

Chapter 1

The Materiality of the World

What do we mean by “embodiment,” by the “human body,” by “physicality?” Can the body become for Heidegger, as it was for Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a “cardinal *ontological* problem?”¹ Could this question provide another avenue for raising a perennial question, which due to its historical forgottenness Heidegger sought to re-ask, the question of the meaning of being? Following in Heidegger’s footsteps, any concern for “meaning” must, after all, take a hermeneutical form. The “hermes” of interpretation is the intermediary that guides us in rendering the indeterminate determinate, in addressing something *as* something, in this case in allowing being to become manifest in terms of physicality. But the formulation of any such meaning-question must assume a historical character, because human understanding is historically situated and is *always concretely enacted through one mode or another*, for example, “everydayness.” Thus when we ask the preceding, we are asking what is distinctive about our historical circumstances that could allow us to translate the perennial question of being into an enigma pertaining to the fact of embodiment? Indeed, we are seeking the “between” (*Zwischen*) that would enable us to address the manifestation of being in terms of the permutations of physicality and materiality.

In this chapter, I will take the initial steps to mark the crossover between the historical presuppositions that govern Heidegger’s selection of a point of departure for re-asking the question of being and the chasm, the *chiasmus*, that separates us, emerging on the cusp of the twenty-first century to criticize his thought. Only by marking the historical variables that shape the relevancy of our point of departure can we, as inquirers, take up Heidegger’s task and pursue it through the opening provided by our era.² I will begin by identifying the common thread interweaving our lives into a “global” culture, the engine

propelling technology in all of its facets, whose impact Heidegger never foresaw despite condemning its Americanized expression, namely, the economic system of capitalism. More specifically, I will show how the emergence of capitalism as the center of the dominant contemporary “lifestyle” provides a historical backdrop against which to recast Heidegger’s *analysis of everydayness* and retrospectively confirm his account of the everyday “they-self” as prevalent in various cultural forms. Specifically, the downward plunge into the cycle of production/consumption, which occurs under the technological rule of capitalism, epitomizes the tendency of falling inherent in human existence. This manner of falling into the grips of technology makes explicit a latent concern for materiality, which is determined less by the physical processes of production as by their global linchpin, namely, the medium of exchange (e.g., currency and money). As this medium makes explicit, humanity’s experience of materiality is always “translinguistic” or linguistically mediated, if only at a prearticulated level of a gesture (e.g., a wink).

After addressing the issue of materiality, I will identify an “aberration” of mass society that both has its roots in falling and illustrates a predicament to which the fact of our embodiment makes us vulnerable, namely, addiction. Heidegger provides the key to exploring the unique dynamic of this phenomenon, in its manifold dimensions, in such a way that addiction appears as a basic “modification” of Dasein’s being as care, or an existential tendency inherent in everydayness.³ Why should we turn to a phenomenon such as addiction in order to address our manner of embodiment? The answer lies in how human existence always discloses (or conceals) itself from the side of one modality or another, including that shaped by the distinctive historical-cultural-environmental climate in which we already find ourselves. By undertaking these concrete analyses, we will “repeat” the account of everydayness that Heidegger undertakes in the first division of *Being and Time*, and, indeed, according to the dictates and design of his own hermeneutical methodology. The outcome of this repetition will be to raise the problem of rethinking spatiality in conjunction with, rather than in subordination to, temporality, which correlates with the precedent set by Western philosophy to privilege the soul over the body, spirit over materiality.

WORK, EXCHANGE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Rilke once exhorted us to “resolve always to be a beginner.”⁴ In executing his hermeneutical method, Heidegger follows this mandate in setting an example for future philosophical inquiry. No matter how far we progress in such inquiry, we never abandon the beginning but instead recover it and reaffirm its

possibility. In selecting everydayness as his point of departure, Heidegger emphasizes that his inquiry into being must always return to this starting place, in order that its “presuppositions” can be further clarified by the questioning already undertaken. By clarifying the totality of these presuppositions, or what Heidegger calls the “hermeneutical situation,” the inquiry yields to the openness that all along has provided it guidance. The opportunity then arises to “repeat” the beginning through its inception within this openness. As we reenact this beginning, the inquiry’s pattern of development—of an advance predicated on the counter-movement of return—can appear as an instance of temporalizing itself whose historical concretion provides the backdrop for re-asking the question of being. The circular movement of this return—the hallmark of the hermeneutical circle—stems from the historical character of human understanding and thereby testifies to its finitude.

Heidegger does not dictate the terms of the hermeneutical circle, however, as does the circular character of understanding, whose potential for disclosedness originates from the ecstases of temporality. The more diligently we employ the hermeneutical method, the more we come to appreciate our place within a concrete historical situation. If as inquirers we adhere to his mandate of “repetition,” then the reinception of everydayness as the point of departure for inquiry must incorporate the changes in the historical situation in which the inquirer finds himself or herself. We must reconcile the analysis of everydayness with the specific facticity of the inquirer, in such a way that the contingencies of our historical situation in the twenty-first century reinform our experience of the everyday use of tools, and so on. In this regard, the insights of Heidegger’s subsequent inquiry into technology can be redirected to illuminate the everyday realm of work, because it is only by anticipating the era of “globalization” in which we reside that his discussions acquire the contemporary relevance they do. Accordingly, the analysis of everydayness must bring to light how the *modus operandi* of work comes to be redefined by these contemporary forces of globalization. In this regard, we would follow the example set by Heidegger’s own hermeneutics, in which the insights of later discussions serve to illuminate the presuppositions of earlier ones to permit the continual widening of the circumference of the hermeneutical circle.

While philosophy, unlike other disciplines, is distinguished by its preoccupation with beginnings, Heidegger differentiates his interest in the same from other philosophers—whether Plato or Aristotle, Descartes or Kant, Hegel or Husserl—by his desire to arrive at the least presumptuous of all beginnings. That is, Heidegger seeks a point of departure that is most removed from a concern for the perennial topic of philosophy, being itself. Indeed, he selects everydayness as his point of departure in order to identify the basic tendency of human existence to neglect the question of being. By

beginning at this prephilosophical level of indifference, Heidegger proceeds from the most innocuous presupposition of what each of us, as Dasein, already understands about himself or herself. Given this orientation, hermeneutics can avoid prejudging the inquiry with the introduction of pre-fabricated concepts about “being,” which may be derivative and thereby allow Dasein’s pre-understanding to point the way to the emergence of a primordial understanding of its being, and, correlatively, of being itself. By entering the inquiry at the juncture where a consideration of being remains most withdrawn, hermeneutics can then allow the dislocations and omissions in everyday existence to indicate, by contrast, the origin of ontological understanding, and, thereby, of the manifestation proper to being itself. But, most importantly, by tracing the emergence of the question of being from a prephilosophical level, Heidegger establishes the wider significance of this question, the scope of its relevance; he thereby marks the experience of “wonder” that summons each individual to engage in philosophical inquiry and to make that endeavor the foremost consideration of all.

We seem to state the obvious in saying that philosophy must begin where we already are, with the pre-understanding of everyday existence. But is the concept of “everydayness,” which Heidegger outlines in the first division of *Being and Time*, set in granite, or, instead, is it open to revision as the historical circumstances of the inquirer change?⁵ Before attempting to answer this question, we must recall that part of what is involved in the self’s facticity is its embeddedness in a culture oriented toward change and development. In light of this observation, I will attempt to show that a revision of Heidegger’s analysis of everydayness is not only possible, indeed, it is necessary, for this revision fulfills an explicit hermeneutical mandate of retrieving the point of departure for ontological inquiry, that is, of “repeating” the earlier analysis in order to uncover its presuppositions within a wider historical context. As Heidegger states at the conclusion of *Being and Time*—quoting an earlier passage—“philosophy is ‘universal phenomenological ontology,’ and takes its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, which, as an analytic of *existence*,” has made fast the guiding line for all philosophical inquiry at the point where it *arises* and to which it *returns*.⁶

A.

The fact that we are immersed in history means that the variables that govern our consideration of the equipmental whole of everydayness may be much different than those that first led Heidegger to undertake such a phenomenological analysis in the 1920s. The facticity that distinguishes those who live

in the “information age” of computers and e-commerce is different from that which defined our predecessors who inhabited the industrialized realm of typewriters and corner markets. If everydayness is simply the routine by which we adapt to changes in *technē*, then awareness of the global character of this change defines modern technology as such. Thus the *technē* of technology and everydayness become two sides of the same coin, insofar as the latter maps on a global scale the practical dealings that preoccupy us in the immediate proximity of our everyday environment. For Heidegger, then, the question of technology springs from the soil of everydayness; conversely, a change in our experience of technology—the historical unfolding of its possibilities—requires altering our concept of the everyday world of equipment. Insofar as Heidegger equates the *technē* of technology with production, which in turn comes to light in its nascent form in the everyday work world, a change in the face of contemporary technology implies another axis along which the significance of equipmental relations unfolds. Given this new axis of the work world, the basic *modus operandi* of everydayness is no longer production but exchange.

In this section, I will show how the issue of exchange remains latent in Heidegger’s critique of “productionist metaphysics” as providing the *Gestalt* for proliferating technology on a global scale.⁷ Then I will establish how “exchange” has an ontological meaning, which in turn can be interpreted in light of the dynamics of the disclosure of being itself. Finally, I will argue that reintroducing economic issues compensates for Heidegger’s neglect of them, *insofar as it interweaves the concern for our condition as embodied beings into the composition of everydayness*. For this reintroduction yields the key to retrieving his earlier analysis of the everyday work world—where embodiment becomes as much a dimension of “world” as it is of the “there”—albeit now recast in light of his insight into technology. Thus a new hermeneutic circle emerges in which a reexamination of Heidegger’s critique of technology returns us to his analysis of everydayness, and, conversely, the repetition of this analysis (with an emphasis on exchange versus production) both sharpens and expands his portrait of technology.

When Heidegger developed his analysis of everydayness in the mid-1920s, he was undoubtedly influenced by the cultural milieu of his time. His examples from the first division of *Being and Time* bear this out: the appeal to the hammer and nail to distinguish the matrix of instrumentality, or the car, turn signal, and road sign to outline the totality of signifying relations which makes explicit the disclosure of world.⁸ By the same token, Heidegger undertakes a phenomenological description of everydayness in order to delineate a structure intrinsic to any culture. He establishes a common thread in how we face the regimentation of daily life or the fact that in any cultural context

human beings become embroiled in certain routines and succumb to the pressures of social conformity. In any event, the work-a-day-world arises in conjunction with a nexus of social relationships, in such a way that world admits different variations to accommodate a diversity of cultural dealings and pursuits (even within a single culture).

For Heidegger, “everydayness” is first and foremost an existential-ontological structure. While his own vision of instrumentalism includes components of twentieth-century industrialized society, he also acknowledges from the opposite pole how the routine concerns of everydayness pervade even “primitive” mentality. In chapter 6 of the first division of *Being and Time*, Heidegger recounts the “fable” of care that exemplifies the concerned awareness that so-called “mythic” Dasein displays about its “thrownness” into a situation, its relation to others, and the purposiveness of all activities. While the thread of everydayness traverses both the worlds of industrialized and mythic Dasein, its texture of composition changes from culture to culture and historical epoch to historical epoch. And since philosophy is essentially a historical enterprise, it is equally necessary to reopen the question of the composition of everydayness, as it occurs, so to speak, “today.” Through the exercise of hermeneutic phenomenology in *Being and Time*, Heidegger unfolds the minimal set of presuppositions that governs the development of philosophical understanding from its origin in everyday life. Conversely, upon entering a new millennium, we must reconsider how the routine of everydayness as displayed in twenty-first-century America both extends Heidegger’s analysis and incorporates nuances that reflect contemporary society.

When placed within its wider context, Heidegger’s discussion of instrumentality coincides with his attempt to address the being of “intra-worldly” things. In *Being and Time*, he coins the term “ready-to-hand” (*zuhanden*) to describe the being of equipment. When immersed in everydayness, the self’s preoccupation with the ready-to-hand leads it to forsake larger concerns about the “meaning” of human existence. The familiarity of routine has the indirect effect of rendering human existence as unproblematic as possible. Thus only through the interruption of this “security” does Dasein take the initiative to question itself, to defer its interest in “mastering” things in favor of addressing the larger concern for who it is.

By contrast, the self’s preoccupation with instrumentality goes hand in hand with its tendency to become absorbed in the concerns of the impersonal “they-self,” the ubiquitous crowd.⁹ An indifference to the meaning of human existence and ultimately to being itself follows from Dasein’s identification with the “they-self.” What remains ambiguous for Heidegger, however, is whether the importance of instrumental dealings stems from the inordinate importance that the “they” places on them, or instead whether a preoccupation

with the things of instrumentality is already inherent in Dasein's tendency to "fall." While this ambiguity may not have been problematic for Heidegger, it nevertheless may be symptomatic of specific limitations in his analysis of everydayness, namely, an emphasis on "production" to the detriment of the "exchange" side of the equation.

In addressing equipmentality in *Being and Time*, Heidegger incorporates Aristotle's portrait of the ends-means continuum that culminates in the project of "that for the sake of which," of some possibility of human existence as care. To a large extent, this Aristotelian vision remains intact more than 2,000 years later, even as industrialization replaces an agrarian society, and the "information age" replaces industrialization. Yet the succession of paradigm shifts that have transpired over the centuries may make the Aristotelian view inadequate to address the different axis on which the world turns today. Among Heidegger's students, Herbert Marcuse was among the first to relocate the roots of everyday instrumentality—whether approached economically (Marx) or even phenomenologically—in the "technological work-world."¹⁰ Yet even Marcuse's understanding of technology lagged dramatically behind the advances of the information/digital age.

If there is one aspect of technology that Heidegger underestimated, it is the exponential rate of change that occurs once technology provides the spring for its own innovation. This self-propelling character of technology means that the immediacy of what was originally classified as "ready-to-hand" is now refracted through the optic lens of an artificial system of computer icons and graphics, for example, the mentality of "having the 'world' at your fingertips." Thus your hammer may be broken, but the possibility of its replacement hinges on the presence of an inventory that is registered through a computer at some centralized place of distribution. In chapter 2 of the first division of *Being and Time*, Heidegger points to the breakdown of the nexus of equipmental relations as offering a phenomenological clue to the appearance of world; the unready-to-hand points back to the completeness of the equipmental totality that is presupposed in everyday praxis. But with the advent of information technology, such dislocations exceed the confines of any specific environment and instead interface on many different fronts—like a matrix—cutting across multiple environments simultaneously. Moreover, it is not just the ensemble of equipment that is relevant; instead, what proves pivotal is the anonymous character of the process in which these various items are linked together within a global network—a "transactional" interreality, of which "cyberspace" is the hyperbole. In the spirit of Heidegger's famous description of the "they" (*das Man*), the impersonalization of everyday praxis, lies as much in this transactional dimension (i.e., in exchange, as it does in production). In this process of impersonalization, the production/use of things (e.g., the ready-to-hand) takes a backseat to the

strategies for their marketing and selling as commodities, what Marcuse calls “total commercialization.”¹¹

While we may debate to what extent the paradigm of the ready-to-hand has changed, what becomes significant is how this change has made the physical aspect of working depend upon an *artificial mechanism for the mobilization of work itself*—the medium of exchange that connects workers together from every quadrant of the globe. Through his interpretation of Ernst Jünger’s writings, Heidegger was familiar with the concept of the “mobilization of the worker.”¹² But for the most part, work remains an extension of a human being’s use of technological devices in proximity to him or her rather than hinging upon a communicative network of exchange relations. This network creates new synergies that redefine the nature of work itself, transposing the importance of what we do and what we own into a global nexus of transactions on which we all depend for our livelihoods. By the same token, money assumes an ambiguous role both as a way to satisfy material needs and as a token or cipher to communicate the complex synergies and partnerships to which we all belong as members of this “exchange” economy.

As such, money is not merely a numerical measure but is also an “insignia” by which human beings express “concern” about their own welfare as natural and social beings. In this regard, Heidegger’s view of the “mobilization of the worker” seems to suffer from underestimating Karl Marx’s insight into the unique status of money as “capital.” That is, qua capital money is not only a “bartering” tool (having a “use-value”),¹³ but is also a vehicle for expressing the confluence of interests among different members of society, a formula for simplifying diverse interests (e.g., of both need and desire) into a common language. As Marx emphasizes, money is more than just the physical currency that we circulate, or, even, as in the case of gold, a representation of the value of that currency. Instead, money as capital is the “declension” of worth that *bespeaks* society’s interest (in the value) of the commodities we exchange—the entire circuit of buying and selling; money thereby “stands for” the process of circulation itself, its social as well as fiscal dynamics.¹⁴

If we take Marx’s clue about the importance of capital, and transpose it within the macro-context of Heidegger’s critique of technology—rather than utilize that analysis for the purpose of advancing one ideology over another (e.g., communism over capitalism)—another portrait emerges: *exchange becomes part of the composition of the existentials of everydayness*. To the extent that we emphasize the priority of exchange over production, and shift the focus of Heidegger’s discussion of everydayness accordingly, we must then address how this change occurs in ontological terms. No matter in which cultural milieu we may exist, and however everydayness in turn comes to be expressed, in one way or another, care (*Sorge*) continues to define the constitution of human being. And

if exchange is to define a mode of interaction made possible by care, then the importance of money must depend on how it contributes to the self's potentiality or ability to be (*Seinkönnen*). Indeed, money is not only something with which we are passively concerned (e.g., as in whether the New York Yankees win another World Series); money instead pertains to the capability we have, or, more specifically, to facilitating the development of that potential.

In a free-market economy, to be of "means" is an inescapable aspect of having opportunity. Insofar as the potentiality to be, and, concomitantly, specific possibilities, define the self, money derives its importance through the creation of opportunity, for example, travel or a college education. But does not the allusion to "being of means" suggest that the value of money resides in its instrumentality? On the contrary, the "of means" is as much a suggestion of an ability that poses a challenge to the self, as an instrument of use (i.e., use-value) in acquiring things to possess. Once again, money exhibits an ambivalent character because we associate its value with the material goods that can be bought with it. Yet when construed as having an affiliation as much with care as with things ready-to-hand, the "ability to be" assigns to money its importance as the key to unlocking the self's opportunities within the exchange economy of capitalism. In support of this contrast, we can point to Heidegger's distinction in *Being and Time* between "not genuine" and "genuine," by which the development of any possibility implies a tension between the self's pursuit of instrumentality and its choice of individuality.¹⁵

But did not Heidegger reject capitalism particularly as epitomized in the American way of life? Indeed, he did. But I am not suggesting that capitalism is a self-sustaining system, as much as indicating how information technology relocates the axis of everyday commerce on a global plane, thereby integrating the capitalist medium of exchange into the fabric of everydayness. This view is still consistent with Heidegger's claim that technology unfolds as a historical possibility, which exacts special social and economic changes. Conversely, the medium of exchange exemplified in capitalism assumes its unique dynamism precisely because of information technology. When seen in this light, capitalism becomes the preferred economic system less through accident than through the constellation of historical circumstances within the frame (*Gestell*) of technology.¹⁶

Are we not going far afield from Heidegger's thinking, even if a new questioning of technology allows us to mark the convergence between the milieu of everydayness and the ubiquity of the exchange medium within postindustrialized society? After all, Heidegger was primarily concerned with the question of being. Is there any warrant in believing that being in Heidegger's sense exhibits a dynamism that enables us to reinterpret the "exchange medium" in ontological terms? To this question we will now turn.

B.

If we take Heidegger's ontology seriously, then we must look to being, to the diversity of its manifestations, to discover the wellspring for our social and worldly possibilities. And if we are to include material concerns among these possibilities, then the same must be true in the case of economics. Thus the sense we ascribe to economics arises from the side of our experience of being. Conversely, an inquiry into economics would cast light, to paraphrase a famous line from *Introduction to Metaphysics*, "on how matters stand with being." Since we are finite, the conditions, whereby being invites a response from us or, reciprocally, what allows us to participate in its disclosure, will define the most primordial sense of economics. Among these conditions of finitude, of course, is time, and space as well, whose interdependence (in clearing the "there") demarcates the scope of human inhabitation.

Because time and space are intrinsic to being's manifestation, together they (*Zeit-Raum*) condition our earthly sojourn and allow for the acquisition of "roots" or a sense of belonging to the wider expanse of things.¹⁷ For Heidegger, this momentum of "bringing into one's own" (*Ereignis* as appropriation or "enowning"), of gaining a sense of rootedness, predetermines all other senses of "having," "possessing," or "owning." The transitoriness of time and the restriction of space determine the relevance of whatever material benefits we may attain, the money we may accumulate, or the things we may possess. Indeed, the value of whatever we possess is a function of these other dimensions—of the conjunction of time-space. For example, it is only due to a certain temporal allocation that we describe as "leisure" that having an expensive yacht becomes important, not to mention the spatial proximity of living by a coastline. Heidegger underscores this point in a lecture course from 1931–32:

The genuine comportmental character of having becomes a self-losing of he who has. The autonomy of the self gives way to the contingency and arbitrariness of needs and desires to be immediately satisfied. Although this kind of having has the appearance of fulfilled possession, it is not an *authentic having in the strict sense of authenticity*. *What we understand by authenticity [Eigentlichkeit] is that mode of human existence wherein man (authentically) appropriates himself, i.e., wherein he comes to himself and can be himself. The having which we have just described is inauthentic, because its apparent freedom of disposition fundamentally amounts to servitude under the arbitrary rule of needs.*¹⁸

In this regard, the temporalizing of time and the spatializing of space are the "protoeconomic" dimensions that condition all other economies.

We often refer to nature as operating according to an "economy" uniquely its own. For example, the cycle of birth and death, the regeneration of life, is

itself an economic process in committing everything within nature to the dynamism of emerging into presence and withdrawing into absence: witness the blossoming and withering of a rose. Of course, Heidegger emphasizes the parallels between his own conception of being and the Greek sense of nature as *physis* or self-emerging presence.¹⁹ Through his analysis of technology, he shows how the historical manifestation of being conditions our preoccupation with the network of everyday involvements and economic concerns. Following the example of the pre-Socratics, Heidegger also suggests that being displays its own unique economy. Indeed, the manner of historical appropriation commits the plurality of manifestations comprising “being” to an economy of its own. This special economy becomes evident in the way that the “negation” proper to being does not diminish its efficacy, but, on the contrary, serves as a “conservatorship” and preservation of the luminosity of its truth.²⁰ As Heidegger illustrates in *The Principle of Reason*, the withdrawal and concealment of being provide an “incubation period” (*Incubationszeit*) during which their meanings remain shielded (albeit dormant) until the occasion of their subsequent recollection.²¹ Once again, we discover that even on this highest ontological plane, time and space remain vital to coordinating the “economy” into which the dynamic “exchange” between being’s withdrawal and emergence, concealment and unconcealment is gathered, distributed, and preserved in all of its variations. Being’s historical manifestation is not a linear progress in the Hegelian sense but is, as Michael Heim suggests, the “trade-offs” of “gains and losses” in the “historical drift” of culture.²²

A famous remark from Heraclitus reinforces my attempt to unfold the ontological implications of Heidegger’s thought and to bring it into dialogue with economics proper: “All things are an exchange for fire, and fire for all things; as goods are for gold, and gold for goods.”²³ For Heraclitus, change is not absolute gain or absolute loss but instead is a continuum of exchange wherein the diversity of nature’s appearances converts from one thing to another. There seems to be a compelling link between a more esoteric sense of “economy” ascribed to being and a more mundane sense exhibited in the material transactions of everyday life. If the Heideggerian allusion to “economy” is not to be merely metaphorical, then we must show how fiscal issues exhibit concerns so all-encompassing that their relevance can only be understood in ontological terms.

C.

While capitalism has triumphed as the major fiscal system of our day—in a way that would have shocked Heidegger—it may not have a monopoly on all forms of exchange. Based on the spirit of competition in a free-market arena, capitalism is a system that separates its participants according to alliances of

self-interest—Microsoft™ versus American Online™, Coca-Cola™ versus Pepsi™. But perhaps there is another form of exchange that brings together individuals of diverse interests and joins them despite their competitive desires. The mode of exchange embodies on a cultural level the finitude that animates the cyclical movement of being's disclosure: repetition. This exchange is a mode of reciprocation, the kind that Heidegger first identifies as the dynamic whereby the self pays homage to the cultural tradition of which it is an heir. The appropriation of tradition is a form of exchange as "reciprocal rejoinder" (*Erwiderung*) by which the self receives the bequest of the past only through the reciprocity of a promise of safeguarding that legacy and then "handing it down" (*Überliefern*) to successive generations. The cyclical movement of repetition shapes the contours of Dasein's understanding—its confinement to finitude—and thereby mandates that any ontological inquiry returns to its point of departure, the hallmark of the hermeneutical circle.

While an appeal to this kind of "exchange" may be enlightening, does Heidegger at any point employ concrete economic locutions to provide a clue for correlating the fiscal and ontological sense of "economy?" Indeed, the German word *Schuld*, or guilt, betrays a vestige of economic meaning in conveying a sense of indebtedness to the past. When we allude to someone's having to pay his or her "dues" in order to reach a certain station of life, for example, the literal connotation of *Schuld* still shines through. Although in its everyday usage *Schuld* assumes a negative connotation, when reenacted as a key to authentic existence "guilt" defines the self's way of taking over its capability for commitment and thereby renewing its ties to the past. When conceived positively, the "payback" of guilt is the exchange between accepting the gift of existence and exercising responsibility for one's having been endowed with the power to choose. Even in the most formal senses of authenticity and freedom, we discover a dynamic of exchange. But how is that dynamic different from other forms?

For Heidegger, freedom constitutes a "power" that is preserved precisely through its distribution, for example, in clearing the way for a spirited exchange between participants of a dialogue. This form of economy differs from that which is involved in the accumulation of prestige, money, and social status with which the "they" is preoccupied. In these instances, power is only attained given the corollary risk of its dissipation, as occurs in the case of the faded luster of a retired university president, for "economizing" in a more primordial sense is a mode of replenishment that stems from sharing and safeguarding rather than from monopolizing and exploiting. In this regard, temporality stands out as a cyclical movement that incubates possibilities of the past so that they can be recovered in the future, and, likewise, space unfolds human existence from its roots, from its place of dwelling. Together space and time comprise an "economy" that adheres to definite limits rather than

annulling them in the totalizing drive of technology that “rations” earth’s resources only when their depletion—witness today’s energy crisis—poses the threat of scarcity (e.g., oil and gasoline).²⁴ The fact that we can distinguish between these two senses of economy suggests that it is relevant to formulate ontological questions to cast light on everyday economic matters.

But is not this appeal to ontology just another standard refrain that states that there are other things more important than money and prestige, a disclaimer that primarily makes sense within a Christian worldview? On the contrary, I am suggesting that if “exchange” can be understood in ontological terms, then we can appreciate the broader relevance of the fiscal processes that preoccupy us in our everyday lives. In other words, money is not simply a numerical measure. It is also a communicative vehicle for conveying the significance of our worldly activities, namely, the concern expressed for the self’s condition as an “embodied” being, its embeddedness within a complex tapestry of relations to which nature and culture both contribute.

The capitalist may believe that financial assets compound in a vacuum, but the truth is, the synergies of prosperity within capitalism become important only through the maximization of opportunity by which the individual takes over the decision-making power of his or her life. Of course, there are different ideologies within capitalism that address how this end of “maximizing opportunity” can best be achieved. We need not concern ourselves with them here. What is important to see, however, is that no matter how prominent financial matters may become, they are still bound by ancillary concerns that merit ontological investigation: the distribution of freedom as a power with which human beings are endowed and its cultivation as a possibility for each individual to safeguard. The “letting be” of the other, the inviting of the voice of the other and the possibility of dissent, defines the heart of reciprocity that we must uphold as beneficiaries of the fruits of “autonomous” decision making, including that involved in the pursuit of wealth. These more primordial exchange relationships bound those that facilitate our ability to benefit from the economic processes of buying and selling.

And what about this pursuit of wealth? Is it not primarily an individual matter? Perhaps. But even here there is a finality to the amount of wealth that one can achieve in one’s life, an economy in the distribution of time that bounds such fortunes from the period of their attainment to their bequest to one’s descendants. The old adage “you can’t take it with you” rings true in indexing time as the dimension that “economizes” all other economies, from the compounding of financial assets, to the enjoyment of the opportunity for leisure that it creates, to its ultimate divestiture through inheritance. And what role does space have? Without its corollary allocation, there can be no tangible benefits for the leisure we seek, no land on which to build a mansion, no fairways on which to hit a golf ball, no clear water in which to boat or swim.

Indeed, without the conservatorship of the earth, as well as *its bequest to future generations*—the greatest “inheritance” of all—all of the benefits that we associate with being wealthy add up to very little in the end. In a subsequent discussion (chapter 3), we will return to consider the importance of this inheritance, along with the question of whether we have an “*obligation to future generations.*”

Would not it be ironic if what today falls under the heading of “ecology” actually receives its importance in connection with “economics”? Indeed, this may be true when we consider that each term shares a common root (“eco” as the “house,” “residence” or “place of dwelling”) *in such a way that the possibilities we ascribe to the stewardship of one’s quest (i.e., ecology as caring for one’s habitat) will inevitably hinge upon retrieving the ancestral meaning of “economics” as the “nomos” or “management” of this abode.* While on the surface ecology and economics seem to diverge sharply, historical destiny forms an uneasy alliance between them, just as it juxtaposes the greatest critic and innovator of technology in the twentieth century: Martin Heidegger and Bill Gates. Despite the historical gulf that separates them, the innovations of the latter have actually confirmed the prophecies of the former.

In heeding this destiny in his monumental essay “The Question Concerning Technology” in 1953, Heidegger displayed a foresight into the future globalization of *technē* (far surpassing the vision of most of his contemporaries), including the catastrophic danger inherent in weapons of mass destruction of which *today* we are more acutely aware than ever. This is why Heidegger remains a giant in twentieth-century philosophy, despite the shadow cast by his involvement in National Socialism. Yet because of these political leanings, on the one hand (including his disinterest in Karl Marx’s economic analysis), and his limited grasp of the exponential growth of technology, on the other hand, Heidegger never envisioned how the advances of the “information age” would clear the way for the development of capitalism on a global scale. Indeed, in criticizing the “productionist” side of technology, he neglected to consider the other side of the equation—latent in his treatment of the “mobilization of the worker”—in which the processes of exchange become integral to understanding both the scope and limits of technological innovation today. As a result, he did not foresee how the tendency toward concealment inherent in (the routine of) the everyday work world becomes reenacted even more extensively in the ubiquity of our fiscal system. This occlusion creates an illusion of material comfort as witnessed, for example, in the promise of great wealth that lies at the other end of the “day trader’s” click of a computer mouse. Like any illusion, this one has its importance, because in pointing to the concealment of being, it also indirectly points to the unfolding of its truth.

To decipher this clue, we must consider the implications that the *technē* of economic exchange has for redefining the workaday world, and, conversely, how the insight thereby achieved can both sharpen and expand Heidegger's critique of technology. The opening forth of the expanse of Dasein's finitude through temporality (the "there") finds its renewal in the reenactment of our thrown condition as embodied beings beset by economic concerns (the physicality of "world").

Whether developed from the side of the hermeneutics of facticity or from the side of the question concerning technology, the discussion of everydayness provides equal access to Heidegger's thinking. Thus the division between "early" and "later" Heidegger becomes irrelevant, because a new hermeneutical circle emerges that grants entrance to his thought at any point. By undertaking a repetition of Heidegger's analysis of everydayness, thinking can confront a "brave new world" in which the circuit of everyday involvements is interwoven into a global economy, and "money" becomes a language more universal than any single dialect.²⁵

Indeed, the more we reinscribe economic issues into the composition of the *existentiale* of everydayness, the more we will discover that embodiment and materiality are parallel concerns that contribute to reshaping the landscape of the question of being. Embodiment cannot be reduced to the activities that are associated with the appendages of our physical beings, for example, the hands involved in the sensuality of touch.²⁶ Instead, such physicality includes a capacity to signify whose parameters are set by the disclosedness of the world itself, the nexus of reference relationships. The wink of an eye constitutes a gesture conveying a shared intimacy between friends. For Heidegger, such a gesture is an example of the prediscursive origin of language, prior to the articulation of words, which acquires its meaning through the way that the "winker" coinhabits a world with others. Rather than something static, materiality is an adjustment within the tension of our facticity to how we occupy a world. The case in point is the material character of an exchange medium of which money or currency is an instance. That is, the act of "handing over" money, whether physically or electronically, illustrates the translinguistic character of materiality, the double way in which the linguistic, as prediscursive, is tied to the physical (e.g., a handshake that signifies closing a deal), but, equally as important, the way in which materiality is always linguistically mediated through the context of being-in-the-world. From a Heideggerian standpoint, everydayness is the dynamic field of this translinguistic materiality.

We cannot fully appreciate the materiality of everydayness, however, without also considering the downside of having a body, namely, the potential to become addicted by certain substances of either an artificial or a natural origin. The elements that define addiction will be seen to arise from the

structures defining Dasein's being as care, including the "intensification" of its tendency to fall. As Heidegger says in his essay "On the Essence of Truth," Dasein is a turning into misery, a turning into need.²⁷ Few phenomena illustrate this better than that of addiction, yet we cannot fully appreciate the material aspect of addiction without considering the unique mode of its transformation within the historical crucible of technology. Indeed, the ubiquity of the problem of addiction in today's society has its roots in the technological mechanisms of production and distribution, which allow drugs and alcohol (think of the scope of Internet sex sites) to be used on a global scale. *In the phenomenon of addiction, the physicality of the hand of the ready-to-hand, the "within-reach" of satiating desire, shines forth* in its worldly setting.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM HAVING A BODY—ADDICTION

A.

In this section, I will employ Heidegger's fundamental ontology in order to provide a phenomenological account of an affliction of the self that is commonly called "addiction." The varieties and forms of addiction, as well as the so-called root causes—special topics of consideration for psychologists and physiologists alike—need not concern us here. Instead, the simple question that guides us is what is it about the constitution of human beings that makes them vulnerable to the aforementioned affliction, of which "substance abuse" would be the most frequent example, albeit not the only one. Conversely, the problem of human addiction offers an important and a unique perspective on the problem of human embodiment and what is distinctive to our experience of it as thrown into the world. *Here we need to cite a rare instance from Seminar in Le Thor (1968) where Heidegger, perhaps echoing Merleau-Ponty, differentiates between the "lived-body," as emerging within the meaningful context of the world, and the "body," as distinguishing only physiological processes.*²⁸ On the one hand, addiction is not simply a physical-physiological problem, as testified by the fact that in their natural habitat animals show no tendency to become addicted. Indeed, the propensity to become addicted, as will discover in the next chapter on sexuality, is interwoven into the fabric of the possibility of being-a-self, the capability of selfhood as such. On the other hand, the curious symptoms that psychologists associate with addiction, for example, in the case of substance abuse, withdrawal symptoms, and "mood alteration," provide evidence in a negative form that the capacity for selfhood cannot be divorced from the fact of embodiment, for without a body one could not fall prey to substance abuse, much less to the thrill and euphoria created by gambling or indulging in Internet pornography. Though much could be said on this topic,

we must acknowledge the role played by dispositions—a chaotic vacillation between relief and discomfort, euphoria and fear—with the entire matrix of addiction, for these moods, which distinguish the character of the self's thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) into the world, *underlie the addict's experience of being placed at the mercy of a "bipolar" vacillation between extremes of emotion (e.g., of "highs" and "lows")*. The craving for "mood-altering" substances and the counter-problem of withdrawal symptoms hinge on the fact that dispositions are more than just "mental" states. Instead, moods indicate the way in which the individual already discovers himself or herself to be "thrown" into the world without the capability of ever completely mastering his or her circumstances, that is, as a being who is inherently temporal and finite. By finding relief in mood-altering substances and activities, the addict seeks to escape from the inescapable condition of thrownness. Etymologically speaking, addiction (from the Latin, *addictus*) is a way of "giving oneself over to," which has similar connotations to Heidegger's description of inauthenticity or disownedness.

In a technological age that seeks to maximize comfort at all costs, there is a backlash of emotion that reminds us of our thrownness. Indeed, the emotion that people in contemporary society complain about most and from which they continuously seek relief—as illustrated by those who use addictive substances—arises in conjunction with our character as embodied beings, namely, stress. As Heidegger remarks in *Zollikon Seminars*:

The diverse ways of a claim made on one (i.e., "stress") show up in these ways of stimulation. Stress is always oriented toward a particular situation, that is, toward the particular, factual [*faktisch*] being-in-the-world where the human being, as existing, does not step into occasionally from time to time, but, on the contrary, *where he essentially and constantly and always already is.*²⁹

Given Heidegger's insights into the finite constitution of human being (i.e., *Dasein*) as care, one might suppose that his existential analytic in *Being and Time* yields important clues as to the origin(s) of addiction or its special occurrence as a phenomenon as such. To be sure, other existentialist philosophies, as seen in Sartre's analysis of "bad faith," might also identify important characteristics of that phenomenon, for example, a tendency toward "self-deception," which would explain much of the behavior of the so-called "addict." What sets the Heideggerian account apart, however, is not the prospect of isolating existential structures that can more or less satisfactorily explain certain kinds of behavior. Even of less interest would be an effort to distinguish general character traits such as those prominent in "obsessive-compulsive" disorders, as if they were the root causes of a specific kind of aberration or "disease" such as addiction. On the contrary, what makes Heidegger's

phenomenology a fruitful point of departure is the ontological removal of the Cartesian bifurcation of inside/outside.³⁰ Thus the analysis of specific kinds of behavior remains inseparable from the prevailing dispositions through which the self discovers its entanglement in a situation, and, conversely, the self's vulnerability to affective states remains interwoven with the development and interpretation of its possibilities by which each of us carves out the "meaning" of his or her existence in the world. While addiction has a physical locus, it is not reducible to strictly physical elements such as brain chemistry or mental elements such as weak volition, for human beings also *experience* that problem as a *crisis of meaning*. This experiential dimension, insofar as it is linked to the embodied, "fleshly" character of human existence as "thrown" into the world, becomes the focus of our phenomenological inquiry into addiction. The inherent ambivalence of this phenomenon, which cannot be reduced either to mental or physical states, accounts for why the malady of addiction so stubbornly resists both psychological and medical treatments.

This section will be divided into two parts. First, I will lay bare the phenomenon of addiction in terms of the self's relation to a mode of being most simply described as the "within-reach," which may best be characterized as a kind of variation on "readiness-to-hand." Second, I will delineate finitude (temporality) as the heart of freedom, the capacity for which is significantly diminished in the addictive state. Then we will be able to answer the question of the "who" of addiction, namely, the individual's misidentification of himself or herself (i.e., of having its being "to be") with the "within-reach" of a "substance," which offers the illusion of a kind of stability beyond the transitoriness of human existence.³¹

The traditional, if not commonsense way of addressing addiction is to assume the perspective of the addict, and then, as if by a method of regression, seek the root causes or conditions for that affliction. Once having circumscribed the life situation of the addict, the attempt is then made to delineate the effects that affliction has on others, including family and friends, as well as their part in denying (and thereby indirectly contributing to the problem) the so-called cycle of "codependency." At any rate, there is a decided tendency to treat addiction as a kind of aberration, which is reflected in the continual debate as to whether alcoholism is a "disease," a "moral weakness," or some combination thereof. But what if we take the opposite approach, the "road less traveled," and assume instead the understanding that is common to us all, addict and nonaddict alike? Hermeneutically speaking, that perspective would correspond to the unarticulated "pre-understanding" that is embedded in what Heidegger calls "everydayness," or the self's absorption in its daily routine.

As the example of Heidegger's own hermeneutics illustrates, everydayness provides the backdrop from which to develop philosophical understanding. Indeed, everydayness offers such a point of departure because it harbors all of

the confusions and misconceptions whose unraveling yields the counterpoint from which to bring into relief, into a full “self-showing,” a more differentiated and complete understanding of our being-in-the-world. As we will discover, Dasein’s absorption into the routine of everydayness (i.e., “falling”) fosters the development of the “they-self,” the face of convention. Since we are all to a certain extent products of convention, we find that the “they-self” dictates many of the attitudes we uncritically accept as members of society. We might then consider everydayness as that thread of commonality that the addict shares with the nonaddict, insofar as both are equally shaped by the factors that enable us to “fit into” society. Due to a passivity in which the desire for acceptance becomes acute, a climate of uncritical tolerance toward other people’s actions often results. Then we have a situation in which the en masse participation in an activity (e.g., “drinking”) becomes so “common” as to legitimate widespread acceptance of it, with the tactic legitimization of a norm condoning the consumption of alcohol as such, albeit with a curious twist of concealing its potential danger. Thus in social gatherings we tend to minimize or overlook the deleterious effects of excessive drinking because of the pre-legitimization of the activity among those who practice it in moderation. Of course, this is not to advocate banning alcohol, because it is not the substance that is “bad” (as the ineffectiveness of the 1930s’ Prohibition shows) nor even the degree of its use. Where the problem arises is in the attempt to blur the lines between acceptable and unacceptable use, so that “everyone” can have equal opportunity to indulge without fear of reprisal or condemnation.

In turning from this perspective offered in everydayness, we undergo a dislocation of focus in which an emphasis on the self’s existence “preceding its addiction” takes priority over its subsequent falling “into addiction.” The climate of passive acceptance then means that, prior to addiction, any so-called decisions to indulge or not to indulge are made in behalf of one’s undifferentiated membership in a group and thereby reflect a will to “fit in” or “belong” from the standpoint of the “they-self,”³² (e.g., what is “cool,” “daring,” or even just “customary,” as in the locution “what everyone else does”). The scope of the “they-self,” however, is not restricted to white-collar professionals who endorse the “two-martini lunch,” much less to the children of these suburbanites. On the contrary, the sphere of its influence can also be found at the margins of “average” society, where the antisocial attitude of nonconformity, as epitomized by illegal drug users, harbors a curious side of conformity to it, insofar as that culture still upholds its own unusual mannerisms of dress, speech, and so on—rites of passage, so to speak—as prerequisites for the individual’s inclusion therein. Wherever people congregate, in any social setting, the “they’s” influence already extends; and the ubiquity of this influence, insofar as it gives the individual a license to indulge, takes the popular form of what we commonly call “peer pressure.” As Twerski points out, it is difficult to get

addicts to establish “goals in life other than sense gratification,” since “our culture [already] embraces addictive thinking.”³³

If we take Heidegger at his word that the they-self is an *existentiale* of Dasein, then we should not be surprised that peer pressure should be so pervasive and its effects so far reaching. By the same token, we might view addiction, insofar as it flourishes in this climate of peer pressure, less as an anomaly and more as a regular or an “expected” adjustment or mode of adaptation to the inherently problematic, painful, and, most of all, enigmatic character of human existence. But if this is the case, can we identify specific structures, and “modifications” of these, within the essential constitution of Dasein as care, in existence, in facticity, but most notably in the structure linked to the emergence of the they-self, to its absorption in everydayness, namely, falling? According to Heidegger, falling belongs to the basic momentum of human existence, insofar as Dasein is thrown into a situation, and, in its facticity, it already confronts a limited range of possibilities in relation to which it exists. Within the structure of falling, Heidegger in turn distinguishes different elements: “tempting,” “tranquilizing,” “entangling,” and “alienating,”³⁴ the interplay of which distinguishes the “downward plunge” of that momentum into a kind of apathy or, almost paradoxically, an inertia.³⁵ Even in the most apathetic state of not caring—which we might equate with an extreme state of addiction—the self still expresses some kind of concern.

Dasein exercises care in falling, as seen in the self’s administering to its basic life task, making a living, or in its involvement with the instrumental concerns of its environment. In the downward plunge or the intensification of falling, Dasein still “cares,” but in such a way that the tension distinctive thereof,³⁶ that its being is always an issue, becomes diminished or slackened. One is now adrift, going along with the flow, albeit now seeking a substitute for that tension of existence, an alternative source of stimulation that simultaneously relieves the “difficulty,” if not the challenge of having to take up one’s existence in new and manifold ways.³⁷ The necessity of taking up one’s existence anew is displaced by the relinquishment thereof, the disownedness of the self or its inauthenticity. In this disownedness of the self, addiction can take hold, for the self relocates its identity in something unself-like, an alien mode of being that promises to restore the unity otherwise lost to the self in its falling: the illusion of wholeness that indulgence in a specific “substance” or pursuit (e.g., gambling) holds out.³⁸

It is almost cliché to suggest that the addict yields to misunderstanding or falls prey to self-dissemblance. The fact of “denial” testifies all too clearly to this tendency toward dissimulation. What is more important, however, is that the possibility of such confusion is foretold in the structure of falling itself, as it were, “preontologically,” in a slippage back and forth between two divergent ways of being, that distinctive of the self and that proper to entities

we utilize or the “ready-to-hand.” It is not literally the entity itself (e.g., this or that potential source of addiction) that proves decisive but rather how its “being” epitomizes “availability,” as already lying within-reach, that distinguishes the dynamic of becoming addicted. To be sure, many vehicles of addiction have a “natural” origin. Yet from the standpoint of everydayness, they require a system of *distribution*, and thereby a prior mechanism of production, which “proximally and for the most part” relegates them (e.g., drugs, Internet sex, cigarettes, slot machines, beer) to the instrumental context of the ready-to-hand. Because Dasein as being-in-the-world discloses the ready-to-hand in its everyday pursuits, it can fall under the spell of the “within-reach” (of a “substance”) in ways animals cannot. Animals become “addicted” only under human influence, as laboratory tests show, because they lack the “handiness” to smoke (except when connected to machines) and they also are “world poor” in lacking a network of instrumental involvements.³⁹ Ironically, the potential to become addicted seems to be reserved primarily to human beings who are capable of disclosedness or care. Perhaps a reason for this is that Dasein discloses its being-in-the-world through “moods” or “dispositions” (e.g., anxiety), that are inherently fluid. By the same token, a certain vulnerability to these dispositions, a sense of frailty at one’s inability to master them, seems to impel the individual to seek solace in various “substances” that promise “relaxation,” “excitement,” or some other hope of “mood alteration.” This desire for mood alteration, however, is still a symptom of the addict’s overall tendency to “flee” existence and the accompanying difficulty of enduring the tension of its “openness.”

When a person becomes addicted, it is as if the individual restricts his or her attention to the narrow reach of availability, thereby closing himself or herself off to the expanse of possibilities that can alone promise a course of development. Conversely, whatever fits the bill of this “(immediately) within-reach”—a beer, a joint, a call to the sex hotline—has the effect of diminishing the self’s initiative to undertake the struggle of existence and defer its own fulfillment in favor of a journey of maturation and discovery. The addict’s well-documented desire for immediate gratification thereby appears to have ontological roots in the movement of disownedness in which Dasein forsakes the self-concern of “having its being to be” in favor of the mode of “within-reach” more properly reserved to entities ready-to-hand. This ontological transposition, as it were, creates the “space” in which addiction can occur. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes this way of allocating space as “deserving,” or the impetus to bring close, make available, or place within-reach. To quote Heidegger: “De-severing’ amounts to making the farness vanish—that is, making the remoteness of something disappear, bringing it close. Dasein is essentially de-severant: it lets any entity be encountered close by as the entity which it is.”⁴⁰ We cannot underestimate the importance of Heidegger’s early

discussion of space, as incomplete as it is, for the allusion to Dasein's spatiality provides a direct inroad to the issue of embodiment, as the locutions that describe the phenomenon of addiction attest: the "within-reach," "availability," and "ready-to-hand." In *Zollikon Seminars*, Heidegger refers back to his earlier discussion of spatiality in a way that explicitly takes up the question of embodiment:

Therefore, the following statement concerning the "spatiality of being-in-the-world" appearing in *Being and Time*, section 23: "Dasein constantly takes these directions [e.g., below, above, right and left, in front, and behind] along with it, just as it does its de-serverances. Da-sein's spatilaization in its bodiliness is similarly marked out in accordance with these directions. (This bodiliness hides a whole problematic of its own, though we will not deal with it here.)"

*The Da-sein of the human being is spatial in itself in the sense of making room [in space] [Einräumen von Raum] and in the sense of the spatialization of Da-sein in its bodily nature. Da-sein is not spatial because it is embodied. But its bodiliness is possible only because Da-sein is spatial in the sense of making room.*⁴¹

Precisely because Dasein is capable of making room, it is also capable of focusing its attention, its circumspective concern, on the source of immediate gratification that lies "within-reach." In addiction, however, falling determines the compass and directedness of the fixating tendency at work. Correlatively, the "spacing" that occurs when the addict focuses on the "within-reach" is really an enclosure that narrows and narrows, trapping him or her in a nowhere realm bereft of any "openness" to himself or herself, others, and the world as such. In view of this fixating tendency, we might call the addict's obsessive urge to get the thing or "substance" that provides satisfaction—insofar as his or her field of attention shifts to entities rather than to being (*Sein*)—an "ontical craving" for "power, security, and pleasure."⁴²

Heidegger offers an interesting account of this experience of being "closed off" under the auspices of "hankering after," which he links to the phenomenon of addiction. "Such hankering *closes off* the possibilities. . . . Dasein's hankering as it falls makes manifest its *addiction* to becoming 'lived' by whatever word it is in. . . . What one is addicted 'towards' [*Das Hinzu' des Hanges*] is to let oneself be drawn by the sort of thing for which the addiction hankers."⁴³ The greater the addict's wish to regain control over an aspect of his or her life, the greater the "contraction" of the self's original "ontological openness."⁴⁴ Within this realm of indeterminacy, all of the addict's priorities become skewed in favor of acquiring whatever environmentally satisfies the condition of "within-reach," whether drugs, alcohol, gambling, or gratuitous sex, just to

name the “garden variety” vices. To be sure, unlike legal substances such as alcohol, narcotics may not literally be “within-reach,” yet they are passionately sought with the intent of making them so (e.g., addicts commit crimes to acquire the cash to purchase drugs). As Seeburger emphasizes, the hallmark of addiction is that the addict is always “thinking about” the next opportunity to indulge, in such a way that this “preoccupation” displaces all other concerns.⁴⁵ As Heidegger remarks: “If Dasein, as it were, sinks into an addiction then there is not merely an addiction present-at-hand, but the entire structure of care has been modified. Dasein has become blind, and puts all possibilities into the service of the addiction.”⁴⁶

This contrast between the addict’s desire for immediate gratification, on the one hand, and the longevity of the path of self-development, on the other hand, implies that the difference between inauthenticity and authenticity hinges on a *temporal distinction*. We should not be surprised at this revelation, since in *Being and Time* Heidegger reinterprets the analysis of care undertaken in division I in light of the account of temporality provided in division II. The analysis of temporality proves vital, because it brings into the foreground the ontological element in the dynamic of making room, as indicated by the spatiality of being-in-the-world, the clearing or openness as such. As the emphasis on the problem of embodiment suggests, the importance of spatiality needs to be retrieved from its omission throughout the tradition. At least within the confines of *Being and Time*, Heidegger tends to follow suit, by privileging time over space, although the thrust of retrieving the question of being anticipates a further stage of inquiry that will necessitate reexamining the intimacy between temporality and spatiality. In making the problem of addiction an occasion for reopening the concern for the body, and its corollary, spatiality, we actively take this further step of anticipating the radicalization of hermeneutics. Beginning from the hermeneutical outline of *Being and Time*, we should be able to illuminate the phenomenon of addiction by distinguishing the actual temporal coordinates that sustain it, and conversely, the precise mode of the enactment of authentic temporality that would arrest the downward plunge of addictive behavior.

B.

Having initiated an inquiry into the phenomenon of addiction, we might ask what interest there may be, much less payoff, for those whose mission it is to extend the frontiers of Heidegger’s thought. At this stage, perhaps the simplest answer lies in discovering that the same conditions that delineate human finitude are also what allow us to address a problem, that is, addiction, which seems to be interwoven with the fact of our embodiment. How we become

addicted is not reducible to physiological elements, but, instead, the reference to embodiment serves as a “formal indicator” to the larger question of human finitude.⁴⁷ By analyzing the phenomenon of addiction, we thereby supply a concrete example to confirm the hermeneutic premise that the analysis of everydayness undertaken in division I of *Being and Time* must be repeated in light of the account of temporality provided in division II. The hermeneutic circle can be unfolded at a deeper level, insofar as the fragmentation of the self occurring in inauthentic temporality yields a point of contrast to delineate more sharply the dynamic of the self’s reunification in authentic temporality. If addiction is like a downward plunge [*Absturz*] into chaos, then how must human existence be capable of the opposite, or how can the self harbor the potential to recover its uniqueness?

Paradoxically, we will discover that the key to the self’s reunification lies in relinquishing the pretense of complete control over its situation, in a way consistent with its finitude. Conversely, the “within-reach” constitutes a fabricated way of imposing that control, albeit over an increasingly narrower range of the environment, rather than accepting the invitation of a greater possibility of openness. This openness, however, is not a simple given. Instead, it springs from a tension that Dasein endures, a double relation in which it acquires the potential to project possibilities only as “thrown” into a situation, and hence its uniqueness can be “won” only through a counter-concession of admitting its limitations. Heidegger describes the vector of this “doubling” in terms of the trajectory of ecstatic temporality (i.e., transcendence). In transcendence, Dasein enters a temporal horizon or expanse in which its identity can be achieved only by maintaining a relation to otherness, of confronting both the terror and wonder of what lies “beyond” the reach of simple mastery—the awe of the fact of existing. The transcendence of “beyond reach” occurs in stark contrast, as we will see, to the concave vector of closure of “within-reach,” whereby the addict seeks to absolve the encounter with otherness and artificially “solve” the problematic character of human existence.

If Buddhism may offer an “eightfold path” to redemption,⁴⁸ then Heidegger’s authentic self travels along a “twofold” path whose borders are demarcated by the grammar of middle voice: the balance between passivity and activity. As van Buren and Kisiel have documented, Heidegger examined “primal Christianity,” which is embodied in St. Paul’s Epistles and later reinterpreted by Luther and Kierkegaard, in order to distinguish an instance of middle voice in the facticity of the faithful who must first lose his or her life in order to win it.⁴⁹ Yet perhaps the easiest link can be made to the Greek notion of temperance or moderation, most notably to that of Aristotle.⁵⁰ Aristotle’s notion of moderation implies that the enjoyment of any benefit occurs in proportion to the acceptance of a condition of self-restraint or limitation. In the grammar of middle voice, one can be liberated for the abundance of life’s

possibilities only through the parallel concession of admitting one's own finitude.⁵¹ The twofold path dictates that one wins one's life back only by confronting, in Jaspers's terms, the "limit situation" of existence.⁵² And only in conjunction with its finitude does Dasein, paradoxically, first acquire the power to choose (i.e., freedom).

For Heidegger, freedom does not simply involve making choices in a vol-untaristic sense of the will. As an extension of human finitude, freedom corresponds to an openness in which the self entertains its unique possibilities, albeit always within a limited temporal horizon. From the standpoint of the self, the inevitability of death demarcates that limited horizon, as the end of all of my possibilities. As such, authentic Dasein approaches death as an ultimate limitation, so the self can be catapulted into openness only by the counter-concession of admitting the withdrawal and concealment signified by the end of death. Once again, the finitude mandated by Dasein, and, indeed, of the unconcealing-concealing power of being, entails that the self can welcome the light of the clearing (*Lichtung*) only by confronting the shadow of concealment. Though the "self-destructive" behavior of the addict may suggest an attraction toward the "nothing," the actual facts (i.e., the "facticity" of the falling, inauthentic self) demonstrate quite the reverse. That is, the addict "denies" death first and foremost, to employ Becker's terminology,⁵³ or, more precisely, the finitude associated with it. The addict does not have so much a "death-instinct" in Freud's sense as a longing to compensate for what he or she seems most deprived by the double admission that the transitoriness of temporality spawns the wellspring of "meaning." Indeed, the addict seeks in the "within-which" a refuge of "permanency," something that offers an easy path of return to it through the "recurrence" of use, something that appears constant and self-sustaining (i.e., in the worst case, what we commonly call a "substance"). Perhaps the "everyday" use of that lexicon should not go unnoticed, since metaphysically "substance" has connotations both in Latin and Greek of a "permanency" (ascribed to "being") that arises in tandem with a mounting indifference to the temporality constitutive of human finitude. If we then define addiction as an enslavement to a specific "substance" (which could also be a recurrent activity such as gambling), we then see this activity as a deprivation of freedom that seeks solace in the illusion of "permanency" and denies the pulse of temporality.⁵⁴ The addict's bondage to such an illusion defies the prerequisite of any true eternity, to quote Rosenzweig, so "life . . . must first become wholly temporal, wholly alive, before it can become eternal life."⁵⁵

The self's retreat into the illusion of permanency displays a distinct mode of fallen, inauthentic temporality in which denies the priority of the future as the harbinger of death and finitude. By foregoing the reaching ahead of anticipating death, the inauthentic self temporalizes by substituting one present instance for another, so novelty is not developed directly from the future but

instead is vicariously relived, as it were, by seeking to recapture through a throwback to the past what the present yields in a restricted form. The present is not actively lived but is sacrificed for its discomfort, pain, and inadequacy for an alternative of comfort, pleasure, and fulfillment that a retreat toward the past supposedly offers. Thus this fugitive affinity for the past, developed out of intensified falling, is constantly in service of it to the point of fixation, because the past alone can offer the illusion of transposing the self into a refuge of solace. And it is this search for a refuge of solace that lies at the basis of the commonsense belief that addicts are seeking an escape. But the escape is not only indexed by a “where” (i.e., what is defined environmentally by the set of circumstances yielding the “within-reach”) but, just as fundamentally, by a “when,” a fleeing toward the past. *And this fugitive relation to the past, as it were, yields a portal of escape in the direction of what, in the guise of the within-reach, emerges as a fixation to which one keeps returning (e.g., the bottle, the joint, Internet pornography).*

Yet what role does the future play in this fugitive process, insofar as the past provides the handle of fixation? The future become a hankering for the constellation of the set of circumstances, for example, the end of the workday, which affords the opportunity to “kick back” and retreat vis-à-vis the past, into the refuge of solace. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger designates such a future as inauthentic, insofar as the self passively “awaits” something to occur by assuming a stance of “expectation.”⁵⁶ He contrasts the authentic future, in which the self is actively involved in transforming its situation by “anticipating” or reaching ahead to meet its possibilities.⁵⁷ As the temporal corollary of addiction, expectation is waiting for something better to come along, a momentary release from one’s circumstances, which only the immediate gratification of the “within-reach” can provide. Although addiction provides the avenue of escape, the future serves to reinforce the passivity by which the self becomes repeatedly vulnerable to its temptations in the guise of a “patient” rather than an “agent.” When the addict is not literally “escaping into the bottle,” the bondage of addiction still holds in the individual a futural preoccupation with drinking even while he or she is at work and is prohibited from drinking. As Seeburger properly summarizes this aspect: “as members of Alcoholics Anonymous often remark, regardless of how much time they actually spent drinking, back in their drinking days, their concern with alcohol was pervasive. As they like to put, even when they were not actually, they were still always ‘thinking drinking.’ That is, they were planning how they were going to get their next drink.”⁵⁸

When occurring either authentically or inauthentically, temporality always includes three dimensions: future, past, and present. In its inauthentic occurrence pertaining to addiction, we can distinguish the schemata for the interplay of the three temporal dimensions or ecstases. Adopting an originally

Kantian term, which Heidegger does in chapter 4 of the second division of *Being and Time*,⁵⁹ we can identify the schema of the future as the prospect or “plan” (as referred to by Seeburger previously) of seeking in what awaits one something better, a passive condition of wishing for a change, no matter how transitory or superficial, for example, an alteration of mood (relaxation, euphoria). The schema of the present involves the logistics of desevering and making available the expectancy held by the promise of the “within-reach.” Within that schema of *making present*, the self, through the fixity of its addiction, seeks to ensure a sense of *stability and continuity*—otherwise lost in the dispersion of its falling—in short, a measure of *control*, over a life that appears directionless and futile. The commonsense belief that addiction is a form of immediate gratification holds, but only to the extent that this immediacy is a way of reclaiming control “here and now” (e.g., the “rush” of feeling better), and hence it implies the past. The schema of the past is the postponing of, or allowing to pass by, the challenge of existence, in exchange for retreating into a comfort zone of security and solace. Within the addictive experience, each of these three temporal ecstases is already in play and related to one another. Nevertheless, because the mark of addiction lies in its fixating tendency, the past dominates in the sense of falsely subordinating to it the expectancy of the future. Two key points arise. First, the future remains closed off, because in its expectancy, it is already dominated by a previous standard of satisfaction supplied by some past experience (e.g., the euphoria of Internet gambling). Second, without the fugitive, escapist character of the past, the obsessive-compulsiveness inherent in addiction would be lacking. Indeed, addiction is like a faulty reconstruction of the routine of everyday life, in which its regimen is not defined by the entire course of one’s day but instead by a singular activity—drinking or gambling. In pointing to the similar addictive effects that both stimulants and depressants may have, despite their contrary medical aims, Seeburger remarks: “Both provide a way of regulating the organism’s level of excitation, keeping it constant. It is precisely such sameness, such routine repeatability, that the addict seeks in the object of addiction.”⁶⁰ In this exaggerated routine of obsessive-compulsiveness, the self “plunges” to the *bottom of everyday existence*.

Addiction closes off the future, restricts it to the next opportunity to fixate on a source of immediate gratification, in short, to “get a fix.” According to Heidegger, the temporalizing of the future yields an expanse of possibilities and spawns the fundamental openness of existence. Conversely, by closing off the future, the fixity of addiction constricts the original “ontological openness.” Herein lies the ontological “fact” as to why it is so difficult for the addict to break the cycle of addiction and start on the path of recovery. Because deception and denial fuel addiction, the addict can overcome these tendencies only by cultivating the openness of existence which, however, remains most foreign

to him/her. Put another way, the impetus toward responsibility, to be answerable, is what the addict possesses least, but requires most, if recovery is to be possible. But if enslavement takes this form in the inauthentic self's mode of temporalizing, then how can we understand the restoration of "freedom," which ostensibly pertains to the temporality of the authentic self?

In chapter 2 of division II of *Being and Time*, Heidegger states: "Freedom, however, is only in the choice of one possibility—that is, in tolerating one's not having chosen the others and one's not being able to choose them."⁶¹ That is, the factual exercise of freedom entails that the self forego certain possibilities in order to select those that prove most viable and best signify the course of its unique development. Once again, death stands as the ultimate arbiter of this finitude, because as the possibility of no longer having possibilities it brings the self before its origins in an openness over which it is essentially powerless. As a result, the necessary counterpart of death is "guilt" as embodying the nullity of one's thrownness into the world, the irreducible fact of always having one's being as an issue.⁶² Arising with this potential for "being guilty" is a sense of responsibility, that is, Dasein's way of cultivating those responses that exact maximum concern over its existence as care and thereby hold forth the uniqueness of individuality that equally allows for an appreciation of the differences of others. Indeed, being guilty entails that the first order of responsibility is to oneself, or self-responsibility. But such responsibility should not be construed narrowly as excluding concern for the welfare of others, or putting "me" ahead of them. On the contrary, self-responsibility allows me to stand forth within that openness where the other can become manifest in his or her singularity, that is, *as* other, and thereby elicit from me a co-responding mode of concern or "solicitude." When understood in this way, self-responsibility means that Dasein no longer "gives in" to those compromises that make it vulnerable to the influences (e.g., "peer pressure" of the "they"). Conversely, when making these compromises, the self construes others as mere "instruments" to aid it in the pursuit of its "indulgences," which licenses the tacit "victimization" of others (e.g. family, friends) in whatever form the pursuit of the "within-reach" takes. To be sure, Heidegger could have explained more clearly how the scope of my freedom includes (a concern for) others. Yet at least he saw that the renewed vow of commitment to oneself, or "resoluteness" (*Entschlossenheit*), can alone circumvent the compromising mentality of the "they-self" and hence hold forth the possibility of interacting with others in a climate of friendship and community.

Levinas was among the first to criticize Heidegger for not adequately taking into consideration the singularity of the other as the key fulcrum from which to understand human existence.⁶³ Yet the dilemma posed by the problem of addiction seems to confirm Heidegger's point of departure. On the one hand, by only having attained a sense of self and the accompanying responsi-

bility can an individual benefit other people. On the other hand, a narcissistic independence cannot be any more viable if its outcome lies in excluding any commitment to the welfare of others. The paradox of addiction is that it is neither simply a “character” fault on an individual scale, which can be corrected by exhorting the person to greater responsibility (because it is precisely that capacity that seems to be most lacking). Indeed, this difficulty becomes prominent when the alcoholic, after experiencing a personally or professionally devastating upheaval due to his or her intoxication, “promises” never to drink again. But the promise remains empty, for the addict lacks the freedom to uphold what is promised, or, in Kantian terms, the “can” that sustains the binding character of any commitment.⁶⁴ Nor is addiction simply a biophysical malady like a disease (in any commonsense guise like “athlete’s foot”), for no prescription of treatment or medicine can altogether speak to the breakdown of relationships and the crisis of meaning dominating the person’s life. Given Heidegger’s ontological orientation, we come to the rather awkward conclusion that addiction is indeed a problem that in some way or another pertains to the self’s “being.” We can define the self’s being either negatively as that which resists compartmentalization in terms of the Cartesian dualism of mental and physical. We can also define Dasein’s being positively as the thrownness that allows for the “instantiation” of human existence—as dispersed temporally as well as spatially—and thereby makes possible the condition of embodiment along with all of the problems that subsequently arise from that mode of being-a-self.⁶⁵ The *potential* to be addicted, which points to a distinctive way in which human beings *experience* their embodiment as interwoven into the “how” of existing, raises concerns that formally indicate the being of the self and its immersion in finitude.

Is addiction, then, a problem, as it were, inherent in human nature? To suggest as much would be to make a metaphysical claim. It would be more accurate to say that the fabric of everydayness changes historically, even from Heidegger’s era, in such a way that the transformations that occur in humanity’s understanding of being, as exemplified most in modern technology, give greater opportunity for addiction to occur. But have not there been addictive substances since the dawn of civilization, just as there has been tool use before the advent of modern technology? The answer is yes, and the parallel is more than accidental. According to Heidegger, tool use changes in accordance with the mode of revealing in modern technology, which allows beings to appear exclusively in terms of “standing reserve.”⁶⁶ Similarly, the more “one-dimensionally” entities appear, the more easily human beings can be reduced to their use-value as producers and consumers. Karl Marx recognized that alienation is inherent in the capitalist economic system, and that “opiates,” albeit of a spiritual kind (e.g., religion), were *available* to “relieve” the tedium of everyday life. The analogy still applies in the more literal sense of addiction as human beings

are placed in service of the mechanized cog of production and consumption (e.g., the possibility of “shopping addiction”). The temptations of addiction become available everywhere and anywhere, because as Heidegger suggests, “Modernity begins its completion in directing itself to the complete *availability* of everything that is and can be.”⁶⁷ Accordingly, humanity becomes more explicitly reliant on the instrumental complex of the ready-to-hand, insofar as technology incorporates increasingly sophisticated systems of production and consumption in order to facilitate *distributing* addictive substances to a larger percentage of the population (e.g., from “crack” to video poker). The corollary impersonalization of society that results—the “they-self” brought to its concrete realization—then creates a climate for human beings to fall prey to addiction. With the advent of modern technology, the “they’s” scope becomes so extensive as to create blanket acceptance of a given “lifestyle,” for example, drinking and smoking, thereby popularizing these activities in television, film, and music. What is the addict’s primary motivation? Perhaps it is nothing more complex than seeking to regain a semblance of control or mastery over his or her life in the face of disillusionment about the way things “are.” Yet in doing so he or she *becomes complicitous with the technological illusion that humanity has complete control over its destiny*, including whatever hardships the environment might arbitrarily impose.

As Dasein becomes the “laboring animal”⁶⁸ who is reduced to its “control-obsessed” cravings,⁶⁹ technology subordinates human beings to activities that are not only personally “harmful” but, indeed, may “endanger” precisely what is “at issue” in what it means to be human,⁷⁰ for example, the exercise of freedom as the ability to “let be.” Under the sway of modern technology, human beings make decisions on the basis of what is expedient and useful according to convention, thereby neglecting a concern for how they themselves, and natural entities as well, become manifest in their singularity and uniqueness. As a result, human beings overlook the possibility of existence as an adventure or a sojourn,⁷¹ and instead they are reduced to the struggle to survive and cope. Ironically, the conclusion that there is no simple answer to the problem of addiction—either moral or medical—recasts our attention back upon a deeper appreciation of the ineluctable dimension of human facticity, of factic-life experience. Precisely by affirming this element of facticity, we discover how restricted the knowledge, recommendations, and solutions of physical science may be to answer the “human, all too human” problems of human existence. Indeed, the question of human addiction points to an enigma that the conventional wisdom of mass culture cannot illuminate and before which the elaborate mechanisms of modern technology remain all but helpless.

Thus the potential for addiction appears to be part of the human predicament, whose *materiality* is shaped by the technological forces of the modern world. But how can we understand the world if not in a double sense, both as

the horizon for the manifestation of beings and as its withdrawal in the frame of technology, that is, as un-world? In the latter case, the materiality of our embodied existence becomes evident by the laboring animal's control-obsessed cravings, which allocate space in the distinct way of making available the "within-reach." The fact that the critique of technology requires a more sympathetic treatment of space will merit further consideration in subsequent chapters. Just as the analysis of everydayness must be radicalized for the question of being to be formulated properly, so hermeneutics must undergo radicalization for the question to "turn around" and incorporate a latent concern for materiality and embodiment. This turning around marks the historical crossing where we can make explicit the nexus of presuppositions, the hermeneutical situation, which situates Heidegger's own inquiry.

We have now shown how the concern for the origins of human addiction provides an occasion to concretize further Heidegger's analysis of everydayness, to distinguish a problem unique to the human manner of incarnality vis-à-vis the physicality of the handiness of the "within-reach." Conversely, by repeating Heidegger's analysis of (inauthentic) temporality in order to uncover these origins, we have more sharply delineated how finite or primordial time demarcates the parameters within which freedom becomes possible for a self who *experiences* embodiment as a distinctive "fact" of its being-in-the-world. That repetition, however, brings to the foreground the need to rethink the importance of space in conjunction with, rather than in subordination to, temporality. Insofar as spatiality reemerges as an explicit concern, the problem of embodiment will also enter the forefront of our inquiry. And the more explicitly we focus this concern for embodiment, the easier it will be to vanquish the Cartesian portrait of the self as a disembodied soul and rediscover the self's incarnation in its manner of ecstatic "bodying-forth."⁷²

In the next chapter, we will show how our repetition of Heidegger's analysis of everydayness provides a new point of departure for addressing the individuality of the self, as it is in part defined through the openness of bodily comportment in activities such as sexuality.