itself" (p. 230). Fear, too, can accompany a defensive evading of the existential anxiety of authentic Being-toward-death, replacing the latter with some concrete entity or event threatening to life and limb. Such fear "is anxiety, fallen into the 'world,' inauthentic" (p. 234).

I cannot recall ever encountering a reference to the mood of shame in *Being and Time*. It is my view that, just as existential anxiety is disclosive of authentic existing, it is shame that most clearly discloses inauthentic or unowned existing. In feeling ashamed, we feel exposed as deficient or defective before the gaze of the other

(Sartre, 1943). In shame, we are held hostage by the eyes of others; we belong, not to ourselves, but to them. Thus, a move toward greater authenticity, toward a taking ownership of one's existing, is often accompanied by an emotional shift from being dominated by shame to an embracing of existential guilt and anxiety (along with grief—see Chapter 7). This is a shift from a preoccupation with how one is seen by others to a pursuit of what really matters to one as an individual—from how one appears to others to the quality of one's own living, including especially the quality of one's relatedness to others.

It is precisely here that an encounter with post-Cartesian psychoanalysis has the potential of enriching Heidegger's existential philosophy, in that post-Cartesian psychoanalysis gives an account of the relational contexts that make it possible for one to dwell in and bear the painful emotional experiences, the ground moods, that are revelatory of authentic existing. Experiencing our kinship-in-finitude with one another (Chapter 6), thereby finding a relational home or context of human understanding in which the traumatizing emotional impact of our finitude and the finitude of those we love can be held, brought into language and dialogue, and integrated (Chapters 3 and 8), helps make authentic existential philosophizing possible. Post-Cartesian psychoanalysis illuminates the rich relationality of authentic existing.

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