

CHAPTER ONE

Heidegger and Kristeva

Residues of Heroic Agency and Stoic Abstraction in Being and Time

Heidegger's description of the human tendency to become lost in the "inauthentic" corresponds closely to a portrait of the subject given over to what Kristeva calls the "symbolic" dimension of language. To respond to the call of Care, in Heidegger's terms, entails an entry into the "semiotic" dimension of language, associated with the feminine.

Jean Graybeal, *Language and "The Feminine"*

In her innovative work, *Language and "The Feminine" in Nietzsche and Heidegger*, Jean Graybeal interprets Heidegger's concept of authenticity in terms of Julia Kristeva's semiotic theory. For Graybeal, the critical import of Heidegger's work stems from the fact that authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) signals a need to break with the hegemony of our "uninterrupted submersion in the symbolic" and to develop a critical awareness of the ways that discursive practices constitute our identities (Graybeal, LF, 107). Heidegger's persistent "quest for non-metaphysical ways of thinking," Graybeal argues, inaugurates a transgression of the patriarchal symbolic, God the Father, and "establish[es] new types of relations with" what she calls, following Kristeva, the feminine in language or *la mère qui jouit* (2, 19). For Graybeal, it is not incidental that Heidegger suddenly resorts to poetic *mythos* when he defines human being as care rather than as rational animal, and, further, appeals to a feminine figure, the goddess *Cura*, to justify this new name (Heidegger, SZ, 198).

An important spiritual intuition motivates Graybeal's Kristevan reading of Heidegger. For Graybeal, the paradox that humans are

driven to anchor meaning in a fixed, transcendent cause (God or man) and yet are immensely attracted to negative disruptions of secure identity reveals an essentially “theological” problem (LF, 18). That problem centers on the need to cultivate a form of life that can abide well the mortality, uncertainty, and ultimate groundlessness of the human condition. Following Kristeva, Graybeal understands the semiotic as referring to extralinguistic aspects of signification, such as gesture and intonation; the semiotic contributes meaning not simply emphasis to denotative speech. In early infancy biological impulses are organized through a liminal attunement between the infant’s bodily needs and the mother’s preverbal, gestural responses. For this reason the semiotic aspects of signification carry maternal associations; these associations become repressed through a social taboo against fusion with the maternal body that heralds the infant’s entrance into the paternal law of symbolization. Patriarchal society censors the feminine force in language, *la mère qui jouit*; and Christian culture symbolically codified that repression, Graybeal says, in the split image of woman as both virgin “source of life” and “corrupting medium of temptation, sin, and death” (19). The theological fantasy of a God (a closed system of meaning) who secures my place in the cosmos (stabilizes my identity) rests upon this sacrificial splitting of woman. Overcoming the theological temptation thus cannot mean replacing the patriarchal God with a Goddess. Instead, it entails fostering a *jouissance* or bliss that harbors no anxious desire to turn the “human drive for meaning . . . into another ‘religion’” (4).

Rather than classify Heidegger as an honorary or profeminist thinker, Graybeal treats Heidegger’s text as a philosophical parallel to the avant-garde literary figures in whose writings Kristeva finds an irruption of the semiotic, a force that “dissolves identity” and reveals “what this society censors” (Kristeva, W, 138). Without embracing Heidegger’s gender-neutral project *in toto*, Graybeal explores how Heidegger’s style of writing allows the semiotic to emerge in select portions of *Being and Time*. Heidegger’s poetic depictions of authenticity as an ecstatic subjectivity echo the *jouissance* of Kristeva’s *sujet en procès*. His style of writing “brings back into philosophy qualities and areas of concern long suppressed or ignored” (Graybeal, LF, 25). Most of all, by promoting the discovery of our self-constitution within language, Heidegger’s text enables the reader to find *jouissance* in the groundlessness of human existence. For these reasons, Graybeal claims that “Heidegger’s struggles to find ways of speaking after the death of God the Fa-

ther, bring [him] into relation with the 'mother' in language, *la mère qui jouit*, and thus make of [him] not [a] theorist of the feminine, but its practitioner" (4).

By highlighting this maieutic dimension in Heidegger's writings, Graybeal illuminates the more radical impetus in *Being and Time*. She not only connects Heideggerian themes to contemporary gender concerns, but also accounts, in part, for the enduring and pervasive influence that Heidegger's thought continues to exercise on French thinkers as well as many U.S. scholars. Nonetheless, Graybeal overlooks competing tensions in Heidegger's text. At the same time that intonations of receptivity and solicitude for others resound in Heidegger's notion of care, we also hear a deeper, masculine, and even heroic undertone resonate in his depictions of authentic resolve. And it is this heroic tonality that bursts forth shortly after 1927 during his involvement with National Socialism. Graybeal's progressive rendition of Heidegger's writing intensifies the recent call within Heidegger scholarship to examine the relation between the socially productive aspects of his work and the regressive elements. Just as numerous scholars have questioned Kristeva's high praise for avant-garde literary works that reflect elements of reactionary misogyny, so too is it imperative to explore links between the Heideggerian notion of authentic care and his reactionary politics.

In this chapter, I wish to contribute to that task by showing that Heidegger's attempt to decenter the ahistorical, impartial—and by extension masculinist—subject of modernity shatters against his own decisive entanglement in a stoic model of resolute existence. In the first two sections, I situate Graybeal's reading of Heidegger against Kristeva's semiotic theory. Although her drive theory finally undermines her ideals, I highlight how Kristeva's early work strives to develop two ideal models: an ecstatic theory of ethical subjectivity that avoids stoic consciousness and a theory of revolutionary textual practice that resists a merely cathartic release from social constraints. In the final, more lengthy section, I will argue that, whereas the psychoanalytic basis for Kristeva's works imbues her ideal of critical consciousness with a thick psychology, Heidegger's parallel model of ecstatic authenticity abstracts from a hermeneutics of suspicion that, rightfully, he should have inherited from Kierkegaard. Heidegger fashions authenticity after a "non-relational" model that abstracts from social processes and relations to others (SZ, 263). For all the talk of overcoming abstraction and giving up myths of mastery, *Being and Time* remains shot

through with an ethos of stoic resolve reminiscent of the masculinist posture of impartiality.

1.1 Kristeva: Negativity and Poetic Mimesis

In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva demonstrates that Husserl's transcendental ego articulates a theory of the *thetic subject*, the subject capable of judgment, denotation, and representation, but not the full lived experience of the *speaking subject*. Through a phenomenology of the speaking subject, Kristeva isolates two radically heterogenous forces at work in the subjectivity of the speaker. These two forces, the symbolic and the semiotic, together comprise Kristeva's view of "the social as a signifying space" or the Symbolic order (RP, 49).¹ Understood as one aspect of signifying processes, the symbolic designates those rules and universals governing "logico-semantic articulation" (63). By contrast, the semiotic refers to a preverbal "modality of significance" that breaks out in gesture and vocal rhythm, and disrupts the presumed unity of thetic identity and the closed system of representational discourse (26). Lived experience thus reveals a more dynamic and ecstatic picture of a *sujet en procès*, split between instinctive modulations and conscious thought, biological impulses and social constraints (25–30, 49–51).

Positing the thetic subject as the origin of signification covers over the fact that the thetic position is an attainment, a "phase" synonymous with post-Oedipal ego-formation (44). Rethinking Freud's drive theory in linguistic terms, Kristeva argues that the semiotic *chora*—site of oral and anal pulsions—can be situated "diachronically within the process of the constitution of the subject precisely because [it] function[s] synchronically within the signifying process of the subject himself, i.e., the subject of *cogitatio*" (29). The thetic position is a "defensive construction" formed by separation from pre-Oedipal immersion in a semiotic continuum and marked by investment in the fantasy of being a unified subject positioned as master of language. Subject-object differentiation arises, chronologically, only by repressing the infant's fusion with the mother's body and, synchronically, by rejecting autoerotic enclosure in the maternally connoted space of the *chora* (49).²

What is central for Kristeva, and cannot be overemphasized, is that the semiotic *chora* functions as a negative dialectical force. From the thetic side, repression of the *chora* is never complete. The

semiotic irrupts in speech and signifying practices as a heterogeneous force that, held in dialectical tension with symbolization, “pulverizes” meaning (51). From the other side, the semiotic *chora*, as a material drive-based force oriented toward “destruction, aggressivity, and death,” simply defies full assimilation into symbolic representation (28). This irreducible and permanent negativity of the drives, coupled with the fact that the *chora* links drive processes to signifying practices, guarantees that subjectivity is never a completed, coherent state but always an ongoing process (37). As a corrective to Hegel’s assimilative logic, Kristeva holds that the material heterogeneity of the drives provides the permanent basis for developing critical distance both on the production of one’s identity and on the symbolic laws that rigidly structure one’s experience. Negativity puts the *sujet en procès*—that is, “in process/on trial” (22, 58).

Yet before such a critical subject position can be attained, Kristeva vigorously maintains, strong thetic boundaries must be firmly in place.

In other words, the subject must be firmly posited by castration so that drive attacks against the thetic will not give way to fantasy or to psychosis but will instead lead to a “second-degree thetic,” i.e., a resumption of the functioning characteristic of the semiotic *chora* within the signifying device of language. (50)

According to Kristeva, anal pulsions mark the definitive orientation of the infant’s motility. As a death drive, anality is a fragmenting and disruptive force; nonetheless, the logic of rejection (negativity) characteristic of anal processes remains a logic of excess. The rhythmic build up, excitation, and rejection of excessive matter yield an infantile *jouissance* (erotic pleasure).³ Cases of child schizophrenia attest that the aggressivity of anal rejection is immensely pleasurable, for schizophrenia occurs in children when the body fails to defend against rejection through secondary processes of repression (152). Kristeva remarks that rejection becomes stabilized when “[i]ts tendency toward death is deferred by this symbolic [thetic] heterogeneity: the body, as if to prevent its own destruction, *re-inscribes (re-marque)* rejection and, through a leap, *represents it in absentia* as a sign” (171).

Thetic identity emerges through a qualitative leap that inaugurates a transposition of real relations (infant-mother fusion) into symbolic functions (represented as ego and alter). First, following

Lacan's mirror stage, narcissistic investment in the imago transposes a more liminal identification with the maternal body into a new level of articulation; that is, into a "spatial intuition" where voice becomes a sign "projected from the agitated body (from the semiotic *chora*) onto the facing imago or object" (46). Second, with the infant's discovery that the "phallic" mother is not satisfied in their symbiotic fusion, a sense of lack (castration) disrupts the natural *jouissance* experienced in rejection and produces the critical momentum necessary for separation. Separation establishes the child's subjectivity as lack, that is as a desire to be, not the mother, but rather the phallus or the symbolic Other. If we extend Chris Weedon's explication of Lacan to Kristeva, then the defensive character of the thetic position solidifies, not simply against incest, but also around the desire to master meaning:

The Other is the position of control of desire, power and meaning. Desire is a product of language and is subject to the constant deferral of satisfaction equivalent to the constant deferral of meaning in language. To control the one would be to control the other. In identifying with the position of the Other, the subject misrecognizes itself as the source of meaning and the power that structures it and of which it is an effect.⁴

From this psychoanalytic perspective, the defensive construction of the thetic position is a mixed bag, both requisite for communication and yet sacrificial. All societies, Kristeva claims, are founded upon an initial violent "murder of soma, the transformation of the body, the captation of drives" (RP, 75). This violence, which marks the inception of the symbolic, is displaced onto the symbolic order and codified in a myth of an original sacrifice. But this sacralization of murder is simply the "theologization of the thetic," the act that brings one's *jouissance* under societal regulation (78). Kristeva holds an ambivalent relation to feminism as a political movement, always cautioning that feminism can deteriorate into a "jealous . . . conserving [of] its power" while reservedly admitting that the movement is necessary (PH, 208; W, 138). Graybeal's spiritualist reading locates the central contribution of Kristeva's work precisely in the belief that feminism should not become a new religion. For resisting the fantasy of unified identity is tantamount to refusing the temptation, as Graybeal says, "to substitute a new god for the old one, simply to insert in the vacant space of the old Father God a Mother Goddess with a slightly altered physiognomy" (Graybeal, LF, 20).

Decentering the fanatical position of thetic identity entails transgressing the border of sacrifice by reactivating “an asocial drive” but without lapsing into a psychotic loss of identity (Kristeva, RP, 79, 71). As Graybeal’s states, in overcoming the theological temptation one must avoid “the two extreme fantasies of mastery and dissolution” (Graybeal, LF, 9). Psychosis entails foreclosure of the thetic phase or a “masochistic and jubilatory fall” toward the fantasy of the “full and pagan mother,” a fall reflected in regression into infantile babble (Kristeva, Psy, 87; cf. Graybeal, LF, 14). Yet rigid adherence to the desire to master language promotes a different, but equally dangerous fantasy. By trying to make repression absolute, one elevates the thetic phase to the “theological” and hypostatizes the “*thetic moment of rejection*” (Kristeva, RP, 206). Such attempts reflect a paranoid psychic structure or an inflated ego-defensive position which readily ushers in neurotic pathologies. For Kristeva, these pathologies manifest both as rigid adherence to conventional norms (conservatism) and as dogmatic reification of opposition (radicalism).

In *Desire in Language*, Kristeva characterizes an ecstatic ideal of the ethical subject as one who recovers *jouissance* without valorizing escapism. She writes:

[I]f the overly constraining and reductive meaning of a language made up of universals causes us to suffer, the call of the unnameable, on the contrary, issuing from those borders where signification vanishes, hurls us into the void of a psychosis that appears henceforth as the solidary reverse of our universe, saturated with interpretation, faith, or truth. Within that vise, our only chance to avoid being neither master nor slave of meaning lies in our ability to insure our mastery of it (through technique or knowledge) as well as our passage through it (through play or practice). In a word, *jouissance*. (DL, x)

Graybeal characterizes this *jouissance* as “the agonized joy of self-relation, of self-creation, of self-observation in the bizarre and fascinating process of relating to what constitutes the self as subject” (Graybeal, LF, 17). It portrays the “double brinkmanship” of the self-divided subject, split between dissolution and law, and the ecstasy that withstands sacrifice without sacralizing it (99). But in this passage Kristeva’s description of being subjected to language while playfully irreverent sounds both too stoic and too cathartic, indeed, too reminiscent of Freudian pessimism. By stoic, I mean a

cognitive rather than affective change, a sort of intellectual cognizance that one is a product of both social conventions and disruptive, asocial drives beyond one's control. The stoic perhaps derives a paradoxically painful yet pleasurable sense of cathartic release because cognizant that social norms have no ultimate claim, even as he or she cannot but obey symbolic laws. Short of any real ability to transform one's drives or society, the stoic adopts an apolitical stance.

Kristeva's description of the ecstatic subject position as self-divided indicates an irresolvable tension between her ideal of a transformed *sujet en procès* and the drive basis of self-transformation which roots subjectivity in a permanently asocial pull. Still, it would be tendentious not to acknowledge that Kristeva attempts to develop an ideal model for a substantive and rich transformation rather than an episodic catharsis or mere stoic concession that one is incurably self-divided. Kristeva argues that "only the subject, for whom the thetic is not a repression of the semiotic *chora* but instead a position either taken or undergone, can call into question the thetic so that a new disposition may be articulated" (RP, 51). Based on her psychologically rich explorations of alterity, abjection, and xenophobia, we can assume that ecstatic subjectivity leads away from paranoid and rigid ego boundaries, even as the self remains bound by symbolic laws. This *jouissance* reflects a transformed disposition marked by psychological flexibility or the capacity to sustain a fallible relation to social norms while lifting repression of one's own psychic heterogeneity.

To her credit, Kristeva strives to articulate an *ecstatic*, rather than *cathartic*, model of critical subjectivity. By *ecstatic*, I mean a subject capable of becoming aware of the social processes involved in the constitution of her (desiring) identity but without romantically codifying the transgressive moment as a value in itself. By *cathartic*, I mean an uncritical valorization of the transgressive moment. Such uncritical transgressions often eroticize the pleasure felt through a violent rupturing of the signifying practices that structure desire, thereby reifying what, I believe, is mistakenly interpreted as an asocial ground of freedom. Nothing about such cathartic pleasure provides a criterion for distinguishing between transgressions that critically promote progressive social transformation and those that solidify into reactionary social formations. An adequately developed model of ecstatic subjectivity would have to articulate such a criterion and challenge paradigms that model transgression on an inherent link between pleasure, violence, and

freedom. Her twin premises, that drives are asocial and that society is necessarily founded on violence, undermine Kristeva's attempt to distinguish cathartic transgression from socially productive strategies for liberation. Nevertheless, in *Revolution in Poetic Language* this intent underlies her view of poetic mimesis as a revolutionary practice.⁵

In her early works, Kristeva looks to poetic discourse for an ideal model of transgression that neither valorizes free-floating escape nor reifies opposition as an end in itself (RP, 209). The early Kristeva holds that poetic language, rather than psychoanalytic transference, affords a unique vehicle for transforming the subject's disposition for several interrelated reasons. First, poetic language does not simply shatter meaning. Rather, it transgresses the grammatical rules of the symbolic while nonetheless "maintain[ing] a *signification (Bedeutung)*" (57). Thus poetic mimesis calls into question the absoluteness of the rules that organize human experience. It brings us to see our self-constitution within the intertextuality of the Symbolic order:

The text turns out to be the analyst of every reader and every reader the analysand. But since *the structure and function of language take the place of the focus of transference* in the text, this opens the way for all linguistic, symbolic, and social structures to be put in process/on trial. The text thereby attains its essential dimension: it is a *practice* calling into question (symbolic and social) *finitudes* by proposing *new signifying devices*. (210)

Second, rather than challenge the unicity of the thetic, it aims at "prevent[ing] the thetic from becoming theological" (58). The revolutionary potential of poetic discourse consists in its ability to reactivitate repressed drives, and the affective *jouissance* associated with them, through anamnesis (60). Whereas analysis leads to "intellectual acceptance of the repressed," poetic discourse eroticizes repressed drives without sublimating the repressed into "the signified." Art holds open the dialectical "expenditure" of the semiotic drives as "*eroticized in a language*" (163–64). It reveals the prohibition and economic regulation of *jouissance* as what binds identity to symbolic practices. Recollection takes the subject not back to therapeutic acceptance of its former repression, but rather to the synchronic site of its current production (67).

Third and finally, because poetic mimesis does not rely upon direct, personified transference, it resists normalization and thus

can promote ideology critique. Rather than “ossifying” the subject’s newly reconstituted identity, it links the heterogeneity of drives to objective social conditions (205). Even while she praises nineteenth-century avant-garde aesthetic productions, Kristeva also critiques them for escaping into a subjectivized transgressive pleasure without questioning social conditions (82). Conversely, she attacks Marxian oppositional struggle for reifying the thetic in a kind of fanatic rejection of social norms that merely institutes a new ideology (206). Between these two extremes, Kristeva seeks an ideal textual practice that can open the subject up to its material heterogeneity and use this newly won *jouissance* to critique the sources of communal dissatisfaction with objective social conditions. Together these three qualities give poetic language a unique role in resisting the theological temptation and in making individuals capable of a new humanism, of cultivating a society that refuses to sacralize its origins.

[M]imesis and poetic language . . . question the very principle of the ideological because they unfold the *unicity* of the thetic (the precondition for meaning and signification) and prevent its theologization. As the place of production for a subject who transgresses the thetic by using it as a necessary boundary—but not as an absolute or as an origin—poetic language and the mimesis from which it is inseparable, are profoundly a-theological. (61)

1.2 The Call of Care: Breaking the Hegemony of the Symbolic

Graybeal reads Heidegger’s *Destruction* of metaphysics as a revolutionary textual practice that puts the subject in process/on trial.⁶ Like Kristeva, Heidegger critiques the Husserlian notion of the transcendental ego for covering over the fact that humans have no *fundamentum inconcussum* (SZ, 24). For Heidegger, it is only because there is no absolute meaning that humans can find themselves naively fascinated by their world in a kind of prethematic understanding. This prethematic absorption presupposes that Dasein’s meaning-context is neither reducible to human consciousness nor fixed in an absolute cause. Thomas Sheehan has shown that for Heidegger the essence of phenomena “lies in their autodisclosure”:

Being and Time makes one overarching point: that man is present to entities only because he reaches beyond them in the direction of his own relative absentiality: his “becoming” (*Zukunftigkeit*)

and “alreadiness” (*Gewesenheit*). . . . The point is that the awareness of his own privative presence (futurity and alreadiness) allows man to know himself authentically and to know entities properly, i.e., in terms of their kinetic intelligibility.⁷

Well before *Being and Time* (1927) Heidegger attacked metaphysical abstraction as a “hyperbolic” flight into an “absolute truth” that takes the life out of theory and the wonder out of life (GA 56/57, 84, 90, 112–17). In 1927, he claims that metaphysics transmutes tradition into “a fixed body of doctrine” that dooms humans to a dogmatic repetition of history (SZ, 17, 20–27). Thus, as Sheehan clarifies, critical awareness of our own constitution “demand[s] a shift of phenomenological focus from things as disclosed to their *disclosive process itself*.”⁸ Authenticity depicts the process whereby Dasein breaks the twin habits of hypostatizing meaning (through projecting a transcendent cause of reality) and conceptualizing itself as in rational control of meaning.

On Graybeal’s Kristevan reading, inauthenticity and falling (*Verfallen*) articulate total submission to the dominant symbolic system which Heidegger names, after Kierkegaard, “publicness.” To lose oneself in the public means to conform thoughtlessly to the “they” or *das Man*, i.e., to take for granted accepted discourses as ways of making sense out of life. In conformity, “We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they [man]* take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge. . . . we find ‘shocking’ what *they* find shocking” (SZ, 127). The inauthentic mode of everyday life, in which we are all caught up in some measure, divests us of the responsibility to think critically, i.e., to reflect directly upon the autodisclosive nature of things (128). For Graybeal, “it is to be limited and confined to what can be understood by all, rationalized, universalized. In patriarchal culture, it is to belong to the Father” (LF, 99).

Echoing Kristeva’s notion that the thetic position is a defensive construction, Graybeal notes that, for Heidegger, authenticity entails “a shattering of the pretenses with which Dasein barricades itself against itself” (LF, 99). Authenticity resembles Kristeva’s model of the “double brinkmanship” of the ethical subject, “balancing the pain of subjection to the law of the symbolic with the pleasure” of a new *jouissance* (14). Graybeal explains,

Care calls Dasein into authenticity, out of the secure but deadened precincts of the symbolic. The effects of Care’s call on Dasein are not comfortable but unsettling; they disturb Dasein’s

condition of “fascination” by the “they”; they move Dasein into an uneasy state of not-knowing, of questioning, of awareness of its precarious and tenuous grasp on its own existence. Care’s call deprives us, as Kristeva might say, “of the reassurance mechanical use of speech ordinarily gives us, the assurance of being ourselves, that is, untouchable, unchangeable, immortal.” (LF, 112; quoting Kristeva, PH, 38)

Graybeal maintains that the feminine-semiotic suffuses Heidegger’s own *jouissance* as a writer who wants to describe the tension between the authentic and inauthentic modes of being (LF, 100). So it seems fitting that the pull back from *das Man* answers to a summons from the goddess figure in the Latin fable of Care. Heidegger describes the call of conscience as an uncanny “alien voice” that disrupts feeling at home in the world (SZ, 276–77). For Graybeal, care calls Dasein to Freud’s “other scene” where drive reactivation occurs and, following Kristeva, one’s own and proper unconscious reveals that one is a stranger to oneself (Kristeva, Str, 183). In Heidegger’s words, the call “comes from me and yet from beyond me and over me” (SZ, 275). Like the voice of the repressed, the goddess “summons” us to stray “beyond the borders of home and the familiar” (Graybeal, LF, 115). Situated on the abyss of meaning, authenticity “breaks through the hegemony of the symbolic” and puts the subject on trial (119).

Graybeal punctuates her claim that responding to Care invokes a relation to the semiotic by noting oddities in Heidegger’s art of writing. Heidegger’s use of fable to depict authenticity marks a “formal anomaly” in the otherwise systematic and analytic construction of *Being and Time* (LF, 111). At the juncture where he must justify the possibility of stepping back from conventional forms of theoretical speculation, Heidegger curiously turns to myth rather than to proof or argumentation (SZ, 197–98). At this “turning point,” where the discussion shifts from inauthenticity to authenticity, the goddess Care (the repressed semiotic) suddenly presides over the production of meaning and challenges the absoluteness of representational discourse.

Tipping a keen ear to Heidegger’s language, Graybeal further connects Heidegger’s description of Dasein’s everyday and inauthentic comportment as *Benommenheit* to a peculiarity in Macquarrie and Robinson’s translation of the term as fascination. While *Cassell’s German-English Dictionary* translates *benommen* as “confused, distraught, dazed, bemused, stupefied” but not as fascinated,

Graybeal notes, the Latin, *fascināre*, means “to enchant, bewitch, from *fascinus*, a bewitching amulet in the shape of a phallus” (LF, 97, 106). Calling this a “bizarrely contorted confirmation,” she remarks that this “fortuitous translation” explicitly links Heidegger’s descriptions of inauthenticity to Kristeva’s view that in Christian cultures the symbolic is phallogocentric, i.e., founded on a sacrifice of the maternal body (107).

Focusing on the notions of fascination and bewitchment enables Graybeal to bring forward the ethical implications of Heidegger’s critique of inauthenticity.⁹ Facing the call from the goddess, *Cura*, initiates a transformation of subjectivity that heals us of what Heidegger calls an “addiction to becoming ‘lived’ by the world” (SZ, 196). Heidegger’s provocative descriptions of inauthentic life indicate that bewitchment by *das Man* is not merely a cognitive disease of mental voyeurism. Rather, the defining characteristics of inauthenticity include affective dimensions that “tranquilize” and alter the constitution of Dasein’s very way of living. Idle talk refers to a kind of superficial relation to accepted ideas but one that remains assimilative. As Graybeal says, idle talk “predigests what might otherwise be up for question” (LF, 101). Curiosity, though associated with vision, issues from a holistic state of “restlessness,” “distraction,” and “lust” for novelty (Heidegger, SZ, 172). Finally, ambiguity indicates a “non-committal” way of surmising events in which one says what “they” will find acceptable and everyone avoids taking action by stipulating what “really” must be done (173). Together these “entangle” Dasein in busy avoidance of its own strangely tameless groundlessness.

What Heidegger describes as a homogenizing disease that co-opts our ordinary wonder about ourselves and others, Graybeal diagnoses as stemming from a spell cast by the phallic amulet. Fascinated absorption in *das Man* reflects “a one-sided addiction to or plunge into the symbolic side of the situation of the subject,” the desire for mastery, for control of the absolute, for God (LF, 124–25). To the extent that Heidegger’s writings remedy this “addiction,” they liberate the reader for a new *jouissance*. Like Kristeva’s *sujet en procès*, authentic Dasein awakens from the fantasy of the phallus, the promise of a “timeless state of stasis” (LF, 17). Just as the *sujet en procès* withstands two forces—the terrifying yet exciting pull toward symbiosis with the maternal *chora* and the painful but necessary submission to the law of the father—authentic Dasein bears its “ontological anxiety” before the abyss of its being and refuses to take refuge in *das Man*. Authentic Dasein faces death,

not as its future demise, but as a jolt that shakes the security of the thetic position and cures it of the desire for mastery (Heidegger, SZ, 276f., 348). Here Graybeal accentuates one final oddity in Heidegger's text: it mentions joy for the first time in connection with this newly won sobriety. In the "face-to-face" encounter with its anxiety, Dasein experiences an "unshakable joy"; it becomes "armed, prepared, ready" for its groundlessness (LF, 125).

1.3 Heidegger's Stoic Valorization of Heroism¹⁰

Although manifold influences inform the complex vision of *Being and Time*, Heidegger's analysis of the inauthentic and authentic modes of life reflects a noteworthy Kierkegaardian lineage.¹¹ The maieutic dimension of Heidegger's project, central to Graybeal's reading, stems from extending the Kierkegaardian *existential* goal of living in personal integrity (without self-deception) to include a *methodological* aspect, namely, a disruption of metaphysics (the drive for fixed meaning). John Caputo argues compellingly that Heidegger's genius consisted in recognizing that personal authenticity must be accompanied by "methodological consciousness":

On the existential level, authentically being oneself (*eigentliches Selbstsein*) is the counter-tendency to inauthentically being like everyone else (*das 'Man'*). On the hermeneutical level—that is, on the level of a thematic interpretation such as is undertaken by the author of *Being and Time*—an authentic interpretation of Dasein in terms of existence and temporality is the counter-tendency to a falling interpretation of Dasein in terms of presence. Our prethematic fallenness (as existing beings) is mirrored in a fallen ontology.¹²

Here I bracket the formal objective of *Being and Time*, to develop an ontology that reflects Dasein's temporal structure, and focus on the practice of developing this critical awareness of the kinetic nature of beings. Heidegger saw that Kierkegaard's ideal of retrieving a critical self-relation must remain partial and incomplete without undertaking a radical reassessment of western metaphysics. Since authentic life does not transpire in a cultural and historical vacuum, cultivating a critical relation to my sense of identity is not simply psychological and interpersonal. It must include questioning the canonical heritage that is constitutive of who I am and that structures how I represent the world (cf. SZ, 20–27).

Graybeal's interpretation stems from this methodological intuition and develops it by interpreting *Being and Time* as a book about how language paradoxically conditions and yet threatens the possibility of nonoppressive social relations. But while a hermeneutics of suspicion and a conception of the social as signifying space clearly underpin both Kristeva's ideal of the subject in process and Kierkegaard's communicative model of existential ethics, the relation of ontological groundlessness to motivated deception and to social relations is wrought with tensions in *Being and Time*.¹³

My argument is that Heidegger takes over the psychologically rich Kierkegaardian themes of anxiety, idle talk, and curiosity that, as existential equivalents to neurotic symptoms, offer a parallel to Kristeva's critique of thethetic position. But when he shifts the concept of authenticity to an ontological level, Heidegger unnecessarily divorces it from ethical critique and depletes it of psychological richness. Thus Heidegger fails to weave the existential problem of living without self-deception together with the ontological problem of fostering a nonobjectifying and nonpossessive relation to the mysterious self-disclosure of others. I locate the cause of this error in Heidegger's methodology. He mistakenly models the practical goal of fostering awareness of disclosedness after his formal, transcendental derivation of the ontological conditions of existential practices. When Heidegger's transcendentalism permeates his maieutic goal, learning a nonobjectifying way of thinking becomes a pristine activity. It is no longer a praxis that, dialectically conceived, both partially conditions *and* is partially conditioned by self-examination, social processes of recognition, and ideology critique. This truncated praxis leads to stoic consciousness and paves the way for Heidegger's reactionary politics of the thirties.¹⁴

The Kierkegaardian Background

Heidegger's thesis that one becomes authentic through resolute decision descends from Kierkegaard's existential reflections on the kinetic nature of human life. As temporal beings, we develop one way or another, for Kierkegaard, either naively as our society dictates or critically through active mediation of one's life.¹⁵ In *Either/Or*, Kierkegaard depicts the ethical failure to actively take over the direction of one's self-development as an aesthetical mode of life, the life of curiosity, idle talk, and lust for novelty. But what is essential for Kierkegaard is that, through this decision, I begin to engage in a process of interior edification, a *Bildungsprozess*.

Like Kristeva's "second-degree thetic," Kierkegaard defines ethical existence as "raising [one's] consciousness to the second power." Ultimately there are multiple stages of spiritual growth which move the self from abstract attitudes toward life choices (e.g., a stoic fatalism that hardens one against what cannot be controlled) to increasingly concrete and psychologically differentiated attitudes (e.g., sifting through the motivated attachments I have and how these keep me bound to an uncritical self-relation, to power and material position, and thus to my relations to others). Kierkegaard's authorship does not valorize the mere act of choice. Repetition holds ethical overtones only insofar as it initiates the existentially transformative process of self-exploration.¹⁶

In spite of his emphasis on the interior life of "spirit," Kierkegaard holds an explicitly *dialectical* view of the relation between personal autonomy (self-consciousness) and community (social context). On the one hand, Kierkegaard argues that my relation to others, to cultural beliefs, to normative discourse hinges upon my self-relation. On the other hand, since subjectivity is intersubjectivity, a critical self-relation can never be realized outside of a particular circumstance of struggling with social conditions and working out interpersonal relations. Against Hegel's tendency to subsume individual difference under Absolute *Geist*, Kierkegaard wants to isolate an irreducible moment of spiritual interiority that functions like Kristeva's negativity of the drives as resistance to assimilation. The ethical activity of developing a critical self-relation, however, is not a natural given, like the materiality of the drives, but rather an achievement that must be abidingly attained. For Kierkegaard, the logic of excess, which positions interiority in tension with existing norms, transforms *how* I relate to my world, thoughtfully as opposed to naively, honestly rather than from a motivated ignorance that enables me to enjoy social power without justification. But as a specific and irreducible activity, the critical stance is not inherently antithetical to community and public discourse. In fact, it cannot stand in for normative justification. Rather, it gives the individual free responsibility for her relation to community and societal norms; conversely, it makes the community responsible to the excess represented by individual needs and not addressed by preexisting social conventions.¹⁷

In *Two Ages*, Kierkegaard differentiates the modal relations, individual and crowd, from the ontological fact that subjectivity is always concretely bound up with intersubjectivity. Whereas selves never exist outside community, the terms "individual" and "crowd"

designate antithetical forms of social interaction. Kierkegaard distinguishes the "crowd" from the possibility of a true community of "individuals" as "neighbors." The crowd designates a form of community that, though moralizing, maintains "en masse" a precritical relationship to its moral code and in this fashion "renders the individual completely impenitent and irresponsible."¹⁸ Genuine community obtains only through the dialectic of interiority whereby individuals undertake a critical mediation of values and ideals. It is this mediation that brings one to awareness of individual differences. Only on the basis of this differentiation can a true communal cohesiveness be built. On the other hand, lacking such awareness,

we have a tumultuous self-relating of the mass to an idea . . . gossip and rumour . . . apathetic envy become a surrogate of each for all. Individuals do not in inwardness turn away from each other, turn outward in unanimity for an idea, but mutually turn to each other in a frustrating and suspicious, aggressive, leveling reciprocity.¹⁹

Kierkegaard's concept of the individual should be confused neither with stoic abstraction nor with repudiation of community. Ethical integrity involves a pull away from the crowd only insofar as it counteracts blind adherence to convention.²⁰ It is arguable, then, that the birth of interiority does not lapse into antisocial, rampant individualism in spite of Kierkegaard's tendency to equate the ethical subject with a subject in exile and against his inclination to romanticize, even deliberately aggravate, his particular life experience of being ostracized. In such moments, he conflates a modal category, namely, how I relate to others, with a particular form of life. Strictly speaking, the ethical "individual" who engages in self-examination can experience isolation from the "crowd" only as a position that intensifies her engagement in society, i.e., only as repudiated by others.

For Kierkegaard, the crowd is a dangerous force not because everyone agrees with tradition, although that might be politically undesirable, but rather because no agreement can arise without first examining how one's social location, relative to others, is determined by assumptions and values. While this position does not give us ideology critique or critical social theory, Kierkegaard's point is that self-examination is a precondition (if only partial) of social and political critique. From his standpoint, how I live makes a difference. Even were I to adhere to traditional principles, my mode

of action would be thoughtful and engaged as opposed to dogmatic, intolerant, and disingenuous. While interiority will not justify my moral or political choice, it will prepare me to engage in critical discussions about normative issues.²¹

Heidegger's Abstraction from Interior Life

Heidegger anchors the aesthetical (inauthentic) and ethical (authentic) modes of life in ontology and this anchoring shifts the Kierkegaardian concept of mode from an intersubjective, *existenziell* level (existence in its concrete determinations) to an ontological, *existenzial* level (the universal structures in every concrete act of existing). Modes (the *Existenzialien*) denote temporal rather than static neo-Kantian structures; they designate the conditions of possibility for intersubjective and historical forms of life.²² For Heidegger, all forms of lived self-alter relations presuppose that "Others" are already "with" me as part of the modal structure of Dasein as a projected Being-in-a-world. Heidegger's discussion of Being-with advances one key claim: that ontology logically precedes psychology and actual intersubjective relations. In Heidegger's words, "[t]his Dasein-with of the Others is disclosed within-the-world for a Dasein, and so too for those who are Daseins with us (*die Mitdaseienden*), only because Dasein in itself is essentially Being-with" (SZ, 120). Yet when Heidegger says that others are with me a priori, he does not mean that they are actually present. Rather, "[t]he Other can be missing only in and for a Being-with. Being-alone is a deficient mode of Being-with; its very possibility is proof of this" (120–21). Because my sense of being the kind of entity I am is embedded in a sense of others, I can experience aloneness and, moreover, I can be alone even when another is present in the room (124). For Heidegger, psychologically based phenomena—such as relating across individual differences, getting to know another's interiority, developing sympathy or hatred, empathy or indifference—rely upon an a priori ontological, albeit prethematic, understanding of others as humans like me.

At an ontological level, we encounter ourselves as both an entity in the world and the very ec-static site of disclosure of the world. In his 1929 lecture "What is Metaphysics?" Heidegger calls human being a transcendence because humans are "held out into the nothing" or non-Being (BW, 105/W, 12). Because we touch this groundlessness in certain moods, the world recedes from us and entities come into view as autodisclosive. In Sheehan's language, only be-

cause our own absentiality is a question for us, can we contemplate the kinetic process of all things. This prethematic ability to contemplate our own presencing and absencing enables us to differentiate the various modes of disclosure peculiar to different kinds of entities. Being-with specifies the particular prethematic recognition that Daseins have with one another. We encounter other Daseins not as entities first objectified and separated from us (present-at-hand) nor as things for manipulation and use (ready-to-hand) but rather as those with whom I share the world and who co-constitute the site of disclosedness of all things (SZ, 118).

At this point, Heidegger's ontology *appears* consistent with Kierkegaardian dialectics. Heidegger uses the term *Fürsorge* or solicitude to depict the specific form of care Dasein exhibits in its prethematic comportment toward other humans. Thus *Fürsorge* denotes the ontological basis for adopting both inauthentic relations of domination and intersubjective relations that free individuals up to be together authentically. Echoing Kierkegaard, Heidegger says that authentic care "helps the Other become transparent to himself *in* his care and to become *free* for it." Similarly, Kierkegaard's crowd resonates in Heidegger's comment that, even when engaged in a common undertaking, humans often "mistrust" one another (122). Formally anchoring inauthentic and authentic care in Being-with does not seem to posit an inherent contradiction between becoming an authentic individual and engaging in productive social relations.

In spite of this promising strain in *Being and Time*, Heidegger ultimately pits the practice of overcoming objectification of others against psychological and interpersonal development. On the one hand, Heidegger's formal claim that the process of understanding the psychical life of others presupposes an original prethematic sense of being like one another is sound. On the other hand, Heidegger's practical claim that becoming authentically "free" for one's care cannot occur through empathy seems highly questionable. This latter claim severs the awareness requisite for authenticity from a hermeneutics of suspicion. Although Being-with is the formal possibility of either "opening oneself up" or "closing oneself off" to others, Heidegger's comments on empathy confuse formal claims with practical ones. Heidegger says,

This phenomenon [opening oneself up to another], which is none too happily designated as 'empathy' ("*Empfindung*"), is then supposed, as it were, to provide the first ontological bridge from one's

own subject, which is given proximally as alone, to the other subject, which is proximally quite closed off. (124)

In this discussion, Heidegger argues that the psychological view of empathy as personal disclosure reflects false ontological presuppositions, namely, that we are first separate individuals who can only subsequently cross over to one another. Such a viewpoint cannot account for how humans can disclose themselves to one another because the "Other would be a duplicate of the Self," a mere projection of one's own identity (124). As a formal argument, Heidegger's conceptual point is sound: empathy is possible only because Being-with is part of Dasein's ontological constitution (125). Still, the status of Heidegger's claim remains unclear. While a descriptive psychology of human behavior and popular psychological conceptions may not yield fundamental ontology, it remains specious to assume that the science of psychoanalysis cannot provide a sound theoretical foundation that accounts for the preobjectifying basis for self-alter differentiation and thus for processes, not simply of bonding, but also of explicit reconciliation of the self to others in a social whole.

More important still are the implications of Heidegger's comments for specifying the nature of the practical relation between empathy (or other existential and therapeutic processes) and examining one's ontological suppositions (methodology) in fostering critical consciousness. Heidegger claims that "welfare work" (121) and empathy (125) get their "motivation from the unsociability" of inauthentic intersubjective relations. We could take this to mean that empathy counters inauthenticity at a lived, *existenziell* level, but does not provide an explicit formal account of its own ontological foundation. Such a claim would be sound. Yet in analyzing that foundation, Heidegger strictly rejects the notion that empathy is an explicit manifestation of the ontological structure of Dasein (one of the *Existenzialien*). Rather than depict empathy as a positive *existenziell* and explicit unfolding of our implicit prethematic and ontological solicitude for others, Heidegger rigorously demarcates *Fürsorge* from empathy.

We can interpret this demarcation in two ways: (a) either empathy initiates a countermovement to inauthenticity but remains partial and incomplete without the critical moment of "methodological consciousness" wherein we break through our static, essentializing suppositions and reach awareness of the autodisclosive nature of beings; or (b) empathy-based relations necessarily rein-