

## CHAPTER 1

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### Totality, Finitude, and Division

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#### Kant and the Cosmic Concept of Philosophy

At the crucial moment when Kant, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, characterizes the ultimate originality of critical philosophy, he seems to retreat before the extraordinary implications of his discovery. Indeed, what he asserts to be the major philosophical breakthrough of modern times consists in substituting for the scholastic concept of philosophy an understanding of philosophy as a *cosmic concept* (*conceptus cosmicus*, or *Weltbegriff*).<sup>1</sup> The overarching significance of the cosmic concept cannot be underestimated, since in the *Logic* Kant goes on to identify its sense with the *cosmopolitical* (*weltbürgerlichen*) concept, an expression which he uses to refer to two ultimate aspects of human existence, insofar as it is torn between inwardness and outwardness: between feeling which goes beyond discourse, and the system of states which will organize their peaceful coexistence.<sup>2</sup> The substitution of the cosmic concept for the scholastic, however, did not coincide with an advance, but rather the advance is itself a return, or recurrence to an earlier view. This view is rooted in the true and most dignified sense of philosophy that prevailed before the Scholastics emerged. The crucial significance of the cosmic concept for any possible philosophy lies in this double movement: a withdrawal which is supposed to reflect what Kant took to be (as he puts it poignantly at the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason*) the last path still open to us.

The scholastic tradition, according to Kant, sought no more than to perfect the logical basis of knowledge accumulated by past mathematicians, past physicists, or past logicians. On the other hand, the ideal philosopher, such as the wise man of the Stoics (A569/B597), is ideal only because he prescribes a perfection that can never have been attained in practical life. As it turns out, his philosophy "is the science of the relation of all knowledge to the essential ends of human reason" (A839/B867), which bestows upon it a dignity or absolute value that is undiminishable. By contrast, scientists may well be less

ambitious; but they do not really know what they are doing because the inner nature of their object, the specificity of their method, and the very possibility of their science remain unknown to them (A725/B753). Scientists make use of a concept without becoming aware of its origin. And so the scholastic concept of philosophy finds at least a modicum of justification in that it throws light, however dimly, on this origin, thereby saving the scientist the embarrassment (within acceptable limits) of remaining in the uncomfortable position of a mere "artisan" or "craftsman" of reason. (The German word is *Künstler*, which cannot be rendered here as artist, given the contemporary meaning of the term.) But this remains a doctrine of skill, whereas the philosopher who lives in accordance with the cosmic concept does not even have the feeling of being an artisan. He is a lawgiver of human reason, inasmuch as he looks to ends which cannot be enclosed within finished products, since they can only be expressed as the unconditioned which human reason aims at.

Kant then goes on to warn against yet another scholastic distortion, which has been responsible for casting the ideal philosopher only as a moralist (A840/B868), thereby unduly restricting the scope of philosophy's search for ends to moral life and practical freedom. In fact, the philosopher as lawgiver of human reason rules over *two distinct* objects: nature and freedom. But just how are we to understand Kant's insistence on the duality of philosophy's ultimate interests?

In his commentary on the Kantian elaboration of critical philosophy as a cosmic concept, Heidegger has proposed that Kant could not see its ultimate significance.<sup>3</sup> Scholastic philosophy is scientific philosophy, which is not preoccupied by the worldview which animates it as the supposed goal and nature of philosophy itself. A worldview is not a matter of theoretical knowledge, nor even a part of it in some special sense. Rather, it pertains to the bedrock of meaning which guides the current affairs of human life, and which are most of the time a mixture of superstition and knowledge, sober reason and dereliction. In its true sense, the clarification of a worldview has as its task the circumscription of the characteristics which belong to the essential nature of the human Dasein. But the popular conception of life in modern times is gravely misled, because it is fraught with a double perversion. In order to provide us with a minimum of guide mark, it makes the demand on philosophy that the worldview should itself be constructed scientifically. This demand, in turn, blocks the way to the more authentic task of philosophy, which deals with what every positing of beings, even the positing done from the perspective of a worldview, must already presuppose ontologically. Whether scientific or not, a worldview philosophy is, strictly speaking, philosophically impossible. To be sure, Heidegger goes on to argue, Kant's distinction between the two senses of philosophy has the merit of showing that

the scientific construction of a worldview cannot lead anywhere, because it perverts philosophy's central concern with questions as to the ends and limits of human existence. Kant, however, could not make the second and decisive step of developing these questions in accordance with their proper sense. We can stay with Kant's explication of existence for a time, but eventually we will have to part ways with him, because his demarcation of the concept of existence (through perception or positing) remains itself unclarified.

In Heidegger's interpretation of Kant, as presented in the famous Kant book of 1929, the whole critical project must be credited with the most profound level of questioning. Kant does not simply examine the limits of human knowledge, but interrogates the very possibility of metaphysics. Whether Kant himself achieves full clarification of this task is a subordinate question; what is important is that Kant recognized its necessity.<sup>4</sup> In the *Critique*, Kant does not simply put in question the *metaphysica specialis*, that is, the possibility of going back to the unconditioned (the three fundamental beings: God, the soul, and the world), but more profoundly the *metaphysica generalis*, that is, the possibility of an ontological fore-understanding which accounts for our encountering being as such. Kant's critical philosophy raises the possibility of metaphysics by means of a double questioning, which bears as much on beings as on the highest being. In order to prove this, Heidegger claims that, contrary to a widespread view, the aim of critical philosophy is not to provide the laying of the ground for the modern mathematical science of nature. Mathematical physics, he argues, provides no more than an "indication" or a "direction" for the connection between ontic experience and something more fundamental—ontological knowledge.<sup>5</sup> Because the critique aims at providing the laying of the ground for metaphysics as a whole, not the positive sciences, it discloses the inner possibility of ontology.

This book follows and expands the negative part of Heidegger's insight concerning Kant's critique: namely, the conviction that transcendental knowledge cannot be equated with the grounding of the positive sciences. But in the process of developing this claim and doing full justice to it, we shall express reservations about the transition to ontology. Indeed, there is a key concept in the critique itself which seems to play the role that Heidegger ascribes to ontology: the concept of *totality*. Perhaps Heidegger can be accused of haste in this respect. In many ways, he has passed over Kant's concept of totality in order to articulate a connection between Kant and himself that serves his own purposes. A full clarification of Kant's concept of totality is needed before we can pronounce ourselves on whether or not ontology in Heidegger's sense is truly the ultimate horizon of Kant's *Critique*. As it turns out, the critical concept of totality is dealt with in the Transcendental Dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*; the concept of world as totality is one of the three Ideas of Reason—the other two being the Idea of soul and the Idea of God. But

Heidegger, in his own book on Kant, is virtually silent on this whole section. If the Kantian expression of Heidegger's concept of Being were to be found in the Idea of totality, there would follow some dramatic consequences for our entire reevaluation of the significance of critical philosophy.

Heidegger's fundamental point of departure from Kant lies in the need to give an ontological dimension to human subjectivity. Kant is not aware of such a dimension, because his transcendental subject is a point *for which* there is being—it constitutes the phenomena of the world—but it is itself irreducible to being. Kant's transcendental subject is thus determined purely negatively, as that which is not being; the possibility of interrogating ourselves about the being of this subject is not even available. Heidegger's strategy is to bring the transcendental down to the factual. Human being must be viewed from two different standpoints: as transcendental consciousness (which is not a being, but which constitutes being), and as factual existence. Dasein is not merely a synthesis of these two structures. It is not the empirical human being, because it has the possibility of revealing the Being of all beings by means of an authentic understanding of it; and it is not consciousness in the classical sense of the term, because, as free, it breaks through being in a manner which is historical and contingent. As a whole, Dasein is historical, temporal, and contingent. Thrown into the midst of being, Dasein is not in a position to constitute being. In any constitution, being is simply assumed to escape us, and the purpose of philosophy is to make contact again with what is separated from us. Dasein is the being which has, at the same time, a comprehension of the ultimate sense of being. Heidegger's interpretation of the Kantian transcendental subject seeks to demarcate itself from the classical tradition still represented by Kant, by assuming that this transcendental subject can know only what it constitutes in accordance with its own intentions: that is, what it constructs in accordance with the categories of understanding in their empirical employment. The problem of the Being of beings would then be limited to that which is constituted. What is the reality that must be connected with the various intentions of consciousness? Kant, however, speaks of a separation between the human mind and the ultimate being of things in connection with the problem of reason in the largest possible sense. For Kant, we have a natural desire for metaphysics, because reason pushes knowledge to a point beyond any possible experience (B21); and reason will never be satisfied by simple expedients that would bring ultimate being within the purview of possible knowledge. Can this highest intention be amalgamated with all its lower expressions in connection with the knowledge of actually experienceable objects? Heidegger seems to take this unity as a matter of course, inasmuch as he does not directly address the critical concept of totality for its own sake.

There is a deep motive underlying Heidegger's stopping at the threshold of the dialectic. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger develops a fundamental

ontology which is supposed to be prior to any possible metaphysics. In this fundamental ontology, the analytic of a contingent, finite, historical, and temporal place is developed—the place at which Dasein asks the question concerning the meaning of being. At the end of this analytic, we are left to wonder about this ultimate issue: how can we be sure that Dasein's interpretation of the meaning of being is the true comprehension of this meaning, not just one vision of the world among many others? All we have found in the analytic of Dasein is proof that any comprehension of the meaning of being actually starts from Dasein. But it could still be that this comprehension is a projection that fails to make contact with the sense of being. Could fundamental ontology be the preparatory step in the direction of ontology? In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Heidegger undertakes to complete the task. He wants to show that the manner in which Dasein interprets being is also the very deployment of the meaning of being. Dasein's pre-understanding of being is not the ultimate foundation, because it is itself grounded in the inner deployment of the meaning of being. Now, Heidegger finds in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* the first traces of his own project of fundamental ontology. Kant's "Copernican Revolution" is based on the insight that Dasein is not just one among many beings. The metaphysical question of the Being of beings must be clarified by means of a prior examination of the actual place in which the question is raised. Heidegger disagrees only with the explicit answer provided by Kant in order to describe this place and bring it to intelligibility.

The temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) of Dasein makes it historical. What Heidegger needs to find in Kant is a concept of transcendental subjectivity that is itself time-like, by contrast with Kant's own claim that the transcendental subject constitutes time, but is not itself temporal. Heidegger argues that transcendental imagination is, in fact, the deepest root of the critical theory of knowledge. Intuition and understanding are presented as two separate faculties. The former accounts for the presence of beings in space and time, for the fact that being is positing. The latter for the fact that we can understand these beings by means of certain mind-dependent structures (categories of understanding). Are presence and structure two different senses of being? Is there not a deeper level at which these two senses merge into one sense of being? The transcendental theory of the schematism, in which Kant articulates his doctrine of imagination, is interpreted by Heidegger as Kant's attempt to unite what was originally separated. Thanks to the transcendental imagination, the structure is given a spatiotemporal content. Transcendental imagination is the representation in time of that which is intellectual. Thus, there would be a more originary place of being than either the subject or the object. This place is indicated in Kant's theory of imagination as original time (*Urzeit*).

Dasein's interpretation of the meaning of being is not arbitrary. Rather, it is the manifestation of the meaning of being itself. The temporality of Dasein, which is described in *Being and Time* in terms of fundamental ontology, should thus allow us to take up ontology, that is, to think the meaning of Being as time. But in the Kant book, Heidegger comes up against an intermediary step separating fundamental ontology from ontology: the dialectic of Dasein, which corresponds to Kant's own Transcendental Dialectic. Between Being and time as they must appear in a philosophy that has overcome metaphysics, on the one hand, and Dasein's temporality as it appears in the existential analytic, we have Being and time as they are thought in metaphysics itself. Why does not Dasein's temporality (as pre-understanding of Being) deploy itself *immediately* in an authentic comprehension of the meaning of being? Kant's Dialectic is preoccupied with the following theme: inasmuch as reason is capable of truth, it also produces illusions which are not arbitrary (the illusions are not outright mistakes that can be corrected), but reflect the actual limits of any possible human relation to the whole of being. In the same way, in the years that followed the Kant book, more particularly in the essay "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," Heidegger developed a metaphysics of Dasein, in which to the essence of truth is now coupled nontruth as *Unwesen*, nonessence. The revealing (*Entbergung*) of Being is concomitant with its concealment (*Verbergung*) or being covered-over (*Un-entborgenheit*). Given the rather special and pejorative sense that Heidegger ascribes to metaphysics, what he actually means is that the *Un/Wesen* of truth does not issue from the insistence/existence of Dasein, but that the latter responds to this *Un/Wesen*. The intense focus on Dasein in *Being and Time* has really been abandoned. Between the analytic of Dasein and the authentic apprehension of Being, we have the history of truth in which the truth of Being manifests itself by masking itself.

At the time of the Kant book, Heidegger has not yet developed his notion of essential un-truth. Does that mean that his stepping back before Kant's Dialectic can be excused and explained because the issue is taken up later? Certainly not. The inauthentic thought of Being is neither error nor illusion, as a transcendental mistake is for Kant, but errancy, responding to being's un-concealment. In terms of Kant's Dialectic, however, the point of errancy would be no more than a half-measure. The dialectical illusions indicate a division inherent in the totality of reason's system, the marks of which can be identified thanks to the precision of transcendental logic. Of course, this is not to say that Heidegger does not interpret Kant's Dialectic because he cannot do so in terms of his own concepts. More seriously, in examining the transcendental logic of illusion as Kant thematizes it, we will find that any attempt to ascribe illusion to the work of the faculty of originary imagination is explicitly discarded by Kant. Furthermore, looking be-

yond the *Critique of Pure Reason*, we will find that, in another species of illusion (the dialectical appearances of teleological judgment), the need to refer to a faculty of understanding higher than our own (the divine understanding which is immediately intuitive, without separation between thinking and being) can only be carried out by giving up the power of imagination altogether. In both dialectics, Kant bases his conclusions on the transcendental principle of waiting—the postponing of reason's fulfillment in being. Neither the world, as an Idea of Reason, nor the divine understanding, as a projection of our own understanding beyond its capacities, finds its roots in imagination as unlimited power of revelation. Imagination opens up the synthetical activity of the mind, whereas reason postulates the possibility of enclosing, of completing a synthesis, even though the actual completion is never more than the horizon of knowing or acting. In Kant's dialectic, the residual opening present at the horizon is not the work of imagination. Put it differently, what bothers Heidegger is that Kant's metaphysics of man is an intermediary step that lasts forever. This worry must have something to do with the steadiness of Being itself.

What, then, is the critical concept of totality, and where does it take us? The task of understanding that Heidegger has bequeathed us is spelled out by Heidegger himself in the last two pages of the Kant book.<sup>6</sup> The content of the Transcendental Dialectic cannot be purely negative, as if Kant merely wanted to destroy past dogmatic systems by applying the results of his new position articulated in the Transcendental Aesthetics and the Transcendental Analytic. Moreover, if a positive problematic can be extracted from the dialectic, shall we not have to develop it in accordance with some presupposed infinitude? Heidegger's difficulties with Kant's dialectic are themselves rooted in earlier distortions of Kant's ultimate project, which were meant to reveal its true significance. Particularly important are the interpretations of Hegel and Nietzsche.

Hegel makes an astonishing comparison between Zeno and Kant, in order to characterize ancient dialectic as superior to modern dialectic. Kant distinguishes between a world in itself, of which we can know nothing, and the appearances that we actually know. We would then have two absolutes: the absolute infinity of the superhuman thing in itself (noumenon), and the finite absolute concealed within the human thinking subject (which Kant refers to as the originally synthetic unity of apperception). The former absolute knows of no mediation, whereas the latter puts us in a relation to what is outside ourselves. Hegel sees in this a strange double movement of exaltation and mortification. The world in itself must be absolutely true, it is only our own behavior (*Betragen*) that ruins it by clamping a mass of determinations upon it. This is the crucial difference between Zeno and Kant: whereas according to Kant the world is ruined by the spirit, Zeno argues that the world

of appearance is untrue both in itself and for itself.<sup>7</sup> Between being and knowing, Kant chooses knowing: Knowledge dictates its conditions to being, which is now conceived as an appearance. With respect to being, knowing is both weak and false. It retrieves its strength if it is ready to limit truth to the world of appearances.

However, once this interpretation of Kant's project is accepted, there is hardly anything to stop the movement of contamination of truth by falsity, of alleged strength by real weakness. Against Kant, Nietzsche goes one step further in the reduction of being, from ontology to value, when he says that the essence of a thing is in fact no more than my *opinion* concerning the thing. Being is essentially what it is worth, that is, the authentic "es *ist*" is in fact "es *gilt*."<sup>8</sup> Consequently, instead of being logically opposed to one another, error becomes the basis of errancy, the presupposition of any thinking. Before there is thought, there must be poetic fiction. ("Bevor 'gedacht' wird, muss schon 'gedichtet' worden sein."<sup>9</sup>) This composition of the world, which takes precedence over any thinking and determines its direction from within essential errancy, has the double character of the poetic and the practical will. For life and its praxis impose their ends on both knowing and being.

Will the poetic and practical ground of life resolve the duality of absolutes pointed out by Hegel? The point is not so much to answer this question as to see what we lose when Kant's project is interpreted in terms of a tension between two absolutes. Modern neo-Kantianism has not really changed anything in our perception of Kant's achievements in terms of a duality. But the duality is not so absolute because we have to live with it. In his objections to Heidegger's interpretation of Kant, Cassirer remarks that the duality between the appearance and the thing in itself cannot be overcome by using the single framework of temporal existence. Man is not just finitude but also freedom, which is atemporal because the moral law produces its object directly, without the mediation of the temporal schemata of imagination. For Cassirer, the true opposition that strikes at the heart of critical philosophy is finite (temporal) knowledge versus freedom—what is versus what ought to be. As he puts it, when we are conscious of our freedom, "we remain entirely in ourselves and, at the same time, are in principle lifted beyond ourselves."<sup>10</sup> Heidegger would reply that the simultaneity involved here cannot be consistent with the temporality of Dasein's inner temporality, which, in turn, compels us to cast doubt upon the transcendental validity of a life according to atemporal principles. Are we bound to accept an impossible tension, or shall we do away completely with the duality? Kant would protest and say: Reason aims at the unconditioned, but deploying in time the movement toward the unconditioned amounts to transforming this unconditioned into an Idea of Reason. Heidegger's Being is an Idea of Reason. But of the traditional



*metaphysica specialis* Kant retained three Ideas only—the soul, the world, and God. Shall we learn anything philosophically by enlarging Kant's dialectic and including Being among the Ideas? Quite apart from Heidegger's own project, apart from its more or less clear attachment to the Hegelian/Nietzschean tradition, we must begin by asking: what is Kant's justification for distinguishing, as he does, between two senses of philosophy?

What is it that remains unacceptable in the scientific construction of a worldview? For Kant, the greatest example of a philosopher who struggled to promote a similar distinction is Plato, the very founder of the tradition which sees philosophy as science. It was Plato the *academic* who, Kant writes,<sup>11</sup> took upon himself a task as crucial as that of the critical enterprise, namely, to elucidate the possibility of a synthetic cognition a priori. The perversion of modern times lies in the fact that what was originally an academic (scholastic) task had to define itself otherwise (e.g., philosophy as a cosmic concept), because some modern philosophers appropriated a mystical-Platonic language, borrowed from the freer style of Plato as a letter-writer. Kant's target here is Jacobi and his disciples. And his complaint is that those who speak such a language do so hermetically, because they confuse a mere clarification of the human possibilities for knowledge with an expansion of knowledge that comes close to divine understanding. They adopt Plato's comparison of the illumination of the soul viewing the sun as a mere foil for their claims that the most basic teachings of sensible experience are to be distrusted. A claim of this sort, Kant tells us, is found for example in a work by J. G. Schlosser of 1795, who used a German translation of Plato's letters in order to justify his own claims in favor of the mystical destination of philosophy. From this book, Kant cites the following statement: "All human philosophy can only depict the dawn; of the sun we can only have a presentiment." Against this quick leap into feelings that repudiate everyday life, Kant advocates a slowing down. The actual experience of the sun is both a bridle and a condition of possibility:

But really, no one can have a presentiment of a sun if he has not already seen one; for it could very well be that on our globe day regularly followed night (as in the Mosaic story of creation) without anyone ever being able to see a sun, because of the constantly overcast sky, and all our usual business could still follow its proper course according to this alternation (of days and seasons). Nevertheless, in such circumstances a true philosopher would indeed not have presentiment of, not *surmise*, a sun (for that is not his thing), but perhaps he could still *deliberate* about whether this phenomenon might not be explained by assuming an hypothesis of such an astronomical body, and he might thus by good luck hit on the right answer. To gaze into the sun (the suprasensible) without becoming blind may not be possible, but to see it adequately in reflection (in the reason that illuminates the soul morally) and even in a practical respect, as the older Plato did, is quite feasible.

The sun: however remote it may be for the ancients, or however close it may be for the moderns (in the wake of the Copernican revolution), remains the symbolic touchstone of the truth of human existence. Kant's designation of the seriousness of Plato's philosophy as academic, and his concomitant claim that his own critical philosophy departs from it to become cosmic, hinges on the fundamental experience of seeing a sun. The ordinary course of human affairs could certainly proceed without a vision of the sun. The true philosopher, however, soars above this ordinary course by advocating conjectures about such basic facts of experience as the days and the seasons. In principle, these conjectures could lead to admitting the existence of a sun, even if no one sees it.

The experience of the sun, though undeniably a factual experience, is thus, in the historical conditions of human life, central to human experience, in that it mandates the reversal of what originally counted as academic, and what as cosmic. Before giving himself over to moral reason and to the practical standpoint, the true philosopher must devote full attention, and therefore take the risk of becoming blind, to that particular question of nature about the sun. In doing so, he even takes the risk of blinding all of humanity; for, in contrast to the mystagogue of modern times, he takes no interest in cultivating the select adepts and initiates of his sect. The moral law already carries me higher than the sun. As Kant puts it at the end of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, there is a deep connection between two extreme visions open to us: "The starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."<sup>12</sup> The first vision is annihilating and makes me fall back upon the earth, which is but a spot of the universe where I have arrived without knowing how. The second vision forces me to search for my own identity in the universal and the necessary, which raises me above myself once again. The stars that shine over our everyday horizon remind us of a common enigma which traverses each of our lives. The starry heavens lead to respect for the moral law, but *between* the darkness of the night sky and the darkness of the innermost depths of my own self, there is the sun. In connecting my free reflection with that of all other people, the sun also reminds me of the authenticity of my terrestrial condition.

Kant once addressed the question of what it means to orient ourselves in thought, and his answer was preceded by an analysis of orientation in space.<sup>13</sup> His aim was to reach a more lucid understanding of the nature of subjectivity involved in the principle of orientation. He begins by asking: how can I orient myself in a dark room that is familiar to me? No purely conceptual relation will be of any help to me; in order to find my way, I can only rely on a lived experience of some kind. The left/right distinction will help, inasmuch as it is rooted in a subjective feeling that owes nothing to the logic of a concept; a judgment on the correct position of objects in the room will be pos-

sible, even if we imagine that everything has been rearranged in it during my absence, so that what was at the left is now at the right and vice versa. However, in order for the feeling to be awakened in the first place, Kant adds that all I need is to be able to seize on a single object whose position is present to my memory. Against Kant, Heidegger argues that in this context memory only serves the purpose of reminding us of our being-in-the-world, which is more primordially constitutive for the possibility of orientation than the feeling for right and left.<sup>14</sup> Has Kant been really oblivious of the world viewed as such a fundamental premise? He states quite explicitly that the dark room is known to me, just like the familiar streets of a town at night in which I walk and make the proper turns even though I am not able to see distinctly one single house. In a dark room, is not the strangeness of the situation due to the fact that I am *simultaneously* in and out of my own world? Have I not suddenly *lost* my world even though I am still physically in it? If only for that reason, the object in the dark certainly loses its property of being objective, so that my memory will be of no help. My memory has now the perplexing effect of propelling me into another world, an other order of being, at least temporarily—this is the world of impenetrable darkness, that can be compared with the immeasurable supersensible space in which the Ideas of Reason reside.<sup>15</sup> But Kant's example shows that this other order of being is not automatically or immediately a projection into the world of practical law.

Before taking an interest in freedom, the true philosopher must then blunder with a philosophy of nature which touches upon the cosmic meaning implied by our contact with the sun. In that sense alone can we say that scientific philosophy (the clarification of the sense of natural cognition) is also worldview philosophy (the clarification of the inescapably familiar experience of the world). For mystical feeling and its excessive haste, the true philosopher substitutes deliberation, which is to say, reflection, founded upon a *faculty* of feeling. Now, as soon as we take into account the need for a phenomenal experience, a vision of the sun, in the sense in which Kant understands it (a "not-at-home" which reminds us of our abode), we can express reservations concerning Heidegger's fundamental reversal of familiarity and homelessness: "That kind of Being-in-the-world which is tranquillized and familiar is a mode of Dasein's uncanniness, not the reverse. From an existential-ontological point of view, the 'not-at-home' must be conceived as the more primordial phenomenon."<sup>16</sup> Just as it invites us not to rush at the practical concerns of life, Kant's appeal to the experience each of us can have of the sun can lead us to postpone the Heideggerian reversal leading to the foundation of my being as solitary and distressed. If our immediate environment were different from what it is (if, for instance, the earth were continually shrouded by clouds), the true philosopher would have no need to reflect on himself, since the natural world would already offer him the means for his

reflection: he would adopt the astronomer's patience. But everybody knows what the natural world is. The true philosopher and the astronomer would then never have anything to say to each other—they would both be at home in their own reflections—if at least each recognizes in his own terms the genuineness of the experience of the sun. Heidegger's existential-ontological point of view would be the only possible alternative, if and only if the scientific experience had itself exhausted all of its possibilities.

Quite characteristically, Heidegger interprets the fundamental project of modern mathematical physics (the so-called Galilean project) *as if it had actually succeeded*. According to this project, communication between observers and nature takes place in accordance with experimentation, which is essentially a projection of possible knowledge upon the possibilities of nature. The human project extends nature's own possibilities. The process has the peculiarity, that since the properties of nature are extended by our own mathematical reflection, they are appropriated in such a way that they stand in exact correspondence to what the knowing subject actually already had in advance, though in an indefinite way. Experimentation is the coming-to-presence of this correspondence. In *What is a Thing?*, Heidegger explains that the project thus gives credit to the mathematical as that evident aspect of things within which we are always moving and according to which we experience them as things at all, and as determinate things. Between us and the things, the dialogue does not know of any limitation as long as we retain of nature only what is calculable, that is, as long as the process is both learning (taking up) and teaching (offering). By implication, such coming-to-presence consigns the non-mathematizable features of the natural world to artifacts of the human senses. The Galilean project protects itself in advance from any refutation from the world of unmediated sensible experience.

Heidegger returns to Kant's distinction between the academic and the cosmic senses of philosophy in "Vom Wesen des Grundes." Here he distinguishes explicitly between the cosmological significance of Kant's concept and its "existential" counterpart. Existentially, Kant limits his investigations to anthropology, that is, an understanding of existence that does not go beyond a certain experience of life. Kant does not address what Heidegger takes to be the more primordial character of the phenomenon of world: the *Umwelt*, which takes the measure of human existence according to the affective tonality of its being given over to a world into which it has been cast. This tonality comes to expression in the one genuinely encompassing concept that must be admitted at the basis of all experience, namely, that of care (*Sorge*). Heidegger says explicitly that nature (in the sense of the sciences of nature, but also in a quite primitive sense) is not included in this investigation of Dasein's existence, because care is merely the basis for the problem of nature. Once again, the question arises: *On what such an investigation could ever refashion*

the contact with nature that is given in mediate (scientific) or immediate (primitive) experience. For Dasein, indeed, the totality is truly understood prior to any explicit grasp of the whole of beings in its specific interconnections, its regions and stratifications. Of this totality there remains, therefore, only a horizon that has lost the phenomenal diversity of the ontic experience of the world. To return to Kant, it is obviously not to be taken for granted that philosophy, in its cosmic expression, should make contact with the full diversity of the whole of nature, given that the limiting experience of the sun draws us into a dangerous game of oscillating between the beyond and the below of any possible experience. But in any event, the horizon of freedom does not bring about a shattering of the suspect attachment of transcendental philosophy to the model provided by nature. Before passing to the practical mode (or the existential mode, in the sense of Heidegger), a cosmic philosophy must involve itself to the farthest possible extent in the ontic meaning of natural objects. This ontic meaning is, indeed, the place of an authentic opening unto the world. Yet once the leap into freedom (or existence) is effected, this sense is perhaps effaced prior to having been really understood.

As against the separation of transcendental philosophy from the scientific philosophy of nature, Schelling is the philosopher who has perhaps most lucidly grasped the need for taking up the Kantian project once again. In his *System of Transcendental Idealism*, he explains that—for transcendental philosophy no less than for any science of nature—the unconditioned (*das Unbedingte*) can never be identified with any thing (*Ding*).<sup>17</sup> Both disciplines are worried about the same origin. For matter is nothing originary, but is appearance (*Schein*) for natural science no less than for transcendental philosophy. However, Schelling goes on to argue that transcendental philosophy and philosophy (science) of nature relate to the *same* totality of knowledge, which they approach in opposite directions. The movement from the object (nature) to the subject (self-consciousness) develops, in its own manner, the very same determinations that transcendental analysis unfolds from a fundamental act of unconditional subjectivity which opposes itself to the world. Schelling would like us to believe that the unconditioned of transcendental philosophy and the unconditioned of the philosophy of nature cannot be distinguished in their being. In the final analysis they must be absolutely identical, because they are both equally unknowable. In this way, Kant's actual project is covered up again at the very moment of being reenacted. For why should the unknowable be a point of convergence? Kant's sense of the unknowable does not bring together; it only indicates possible paths in the direction of bringing together. Just as Heidegger's reversal cannot really begin unless we could be sure that natural philosophy has given all that it could, so the absolute aimed at in Schelling's philosophy of identity is perhaps *not yet* a place of reconciliation of opposites.

In his own commentary on Schelling, Heidegger has pointed out the fundamental precondition for philosophy today: "To note today that Kant did not yet know anything about possible historical transformations of the use of reason is not difficult after a century and a half of historical, anthropological, and psychological research; it is simply tiresome and unfruitful. However, it is difficult to raise our task and work up to the level of Kant's thinking again."<sup>18</sup> Strikingly enough, Heidegger does not include the most obvious of these transformations that make us falsely believe that Kant's philosophy has been overcome: the developments of natural science. Heidegger's omission, whether deliberate or accidental, is fraught with remarkable consequences. That Kant's transcendental investigation of natural science is superseded by post-Newtonian science is obvious. However, post-Newtonian science is perhaps completely alien to a purported transcendental foundation. Is this a sign that science has come to an end, that the scientific worldview has exhausted all its possibilities? Perhaps it is the other way around. In disentangling itself deliberately from the yoke of transcendental foundation, science has turned in the direction of an entirely new kind of foundation, very little of which is understood at present. If this latter possibility cannot be simply ruled out, then however historically determined it may be, and precisely because it is the last attempt in modern history to understand science absolutely, Kant's investigation remains today the ultimate touchstone for the clarification of *any* possible natural knowledge, and thus also for the knowledge of the whole in the context of modern cosmic philosophy.

### Nature and Freedom

In Kant's critical philosophy, the distancing from nature, achieved by the true philosopher on the way to freedom, takes place in the third cosmological antinomy of pure reason. The process reflects the painful extraction accomplished by reflection, as a result of which, in the antinomy, transcendental freedom is assigned to the idea of world. Yet, at the same time, as a foundation for practical philosophy, it liberates itself from the world. Freedom emerges from determinate being, instead of being simply suspended in it. If it were true that freedom is a property of the faculty of desire, the will of a reasonable being, then it should have belonged to the psychological idea which deals with the "I" of "I think." Since this is not the case (A448/B476), freedom in the Kantian sense cannot be said to belong to the essence of man. The ability of human beings to choose between right and wrong, good and evil, does not proceed from their freedom. Rather, freedom is the beginning of a series which insinuates itself into the causal series of the world of experience. It is to be met with only in acting, and it works as the principle of action. Kant expresses this fact

by distinguishing two “characters” in the series of the sensible world, that is to say, two modes of causality. One is empirical, according to which any cause is the effect of an antecedent cause; the other is intelligible, as a power absolutely to initiate a series of causes. (A539–41/B567–69). These two characters do not define two worlds, because the intelligible character does not at all belong to a higher understanding. That is why transcendental freedom is still part of the cosmic concept of philosophy. There is only one world, namely, the sensible world, in which these two orders manifest themselves in accordance with their own principles, like two voices of the same melodic line. As Heidegger puts it, “freedom is nothing else than natural causality thought absolutely.”<sup>19</sup> But when it is thus thought through, nature contradicts itself (its two modes of causality degenerate into a conflict between thesis and antithesis), precisely because we can never think absolutely. A bold stroke is needed in order to make it thinkable. Kant therefore invites us to think about the unity of irreducible terms, a unity such that the two terms *remain* opposed to one another (even though the thesis and the antithesis are both true)—the two voices are always discordant, there is no tonality of being that could ever fix the melody of the world in anybody’s ear. As it turns out, thinking through such a unity also requires that we move away from the cosmic concept, or that we swing over to another horizon for the interpretation of human freedom as the *absolute* beginning of a series.

Kant distinguishes between two senses of the unconditioned: the mathematical and the dynamical. To the former belongs the cosmic concept “in the narrower sense” (A419–420/B447–48) which deals with “the world of the great and the small.” This employment of the cosmic concept covers the idea of world, which signifies “the mathematical sum-total of all appearances” (the first two cosmological antinomies). But when the world is viewed as a dynamical whole, it must be called nature, inasmuch as it concerns the unity in the existence of the appearances, not merely their aggregation in space and time. In contrast to the cosmic concept, Kant calls the idea of such a dynamical whole the *transcendent concept of nature*. Freedom, as unconditioned causality in the field of appearance, belongs to the latter class of concepts. But whereas world and nature are not opposed as irreducible elements (they indicate the same reality), freedom and nature *are* opposed to one another in respect of the two above-mentioned orders, namely, the empirical and the intelligible. Nature, as a dynamical whole, produces its own series of events within those of the mathematically homogeneous series. Freedom organizes its series by using the same substrate as does dynamical nature, but it is another dynamics altogether, in which “change” requires no “dynamical determination in time, and therefore no causal dependence upon appearances” (A541/B569). What is an event that appears in the sensible world, and is yet wrenched away from any temporal relation to what precedes it? Human

being must first have, and show, the *strength* that such a wrenching presupposes. That is, each of its resolutions, which testifies to its potentiality for free action must be accompanied by a resolution of a different order: the power to manifest that he is *alien* to the world in which s/he nonetheless continues to live—the mechanical world of sensible events, which s/he has succeeded in making intelligible by means of categories and principles of understanding. The third antinomy gives him or her the tools for this wrenching.

Heidegger realizes that the exposition of the conflict between thesis and antithesis in the third antinomy results from the fact that the problem of freedom belongs to the problem of the world.<sup>20</sup> What motivates the search for a resolution of the conflict between causality through freedom, and causality according to nature, which is to say the possibility of union between partners in conflict? Heidegger does not see here any forceful innovation. According to his reading of Kant, this possibility is simply the result of borrowing from the reflections of ordinary reason. For natural experience already presents to us a unity of laws. We never leave the world, because man, the plain “material evidence”<sup>21</sup> of the world, is the connecting link between the two causalities. To think the possibility of a union between nature and freedom amounts to thinking “the possibility of man as being-in-the-world.”<sup>22</sup> Insofar as he integrates the problem of man into the cosmological problem, Kant also would have reduced nature to something simply “selbstverständlich.” But to think through natural causality, to attain its ultimate principle, will this amount, in the end, to imitating its surface, as it is immediately given to ordinary reflection? What is the world that grounds the Kantian Being-in-the-world, since at the very moment when the powers of natural causality give out, the cosmic concept has already burst forth in the transcendent concept of nature? What is presented in the third cosmological antinomy must be already the outcome of a thought which clarifies a motivation, deeper than common reflection, for engaging in dialogue with nature. This is a dialogue in which the cosmic sense of philosophy is critical.

### Being and Knowing

Being and knowing: as soon as I think the relation of one term to the other, I am deprived of my self-possession. I cannot, indeed, hope to know anything whatever about being unless I am prepared to lose myself in it, to abandon the prerogatives of my own existence. Yet I who think am always still here. Unless I renounce knowledge, thus respecting being without marking it, in whatever way, by a relation of knowledge, I can only try to regain possession of myself. To recapture what I always already had, not to let myself be intimidated by the suctioning force of being: such is the first manifestation



of that resistance which constitutes the freedom of a being that knows. I lay claim then to what I owe to existence. Yet my request encounters no echo whatever in being. Since it encounters nothing other than its own prerogatives, it encounters nothing that could delimit it. Knowledge is the development of that freedom which owes its force only to a lack of resistance on the part of being, to the lack of interest, on the part of the world of things, in my miserable interrogation. Sometimes this force fancies falsely that it encounters obstacles on its path. It quite deliberately invents obstacles—the concept, the sensation, being—so as to test and gain the assurance of its power. These obstacles it surmounts more easily the more they pose themselves *subsequent* to its confident outset: the free force finds them only in looking back behind itself. Kant expresses this movement with remarkable lucidity: “it is, indeed, the common fate of human reason to complete its speculative structures as speedily as may be, and only afterwards to enquire whether the foundations are reliable” (A5/B9). Consequently, the frail force of a light dove sufficed to allow freedom its flight.

If, however, it were to be confirmed that the invented obstacles are not, in the end, all that different from the density of the world in its own being, the test whereby knowledge secures its acquisitions would become a source of irremissible disquiet. This is exactly what happens once philosophy discovers its critical project. Critical vigilance discovers the dogmatism, and the naïve arbitrariness, of the spontaneity of freedom that is taken for granted, the spontaneity which pushes us forward, which enables us to face and surmount obstacles. It tries to exercise its freedom in the direction which dogmatism tries hard to flee by means of its customary ruse: regression. It endeavors, at every turn, to return to the origin of the arbitrary dogmatism, to retrace the steps of dogmatic confidence and delay its claims, because dogmatism is answerable also for being, and not merely for its own ruse with false obstacles. This would lead to an infinite regress if, for the last time, the regress itself had to play games with being, and flee it, so as to come back to the zero point where knowing faces up to being. Is the regress, then, still an exercise of freedom? Such is the question Kant poses in the *Transcendental Dialectic of the Critique of Pure Reason*, where he describes the retracing of dogmatic steps as the infinite regression brought about by human reason, which passes from the conditions of what exists to the latter’s ultimate condition that is itself unconditioned. Human reason, of its own nature, becomes entangled in a conflict with itself because, trusting its own naïve spontaneity, it fails to notice that, at one moment at least, it comes up against being. It goes on to pretend—by a process that Kant calls “transcendental subreption”—that it does not recognize being because, however much being may come toward us without our having incited it to do so, it will, in any case, be unrecognizable. The shock of the encounter, nevertheless, leaves its trace.

For, in order to prepare itself for the shock and to protect itself against the consequences thereof, reason fashions its own weapons, so as to fight on undisputedly equal terms with being. These weapons are the interminable polemics (called "antinomies") which turn being away from the field of reason, leaving reason to imagine that it contemplates only itself. In the antinomies themselves, the delaying tactic of critical reason, against the rush forward demanded by dogmatic reason, has become far too intrusive. A critical solution to the conflict is needed, which will enable us to advance without the undesirable haste of dogmatism. But what is it that such a solution will actually solve, since no magic will ever remove the primordial disquiet from which the critique nurtures itself?

There is still another manner of distorting the primordial disquiet of knowledge as it grapples with being. It is a matter, here, of deferring the disquiet by passing from knowledge to ethics. Ethics installs itself, from the outset, in the unconditioned that theoretical reason so desperately aims at. It can do so either with perfect calmness, as if none of the effort of reason were to show through, or else at the cost of a new ruse, masquerading as the authentic accomplishment of that effort. However, whether it is immediately within truth, or whether it dupes us so as to achieve its ends, ethics, rather than continuing to place full confidence in the exercise of freedom, calls this very exercise into question. It questions itself concerning the value and merit of the initial questioning of being on the part of knowing. The contact with the world is no longer what unsettles me, but rather my own responsibility in the face of the implications, for life, of posing the question.

The so-called Copernican revolution that Kant brings about, so as to carry out the critical project, has the peculiar character of being an exercise of freedom of which the meaning, from the outset, is to call freedom into question. Kant achieves this thanks to his distinction between *two kinds* of being, the appearance and the thing in itself. In Kant's own terms, it is a matter of experimenting with the fundamental concepts of all thought. The experimentation calls for a staging and for a proof. To the two kinds of being there correspond two proofs supporting the validity of the hypothesis. To begin with, there is a direct proof that faces up to being without guile. For being is, from the outset, under its control—it is appearance, the own offspring of the proof. But this land of truth, as Kant calls it, is "surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the native home of illusion, where many a fog bank and many a swiftly melting iceberg give the deceptive appearance of farther shores" (A235/B294–95). I must admit that the appearances may have been engendered by being, rather than by any interaction with myself. I cannot, consequently, avoid seeking an indirect (dialectical) proof, where reason loses control of appearances, its own offspring, and calls being to account. Not that it is a matter of seeking reassurance. It is a matter, rather, of exacerbating

once and for all the primordial agony of my position within being, of engendering illusions as one engenders truth. There are no antinomies of dogmatic reason, which would be superseded by the antinomies of critical reason, but rather a single dialectic that allows itself to be manipulated in keeping with the interests of reason. Kant therefore thinks that the indirect proof reaches its term if one succeeds in thinking the thing in itself as *the other* of appearance, as if it were the latter's back side seen in a mirror. In this way, since I have compelled illusion to speak my language, that which escapes me—the offspring of being—is after all still in my power. In thinking freedom by the same movement of thought which puts it into question, *the critical project reaches its highest point just before consciousness founders in ethics properly speaking*, which is to say in the reflection on my possible inability to master what escapes me.

In this way, if this highest point could be articulated for its own sake, the rush for new demands that cannot be fulfilled by the critique is postponed. The critical project should not—in the sense of not yet—be overcome by abrogating the original duality of its absolutes. Something must be done to change Hegel's verdict on Kant, as interpreted by Heidegger, according to which critical philosophy wants simultaneously to reach the absolute and to get by without *the Absolute*. For the desire of the absolute is defined by Kant as *natural*, it falls short of the properly *critical* desire yet to be characterized. Following Hegel, Heidegger writes: "The seemingly critical fear of rash error is really the uncritical evasion of the truth which is already gathered there."<sup>23</sup> The critique *is* an evasion, which is all the more enormous because it can accept no truth (in particular, that of Being) which is always already deployed in some way before us. Nor should we be asked to live in the impossible tension between what is and what ought to be. The examination of the highest point requires that we refrain from any prejudice concerning the transcendental or metaphysical nature of either term. This kind of examination puts us on the track of an authentically phenomenological reading of Kant's dialectic. Indeed, a prejudice shared by commentators of the dialectic is well reflected in Cassirer's interpretation. The transition from the concepts of understanding to the concepts of reason, from the Transcendental Analytic to the Transcendental Dialectic, is such that the latter concepts, as he puts it, "never refer immediately to intuition but rather pertain to the use of the understanding itself, to which they intend to give the greatest systematic unity."<sup>24</sup> If the sense of the unconditioned aimed at by reason were already fixed by the limits of objectivity constitutive of the understanding in its empirical employment, then reason would have nothing to learn from its own indirect relation to intuition. But if this indirect relation resulted from reason's ability to neutralize the action of the understanding in certain well-definable circumstances, and put it out of play, then the non-immediacy of its relation to intuition would be the vision of the otherwise concealed

essence of the appearance. When the understanding understands something which is given immediately in intuition, Kant tells us in the *Analytic*, it recognizes, that is, it sees itself at work in the ordering of the immediately given manifold. When I know something, I also know myself in this something inasmuch as a trace of my own intellectual activity is visible in it. Thus, the essence of the appearance, or the appearance *as appearance* and no more than appearance, is concealed at all times, precisely because it can only be recognized. Our mental appropriation of the appearance has the effect of splitting the cognitive powers into pure sensibility and pure understanding, whereas we still would like the appearance to be redoubled (i.e., to appear as appearance) so that the world itself could teach us how to make sure that it is what it is. As we move to the *Dialectic*, we get into the field of illusion, reason begins a discourse about things without even noticing that it speaks about unknowable things in themselves. But how can we pretend to see what cannot be seen, let alone speak about it? We are led to suspect that the non-immediate relation to intuition is another kind of concealment, a postponement of immediacy which enables us to see the appearance as if we were in it, without any need for self-recognition. There is a *phenomenality of the world*, namely, the spatiotemporal level of immediately given experience which gives objects their prior phenomenal character; but any attempt to capture the appearance as no more than appearing only leads to a new phenomenality, just as irreducible as the first. This is the transcendental appearance, understood as spontaneous production of thought. On balance, a meaningful dialogue between thought and the world is possible only through the intermediary of a play of illusions proper to the *phenomenality of thought* itself, since Kant names “principles of intuition” those regulative (dynamical) principles of reason which (unlike the mathematical principles) fail to be constitutive (A664/B692).

Consequently, by privileging the *faculty* of imagination at the expense of intuition and concept as two irreducible poles, Heidegger’s interpretation leads to the unacceptable view according to which the “phenomenon,” whether an *Erscheinung* or *Schein*, finally appears in the same way. Instead of interpreting any regressive movement toward ultimate conditions of possibility as an opening toward a more originary domain, we will have to interrogate the regression as if it were an originary domain to itself. But before we can engage ourselves in this phenomenological exercise, we must ask whether the broader framework of questioning within critical limits is still legible once the *Transcendental Dialectic* is read as a phenomenological moment. What is it a moment of?

In his lectures on logic, Kant says that, when taken in its cosmopolitical sense, philosophy faces the following four questions: What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope? What is the human being? The connection be-

tween these four questions reflects the innermost interest of human reason. Does not our interpretation demand that we focus exclusively on the conditions allowing us to pass from the first to the second question? But if that is so, do we not run the risk of depriving ourselves of any means to approach the one ultimate question—the question of hope, which opens up the realm of what is authentically human in the human being? Commenting on the questions of ability, duty, and hope, Heidegger, in the absence of a positive interpretation of Kant's Dialectic, believes that any possible answer to them can only ratify the essential finitude and negativity of the Kantian ground-laying. Where an ability is to be delimited, it already places itself within a dis-ability; where a duty is questionable for a creature, this creature worries about what it should not do; and finally, "where an allowing to hope becomes questionable, . . . what is asked about is what can be placed in the expectation and what cannot."<sup>25</sup> Clearly, if a positive account of the Dialectic is thinkable in Kant's own terms, we must prepare ourselves to find space within the critical bounds for an infinite expectation—an infinity which can sustain the paradox of being simultaneously fulfilled and unfulfilled. Again, this space is found outside the realm of ethics properly speaking.

Indeed, the moment just before ethics takes over is the point at which the critical concept that is itself the most exalted, that of totality, redoubles itself. On the one hand, we have a totality of pure nature, which incorporates the entire field of experience, however far it may extend. This is the infinite climb, where the cause through which all things happen is itself caused. But on the other hand, this totality fails to encompass the "absolute totality of conditions" (A533/B561), which contains the reason for the causal relation—the hypothetical point at which the infinite climb stops. The idea of a spontaneity which can begin to act on its own makes up for this failure, and even though the empty space between the two totalities indicates my finitude, the free spontaneity fills it. The totality of pure nature, which lacked some of its conditions, is filled up with this spontaneity and becomes the absolute totality of conditions. But the free action which supplies the missing conditions does not belong to either totality. This freedom is transcendental. Its action operates without incurring any debt with respect to one of the two totalities. Not belonging to any totality, it is pure indeterminacy. It furnishes reason the means for this forward flight before the implications of an encounter with being. And it justifies appearance.

But just as one can speak of two totalities, freedom also redoubles itself. For there is a practical freedom, the domain of ethics properly so-called. Being incapable of rendering transcendental freedom determinate, practical freedom renders it at least sensible in its own being as indeterminate. In its encounter with unknowable being, it leaves a mark of absence, namely, that if something did not come to be, that thing ought to have or could have come about. Any moral law is based on such a retrieval of absence; the moral

intention cannot be caused by a material content. How, then, can it conform itself to a content without being caused by it? The work of practical freedom would not be possible if freedom itself were not double: an external versus an internal freedom. An act is moral when it is done out of respect for the moral law. The same act is simply legal when, viewed from the outside, it conforms itself to morality. It can then be done by social coercion, or by fear of punishment. The function of the state in civil society will then be conceived by Kant in such a way that, through natural causality, the content of acts is legal. For the moral intention finds in civil society an adequate content which, however, is not caused by it. Contrary to a common interpretation, Kant's doctrine of right does not derive from morality. Together with the transcendental illusion in cognition, the infinite expectation that we await in and from society is thus the other highest point of the critical enterprise, just before ethics takes over.

To the two forces of freedom there correspond two forces of knowledge, understanding and reason, which are no less opposed to one another. So as to seize upon the key moment of the critique, it is important to articulate what produces their opposition. Not that the critique could, on this point, be converted into a simple exercise in the foundations of science. The first critical experimentation with the concepts, which posits the division of the totality into appearances and things in themselves, already does not simply translate the revolution of thought brought about in science by Copernicus, Galileo, or Newton into philosophical terminology. Kant, in fact, gives us to understand that the transcendental philosopher, insofar as s/he separates the appearances from the things in themselves, is comparable to a chemist; and elsewhere he complains that chemistry is not truly a science since it lacks the mathematical foundation proper to every science worthy of its name. Despite his interest in chemistry in the *Opus Postumum*, certainly he does not expect that imminent developments in chemistry will allow the latter to sanction the scientific character of the critical enterprise. If it is true—as Heidegger holds—that, for Kant, the decisive orientation for resolving the antinomies is provided by nature, one must take into account that the relationship of the critique to nature is not simply an analogical reflection of the labor of science. On the contrary, the distance between the critique and the sciences allows us to put the Galilean project out of play. The vindication of scientific philosophy in its critical sense does not require one to regard this project as having always already succeeded.

The antinomy, moreover, is the result of a particular type of analogy (causality) that is pushed too far, that is, the analogy of experience which becomes trans-empirical. In relying upon the empirical synthesis as a model, reason seeks the unity of a synthesis which surpasses the field of experience. It ends up by articulating a redoubling of finitude. Whereas every limit

(*Schranke*) presupposes something real that encloses or circumscribes, the boundary (*Grenze*), by contrast, is a simple negation without relation to anything else. Whereas the boundary is reassuring, because it makes us believe in the existence of a definitive wall, it is the very nature of the limit ceaselessly to renew the disquiet at the very heart of the being-ready-to-hand of our factual existence. The chasm between the two senses of finitude is precisely what swallows up the Kantian antinomies.