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Heidegger and Korsgaard on Human Reflection

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In this paper I attempt to elucidate, and criticize, Christine Korsgaard's notion of an agent's practical identity by contrasting it with a notion that plays a structurally similar role in the thought of the early Heidegger, the notion of that for the sake of which human agents act. For Heidegger, as for Korsgaard, human being has an essentially "reflective" structure. And for both of them, this reflective structure has two critical consequences. First, this reflective structure necessitates that every human agent has some self-conception or self-interpretation, some particular way in which she understands who she is. And second, for both Korsgaard and Heidegger, this self-conception is essentially *practical,* in the sense that to have such a self-conception is to have "a description [of yourself] under which you find your life to be worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking."[1]

But Heidegger has a very different, and I will argue, more plausible understanding of the reflective nature of human being than does Korsgaard. And this different understanding of the reflexive character of human being implies a different and more plausible way of understanding the role of our practical identities in the structure of rational action.

The paper has four parts. In the first part I analyze Korsgaard's view regarding the reflective character of human being and its relation to what she terms the problem of normativity. In the second part I rationally reconstruct the role that practical identity plays in Korsgaard's system in light of

her Kantian-style understanding of human reflective self–consciousness. I argue that Korsgaard's conception of the reflective nature of human being gives rise to a problem regarding the grounds of our practical identities that can not be solved using the resources available to her from that conception. In the third section I rationally reconstruct the role that "that for the sake of which" we act plays in Heidegger's thought in light of his non–Kantian account of human reflective self–consciousness. In the brief fourth part I show that one can solve the problem developed in the second part if one substitutes the Heideggerian conceptions of reflection and practical identity for Korsgaard's Kantian conceptions.

I. REFLECTION AND THE PROBLEM OF NORMATIVITY

Korsgaard's thought is based upon what she takes to be a singular fact about us; we are, essentially, self–conscious. "The human mind is self–conscious."[2]

Korsgaard is careful to distance herself from the familiar Cartesian notion of self–consciousness, for which to say that the human mind is self-conscious is to say that, for every thought, I am immediately and indubitably aware that I am having that thought and immediately and indubitably aware of which thought I am having. For one thing, she is quite willing to admit that many animals have states that qualify as mental, although those animals are not capable of self–consciousness in her sense. Further, Korsgaard does not think that the sort of transparency regarding one's own mentality that Descartes sees as essential to self-consciousness is even possible for human self-consciousness. So Korsgaard is no Cartesian concerning the nature of human self–consciousness.

Rather, for Korsgaard, to say that the human mind is self–conscious is to say that it is "reflective": "the human mind is self–conscious in the sense that it is essentially reflective."[3] One can get a sense of what it means for a mind to be reflective in Korsgaard's sense from the contrast she draws between human mental states and animal mental states. An animal's attention, she tells us, is "fixed on the world. Its perceptions are its beliefs and its desires are its will. It is engaged in conscious activities, but it is not conscious of them." We humans, on the other hand, "turn our attention on to our perceptions and desires themselves, on to our own mental activities, and we are conscious of them. That is why we can think about them."[4]

So, for Korsgaard, for a mind to be reflective implies at a minimum that the mind is capable of second-order intentional states. It is not merely the case that reflective minds contain states that are intentional by being directed toward the world, states such as believing that there is a predator in the area or wanting to get away from the predator. In addition, reflective minds contain states that intend first-order intentional states, states such as

believing that one desires to get away and desiring to believe that there is a predator present.

Although she doesn't note the fact, the fact that Korsgaard characterizes this sort of mind as "reflective" strongly suggests that she also thinks that it is essential to human minds that they be able to identify the one who is having the thought one is thinking about. It is not merely the case that I can think about my thinking, or yours, I can also recognize that my thought is my thought and your thought is yours. And, indeed, Korsgaard's consistent practice is to assume that any reflective mind has this capacity. Reflective minds do not merely have any old beliefs and desires about beliefs and desires. Among those second-order beliefs and desires are beliefs and desires that have the form "I believe (or think, or desire) that I desire (or believe, or think) p," where the reference of both the I's is univocal and includes both the subject of the present thought and the subject of the thought my present thought is about.

So, for Korsgaard, reflective self-consciousness involves at least two intertwined abilities: the ability to have second-order intentions, and the ability to identify oneself as the same subject that is thinking about some thought and that had the thought that one is thinking about. But what does it mean to say, as Korsgaard does, that the human mind is "self-conscious in the sense that it is essentially reflective"?

This claim admits of at least three different interpretations, and Korsgaard gives us little explicit to go on in disambiguating the claim. On the first, and strongest, interpretation, to say that the human mind is essentially reflective is to say that every human intention displays the reflective character that Korsgaard picks out. On this view, every human intention in fact has a structure that is accurately described as "I think (or believe or desire) that I believe (or desire or think) that p," where the initial "I think" is more or less explicit. The second and third interpretations fix on the fact that what really distinguishes human intentionality is the ability to entertain self-recognized second-order thoughts, rather than the supposed fact that human minds always exercise this capacity. This insight admits of a stronger and weaker development. On the stronger development, to say of a human mind that it is essentially reflective is to say that for every intention that p that such a mind has, it is possible that the mind form a new and different intention that in fact has a structure that is accurately described as "I think (or believe or desire) that I believe (or desire or think) that p," where the initial "I think" is more or less explicit. On this view, to say that the human mind is essentially reflective is to attribute "the necessity of a possibility" (to use Henry Allison's perspicuous phrase) to that mind: it is necessary that it is possible to attach an "I think" to every human thought. The third interpretation of the claim that the human mind is essentially reflective is the weakest. All that this claim involves is the requirement that it be true of

every human mind that some of its intentions are capable of being reflected on. On this view, to say of a human mind that it is essentially reflective is to say that for some intention that p that such a mind has it is possible that the mind form a new and different intention that in fact has a structure that is accurately described as "I think (or believe or desire) that I believe (or desire or think) that p," where the initial "I think" is more or less explicit.

Korsgaard doesn't seem to recognize that the claim that human minds are essentially reflective is ambiguous in this way, and she gives us very little direct evidence regarding how we are to take this assertion. Korsgaard's failure to recognize this ambiguity is important because she sometimes appeals to the strongest version when she is only entitled to a weaker one.

Korsgaard gives us considerable indirect evidence on how best to interpret this claim of essential reflexivity in her thought. She avowedly borrows her insights regarding the reflective nature of the human mind from Kant, who is anything but blind to the ambiguity in question. In the B edition of the Transcendental Deduction, Kant specifies what might be called the reflexivity requirement on human intelligence as the premise of the transcendental deduction. And, when he does so, he is clear that all that he thinks is necessary for human thought is the second, intermediate, interpretation. For Kant, for every human thought that p, it is necessary that it is possible to attach the "I think" to that thought, but this does not imply that the "I think" is actually in fact so attached to every thought, or even that it ever become so. "It must be possible for the I think to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me which could not be thought at all, and that is equivalent to saying that the representation would be impossible, or at least nothing to me."[5]

In adopting this intermediate position, Kant splits the difference between Locke and Leibniz (as he often did in other contexts). Locke had followed Descartes in suggesting the strongest possible interpretation of human reflexivity, that each of our thoughts is self-consciously intended as one of our thoughts. In the introduction to the *New Essays,* Leibniz had specifically denied this, and claimed that there are an "infinitude" of representations present in us that we cannot be conscious of as our own, although it is necessary for human intelligence that we can intend and recognize some of our own representations as our own. That is, Leibniz held to the weakest of our interpretations of the assertion that the human mind is essentially reflective. But Kant rejects both of these interpretations in favor of the intermediate alternative. He is impressed enough with Leibniz's arguments concerning the way in which our mental states sometimes affect our behavior even when we don't attend to them as our mental states to reject the strong Lockian understanding of reflexivity. But Kant is also sensible enough of the crucial role of reflection in human intelligence to reject the Leibnizian view that we can have mental states that we are incapable of intending as

our own. So he adopts the intermediate position: the possibility of reflection is necessary for every human thought.[6]

Given Korsgaard's reliance on Kant, this fact gives us reason to interpret her claim that the human mind is essentially reflective in this intermediate, Kantian, way. On the other hand, she sometimes implicitly relies on the strongest, Cartesian understanding of reflexivity, even though she explicitly denies that her views are Cartesian. In particular, Korsgaard immediately infers from our essentially reflective nature that (1) we are distanced from our own mental activities and (2) that this distance presents us with a problem, the problem of normativity and the need for reasons to act. And these conclusions follow from human reflexivity only if one assumes that all of our intentions actually have a self-conscious, reflective structure, even though Kant denies that this is the case, and Korsgaard herself says she relies on the capacity to reflect, rather than on the pervasive actuality of reflection.

As the transition here is crucial to my purposes, I quote the key inference at length.

> And this [our essentially reflective nature] sets us a problem no other animal has. It is the problem of the normative. For our capacity to turn our attention on to our own mental activities is also a capacity to distance ourselves from them, and to call them into question. I perceive, and I find myself with a powerful impulse to believe. But I back up and bring that impulse into view and then I have a certain distance. Now the impulse doesn't dominate me and now I have a problem. Shall I believe? Is this perception really a reason to believe? I desire and I find myself with a powerful impulse to act. But I back up and bring that impulse into view and then I have a certain distance. Now the impulse doesn't dominate me and now I have a problem. Shall I act? Is this desire really a reason to act? The reflective mind cannot settle for perception and desire, not just as such. It needs a reason.[7]

While the rhetoric of this passage is highly persuasive, there is not much here that could count as an argument connecting our reflective nature, which here functions as a premise, with the conclusions that we are distanced from our own mental activities and that this distance presents us with a problem, the problem of normativity and the need to have reasons to act. The notions of "reflection," "distance," and "questionableness" are simply thrown metaphorically together. Nevertheless, the dots can be connected.

First-order intentions are directed directly on the world, and because of this they directly determine action. When you believe that there is a predator in the area, or desire to flee a predator, this is a fact about you that specifies how you are related to your environment, and, insofar as your intentional states motivate and explain action, that fact in turn will have direct consequences for how you behave. But when you think that you

believe there is a predator in the area, or think that you desire to flee a predator, this is a fact about how you are related to yourself. And nothing follows directly about how you will behave from the fact that you have this sort of intentional state. People who believe that there is a predator present and desire to flee predators will, *ceteris paribus,* flee. But people who reflectively think that they believe a predator is present and believe that they desire to flee predators, need not flee. After all, one could be wrong about one's own states.

Now, if Korsgaard were entitled to the strongest interpretation of the reflexivity requirement, she would also be entitled to immediately infer from this fact that second-order intentions do not directly motivate action, that we are "distanced" from our own desires and beliefs, and that we always confront the problem of normativity. For, if all of our intentions are accompanied by the "I think," and any intentions accompanied by the "I think" are second-order intentions, and no second-order intentions directly motivate action, then none of our beliefs and desires could ever directly motivate action. And, in that sense, we and our actions would be "distanced" from our own beliefs and desires. Further, in that case, something other than our simple beliefs and desires would need to account for our actions, and, given our reflective nature, we would know this fact. And, Korsgaard could argue, this recognition of the underdetermination of human action by simple belief and desire confronts the reflecting self with the problem of what could, or should, determine action. That is, it would confront us with the problem of normativity.

Given the immediacy with which she infers distance and the problem of normativity from our reflective nature, it is possible that Korsgaard in fact reasons in this way. Unfortunately, Korsgaard is not entitled to the key premise here, that all of our intentions display a reflective structure. Not only is this Cartesian assumption implausible in itself (in light of twentieth-century developments in neurology and cognitive science), it also flies in the face of Kant's own position and her own specific reliance on our capacity to reflect. Since Kant claims only that it is *possible* that the "I think" accompany each of my intentions, it is also possible that I have some intentions that the "I think" does not accompany. And since it is possible that I continue to have some first-order intentions that lack reflective structure, it is also possible that I continue to have the first-order beliefs and desires that I do reflectively consider. And those first-order beliefs and desires would directly cause action, and in that respect they would mimic animal belief and desire. And, according to Korsgaard, animals are not distanced from themselves and do not face the problem of normativity.

So the possibility of reflection regarding one's own states is not sufficient to guarantee that "the impulse doesn't dominate me." As long as I have some effective first-order desires that are unaffected by our reflective nature,

the fact that, for example, my belief that I desire ice cream is motivationally unrelated to any action in order to get ice cream (even given that all else is equal), implies nothing regarding whether or not I am motivated to act so as to get ice cream. That depends upon whether or not I in fact have the first-order desire to get ice cream, and that desire is logically independent of my reflective thoughts about it. Similarly, even my reflective second-order desire to desire that I get ice cream would seem to be logically unrelated to my desire for ice cream. And whether or not I act so as to get ice cream would seem to depend on that first-order desire, rather than on my reflective second-order desire to have such a first-order desire. And if our acts are determined by our first-order states, regardless of our second-order attitudes toward those states, and we know this, then we never need to confront the problem of normativity.

So Korsgaard is not entitled to the immediate inference from our essentially reflective nature to our needing reasons to act. That she thinks she is is a product of her failure to identify the ambiguity in the claim that we are essentially reflective. To secure the inference, Korsgaard needs an additional premise. This premise concerns the way in which second-order intentions can affect the motivational force of the first-order intentions they are directed toward.

As Korsgaard's rhetoric makes clear, she sees a subject with only first-order states as determined by the content of the first-order intentions. According to this view, if such a self currently wants ice cream and believes that it can get it by going to the store, then it will act by going to the store. And if, on the way to the store, the subject comes to want something else, it will cease to go to the store and act so as to attain that other end. The actions of this sort of agent are dominated by what it currently wants and believes in such a way that it is entirely motivated by its current contingent states.[8] The content of its first-order intentions defines what such a non–reflective agent is.

Now, the fact that the reflecting self must be identical with the reflected self implies that the reflecting self is also motivated by the same beliefs and desires as the reflected self had been motivated by prior to the reflection. I believe that I desire ice cream, and if it were true that I desired ice cream prior to my coming to have this belief, then I still desire ice cream. But according to this traditional Kantian view, the fact of this reflection changes the motivational force of this desire. I want the ice cream. But if I am aware that I want it, the fact that I want it is no longer sufficient to assure that I will act as I believe is required in order to get the ice cream. That is, my currently having this belief and this desire do not, by themselves, motivate my action. As Korsgaard says, the impulse no longer dominates me.

Korsgaard never quite makes explicit why she thinks that there is this change in motivational force, but we can reconstruct the argument. For

Korsgaard, the impulse no longer dominates me because in addition to being the one who desires the ice cream I am also the one who views that desire itself, as it were, from the outside. For my, i.e., the reflective self's, attitude is directed not merely to the ice cream, but also toward the desire I have toward the ice cream. And the first desire does not determine the second attitude, because the first desire motivates action directed toward getting ice cream; it doesn't at all motivate the act of coming to have an attitude toward itself. Now, Korsgaard can argue, if the second-order states are in fact going to count as intentional states at all, they must have some motivational force. But what these second-order states motivate is change in the first-order states. For example, my desire not to desire ice cream motivates me not to desire ice cream. So, in this case, this desire works to counteract and limit my first-order desire for ice cream. And, Korsgaard can now conclude, the mere fact of reflection distances me from my first-order self by placing my own beliefs and desires "under brackets," to use Edmund Husserl's apt phrase.

Thus, on Korsgaard's view of reflection, the fact that we are capable of thinking about our own states establishes a complex set of relations among our first- and second-order states. The fact that I desire ice cream, for example, does not logically imply that I will have any particular second-order intentional state directed toward that desire, even if, on the intermediate view of reflection, it must be possible for me to have some second-order intention directed toward it. I might desire that I desire ice cream, or desire that I not desire ice cream, or believe that I desire ice cream, or fail to believe that I do, and for all of these variations it is logically possible for me to desire ice cream. (There might be reason to believe that under some conditions my desire for ice cream would cause me to believe I desire ice cream, but this is a separate matter.) Nor does it logically follow from the fact that I believe that I desire ice cream, or desire that I desire ice cream, that I also desire ice cream. But if, for any reason, I come to desire that I desire ice cream, then it must be possible, under the right conditions, for this desire to cause me to come to desire ice cream. If it didn't, then the second-order desire would lack all motivational force, and thus lack one of the conditions on counting as an intentional state at all. And this fact, which is a consequence of the possibility of my reflecting on my desire for ice cream, implies that the actual presence of a desire for ice cream no longer settles the issue of whether, under the right conditions, I will act so as to get ice cream. For a reflective self, it is always possible that it will come to have a second-order desire to rid itself of its first-order desires, and possible that that second-order desire might be effective.

This possibility explains why Korsgaard thinks that the mere fact of reflection implies the problem of normativity. The fact of reflection settles that the agent has the possibility of reflectively distancing herself from her

own beliefs and desires by taking some attitude toward those beliefs and desires. But, given that neither this reflective ability itself, nor the content of the first-order beliefs and desires settles which attitude will be directed toward the first-order states, and that it is always possible that whichever second-order states arise can be effective in changing the first-order states toward which they are directed, it is also unsettled which first-order states the agent will come to have, regardless of which first-order states it originally starts with. And, moreover, this fact is unsettled for the agent herself. For this agent is a reflective agent who is capable of intending her own intentional life, and thus capable of intending the fact that she might be other than she is, might believe and desire different things, depending upon which beliefs and desires she comes to desire to have, and she also believes that which beliefs and desires these are can become unsettled by what she in fact believes and desires. So, Korsgaard can conclude, such a reflective agent is confronted with the fact that nothing about how she currently is causally determines what she will come to be, which depends upon what she comes to want to be, which in turn at least partially depends upon which second-order attitudes she comes to have.

For Korsgaard, such an agent is confronted with the problem of normativity. The question of which attitude I should adopt toward my own beliefs and desires is the inevitable consequence of the fact that nothing about me causally fixes what in particular those attitudes will be, and I know this about myself. I know that I can cause myself to be different by adopting different attitudes toward myself, I know that I will adopt some such attitudes, and I know that nothing about myself causally determines which second-order attitudes I will adopt. So I confront my self as an open question that I myself must answer. But, because I am a reflective agent, this question has a different structure for the agent from other questions that are open for the agent. If a reflective agent wants to know what a ball or a rabbit will do, she needs to make a prediction based on her knowledge of what the ball or the rabbit already is. But what a reflective agent is for herself is a complex of first- and higher-order beliefs and desires, and these beliefs and desires are related to one another and to other possible intentional states through normative relations. For example, part of what it is for an agent to believe that p is for that agent to be in a state which is such that that agent ought also to believe q if q logically follows from p. That I believe p will not cause me to believe q. Nor will my belief that I believe p, nor will my belief that q follows from p cause me to believe q. But, nevertheless, for me to believe p and believe that q follows from p is for me to stand under a norm to believe q, and I can come to believe that I stand under that norm. Korsgaard calls this the "rational necessity" of q.[9] Since reflective agents are or can become reflectively aware of these normative facts, when such an agent approaches the open question concerning what she will do, she

confronts it as the normative question regarding what she ought to do, believe, and desire. That is, for Korsgaard, to ask this question of myself is to, for the first time, raise the question of how I ought to determine the answer. This is the problem of normativity.

On Korsgaard's account, the problem of normativity that each of us faces is a wickedly difficult one. For it seems that nothing can solve the problem. There are no first-order intentional states that I could have that would decide the issue of which first-order states I will come to have. For which ones I will come to have depends upon what I, the one who is capable of intending my own first-order states, come to believe and desire about my own first-order states. And there is nothing about me that fixes what I will come to believe and desire about my own states. But I must come to have some such intentions directed toward my own intentions. So I conceive myself as the one who is required to act, without already being determined regarding how I will act. My own act is uncertain for me, but required nonetheless. I further recognize that what I ought to do, believe, and desire is fixed relative to what else I believe and desire, but that it is neither causally nor logically necessary for me to have these other states nor fully justifiable for me to have them, given that they are only justifiable in terms of their relations with still other beliefs and desires which, in the same sense, are also optional. This self-conscious necessity to decide, to determine what one is to be, without causal or justificatory grounds, confronts the reflective self with what Korsgaard thinks of as the "first personal" problem of what to do. Which effective second-order attitude, from among all the possible ones, is to be chosen; what principle should I use to fix upon the attitudes to be adopted?

II. KORSGAARD'S SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF NORMATIVITY

Korsgaard offers a three-stage solution to this problem. First, I should act in accordance with a self–imposed law. Second, that law should be expressive of my practical identity. Third, my practical identity should express my citizenship in a Kingdom of Ends. Korsgaard's innovation on Kant is the introduction of the second stage of the solution, having to do with practical identity.

The first stage is borrowed directly from Kant. The reflective self's problem has the form "What am I to do?" This form presupposes that the reflecting self is capable of doing something, capable of action. Since the problem of normativity presupposes that the reflecting self is an agent, in confronting that problem the reflecting self can take for granted all those characteristics of itself that are implied by its being an agent. Both Kant and

Korsgaard analyze the notion of agency in light of a modified Humean conception of causality. On this view, everything that happens instantiates a causal law which embodies a regularity or rule of the form "Whenever an event of type A occurs, an event of type B occurs." Although Hume is unclear about it, it appears that he thinks of events as alterations in objects, and this is certainly Kant's view. Events are typed in virtue of being a certain kind of alteration in a certain type of object; e.g., a heavy thing becoming unsupported in the earth's vicinity, or a human being seeing a purse of gold at Charing Cross. The agent in an alteration is the subject of the A type of event in the above formula. Thus it is a necessary condition on being the agent of a change that the agent instantiate a type which is subject to a regularity or rule which governs all entities of that type.

Now Korsgaard thinks that the normative problem for reflective minds arises out of the fact that they recognize that they must be agents, but also recognize that they naturally belong to no type. Since reflective agents are potentially alienated from every impulse that could type them, they stand under no law or rule which governs agents of any natural type. In fact, however, there is a type to which reflective agents belong. They are reflective agents, that is, agents who must be agents regardless of the fact that they belong to no natural type. To act, an entity must be an agent, to be an agent is to act according to a law that governs actions of agents of a type, and the only type reflective agents belong to is the type "reflective agent," that is, an agent that is not determined by any natural fact about itself. As Kant famously argued, it follows from these considerations that the law that a reflective agent must act in accordance with in order to count as an agent is a law that the agent has given to herself (since it cannot be a law that she falls under in virtue of some determinate fact about her), and what this self-given law must be is simply that it be a law (since any further content would need to be borrowed from some natural determination of the agent, which is disallowed).

There is a crucial difference between a law that an entity stands under in virtue of some natural fact about that entity and a law that an entity stands under in virtue of having imposed a law on itself. The first type of entity stands under the law regardless of whether or not it recognizes that it stands under that law. If the entity gives the law to itself, it stands under the law only insofar as it acknowledges that it stands under the law. In that case the second-order intention in which the reflective being accepts the belief that it is a reflective being that acts according to a self-imposed law plays a critical role in determining what it is and does. That is, it stands under the law only insofar as it commits itself to the law, to use Korsgaard's term. As this commitment must be self-conscious to be effective, it serves as a premise from which the agent can and does infer what in particular she is to do. Since I accept that I am a self-determining agent who must, to be so, act

according to law, I infer that I should act in such a way that what determines my act could be a self-imposed law for any reflective agent. As Kant puts it, "everything in nature works according to laws. Only a rational being has the capacity of acting according to the conception of laws, i.e., according to principles."[10]

The pattern for the explanation of the acts of a self-consciously reflective agent is thus quite different from the pattern for the explanation of the acts of other, natural, agents. Natural agents are caused to act as they do by their natures. Reflective agents act as they do because they accept reasons from which they can infer actions that are appropriate given those reasons.

It is at this point in her discussion that Korsgaard introduces the notion of a practical identity. Her reason for introducing this concept has to do with a problem regarding the domain over which the law that a reflective agent gives to herself should range. "If the law is the law of acting on the desire of the moment, then the agent will treat each desire as a reason, and her conduct will be that of a wanton. If the law ranges over the agent's whole life, then the agent will be some sort of egoist. It is only if the law ranges over every rational being that the resulting law will be the moral law."[11]

Here is the problem. Laws govern types of entities. Reflective agents must give laws to themselves, and the metarule they are to follow in constructing laws for themselves is that the laws they construct must be capable of serving as laws for every being like themselves. But insofar as such lawgivers are reflective beings they distance themselves from all natural determinations. The only type such beings belong to is that they are reflective. But the essence of reflection is the self–identification of self with self that comes with the second-order intention embodied in the "I think." But this, by itself, does not fix the ontological type of the thinker. Since a reflective thinker is only identical with the thinker of some other thought that it accepts as being identical with itself, just which thoughts are my thoughts depend upon just which thoughts I accept as my own. There is no further fact of the matter regarding the case. For example, in reflecting I might identify myself only with my most recent desire. All other desires are not mine; I am, strictly, just a rather brief time slice. And there is no contradiction in such a being willing as a law to itself the law "Always act on one's current desire." What other law could I, so understood, hope to follow? Similarly, since the thoughts, the beliefs and desires, that count as mine depend on the thoughts I accept as mine, I can identify myself as a biological life form. In that case, all of those beliefs and desires that I take to be appropriate for such a living thing would be mine; any others that I might run into would be mere "unnatural" impositions which could provide no reasons for acting. And there is no contradiction in such a being accepting the law "Always act so as to maintain one's own biological identity and integrity."

So the fact of my being a reflective being does not determine the range

of who I am, and because of this, my status as a reflective being fails to determine how I am to apply the metarule that I should give a law to myself. The problem is that there is no apparent reason to adopt one conception of ourselves as opposed to any other, since all reasons depend on how we conceive ourselves. So the normative problem remains unresolved.

Korsgaard's concept of an agent's practical identity is meant to resolve this problem. The basic idea is that one's practical identity is a description of oneself, such as being a woman, or being a Jew, or being a mother, or being a professor, that the agent herself accepts as correctly describing herself. And, just as a matter of contingent fact, each of us does accept some such descriptions or other. My acceptance that I am correctly described as belonging to one or more of these types by itself provides me with the principle that I must follow in constructing a law for myself. When I recognize myself as a teacher, I acknowledge that I am an instance of a type, and, as with any other type, this type involves specifications of what beings of that type will do under various circumstances; heavy objects will fall if unsupported in the vicinity of earth, and teachers will show up in class on time. But, because human beings are reflective, it is always possible for them to become distanced from any way in which they are, any type to which they belong, and place that description in question by taking up an attitude toward it. I might, for example, come to want not to be a teacher, and this higher-order intention might become effective so that my supposedly being a teacher no longer motivates me to act as teachers act. Further, since I always retain my first-order desires, regardless of the fact that I identify myself as a teacher, it is always possible that my second-order intention to be a teacher become ineffective and I simply act on those first-order desires. So each such description has a normative dimension. As Heidegger would put it, I have my being to be. Acting as a teacher is something that I must do if I am to be what I take myself to be, a teacher, but it is never *necessary* that I act as a teacher or be a teacher. Being a teacher is a norm for me. "And all of these identities give rise to reasons and obligations. Your reasons express your identity, your nature; your obligations spring from what that identity forbids."[12]

So when one identifies oneself as having a practical identity, one places oneself under a specific set of norms and provides oneself with specific reasons to act. In determining what one is to do, one follows a quite specific form of argument: Teachers show up to class on time; I am a teacher; therefore, I show up for class on time. My practical identity thus answers the question of the range of the law I am to give to myself. As I accept that I am a teacher, the metarule that governs which law I should give to myself has the following form: In all one's acts, act in a way which is consistent with the identity of being a teacher.

Reflective agents act as they do because they accept reasons from

which they can infer actions that are appropriate given those reasons. And for such an agent to accept that she belongs to a type, and thus accept the force of the reasons that emerge from membership in that type, implicitly involves a second-order positive intention toward the agent being of that type. Since I am a teacher only if I accept the role of teacher, my committing myself to teaching is itself an acceptance that being a teacher is a way of being that I approve of. The pattern of reasoning is implicitly along these lines: Being a teacher is a way of being a reflective agent that it is good to embody for those for whom it is possible; it is within my power to be a teacher; therefore, it is good for me to act in such a way as to count as a teacher. So, for Korsgaard, the fact that one accepts a practical identity commits one to the major premise that it is valuable to be an agent of that practical type, and from this it follows that any reflective agent who acts according to that type is to be valued and respected insofar as she acts according to that type. My own commitment to my own practical identity implicitly commits me to a positive evaluation of any other agent who shares that identity with me.

Unfortunately for Korsgaard's attempted solution to the problem of the indeterminacy of the range of the law which reflective agents are to give to themselves, her concept of the agent's practical identity is highly unstable. This instability is rooted in the very notion of what it is to be a reflective being that Korsgaard thinks gives rise to the normative problem in the first place. My belonging to a given type—say, father, teacher, or Jew—is relevant to determining the range of the law I give to myself only insofar as I do in fact belong to that type. But, given that for Korsgaard reflective beings can only belong to a given type if they accept that they belong to that type, my belonging to such a type depends upon my acknowledgment that I belong to that type. But that second-order intention, that acceptance, that acknowledgment that I am, say, a teacher, cannot itself be supported by my practical identity as a teacher. I have reason to follow the law that I should act in a way that is consistent with my identity of being a teacher only if I am a teacher, and I am a teacher only if I accept that I am a teacher, which I should do only if I accept that I have reason to follow the law that I should act in a way that is consistent with my identity as teacher. Since my being a teacher is always unsettled, it is never necessary that I will identify myself as a teacher and thus it is never settled that I will show up on time. I will do so only if in fact I on this occasion accept that being a teacher makes my life worth living and my actions worth undertaking. And my having been a teacher guarantees neither that I now will in fact accept that I am a teacher, nor that I have a reason to identify myself in that way. I always find myself having to decide anew regarding who I am, and no fact about me can answer that question, as I can always adopt a variety of attitudes toward any such fact. The possibility of my reflecting on being a teacher thus makes any

practical identity I might happen to have assumed just as unstable and insufficient as a ground for an answer to the question of what I am to do as the same possibility of reflection makes any desire I should happen to have unstable and insufficient as a ground for an answer to the question.

Notice that the problem here is not that Korsgaard can give no account of our practical identities. She can. There is no reason that she cannot just say that it is a contingent fact about human beings that we happen to practically identify ourselves in various ways and take ourselves to have reasons to act, and thus have reasons to act, in light of those identities. What she cannot do, given her concept of reflection, is assert that the fact that we each have some practical identity or other is at all relevant to solving the normative problem that she thinks arises out of our reflective natures. It would do so if a reflective agent's falling under a type were just a fact about that agent. In that case that fact, with its attendant norms, would specify what that agent is to do, because what that agent is, its being, would already be determined and that being would determine how the agent is to act. But for Korsgaard's sort of reflecting being, the mere fact that one happens to identify oneself as a teacher, or woman, or Jew can give one no more reason for giving oneself the law that one should act as teacher or a woman or a Jew than does the fact that one happens to currently desire ice cream gives one a reason for acting so as to get ice cream. So, given the way in which Korsgaard understands reflection, once the agent reflects on her being a teacher, the fact that she is and has been a teacher no longer gives her a deciding reason to act as teachers are to act.

Korsgaard recognizes this problem with her view. Indeed, it is because of this problem that she needs to introduce the third stage of her solution to the problem of normativity. The fact that we follow some law is not enough to solve the problem of normativity, the problem of what I, as reflective self, am to do. Both the wanton and the puritan follow a law, and merely the injunction that as a reflective agent one must give some law to oneself does not decide which of these laws to follow. However, given that the adoption of a practical identity is a self–conscious commitment to follow a particular rule, insofar as we have some practical identity, the decision about which law to follow has already been made. And each of us has some practical identity or other, so each of us has resolved the problem of which law to follow, which type of agent I am, in some way or another. The problem reemerges, however, just at that point at which the reflective agent realizes that she can reflectively divorce herself from her own already constituted identity. At that point the reflective agent no longer has any reason to choose one identity as opposed to another.

Korsgaard argues that this final normative problem is solved by appeal to the fact that each of us has some practical identity or other, regardless of what in particular it is. She takes this fact to be in some way non–contingent.

"What is not contingent is that you must be governed by some conception of your practical identity."[13] If you did not have some practical identity or other, you could not live or act at all, for reflective agents can only live if they act, they can act only if they have a reason to act, and they have a reason to act only if they accept some practical identity. "For unless you are committed to some conception of your practical identity, you will lose your grip on yourself as having any reason to do one thing rather than another—and with it, your grip on yourself as having any reason to live and act at all."[14]

Korsgaard characterizes this fact as a

> reason for conforming to your particular practical identities [that] is not a reason that springs from one of those particular practical identities. It is a reason that springs from your humanity itself, from your identity simply as a human being, a reflective animal who needs reasons to act and live. And so it is a reason you have only if you treat your humanity as a practical, normative, form of identity, that is, if you value yourself as a human being.[15]

Since every rational action requires acceptance of a practical identity and accepting oneself as belonging to a type, and adoption of a practical identity and acceptance of oneself as belonging to that type implicitly commits the agent to a positive evaluation of that type, if one accepts some practical identity because one cannot live as a reflective animal unless one does so, then one implicitly accepts a positive evaluation of one's identity as a reflective animal who must have reasons to act. And, in light of this positive evaluation, one has reason to respect all such rational animals that give reasons to themselves. And, because of this, all adoptions of practical identities stand under the meta–requirement that they should involve laws that are consistent with the value of each and all self–legislating reflective animals, that is, all members of the Kingdom of Ends.

Korsgaard calls this a transcendental argument, and she is right. Unfortunately, it is a hopelessly muddled one.

All transcendental arguments require a base step, some intentional feature that is taken for granted as being characteristic of all intentional agents of some type. In the First Critique, for example, Kant takes the necessity of the possibility of the "I think" accompanying each of one's representations as his base step. He then argues that whatever is necessary for that intentional feature is also necessary for intentional agents of that type. Now Korsgaard takes it to be a noncontingent fact about us that we must adopt some practical identity or other. But who are "we"? When dealing with Korsgaardian reflective agents this is always the crucial question. According to the argument outlined above, the consequence of not adopting a practical identity is that, because we are reflective agents, we will not be able to live or act. So "we" are reflective agents who have the ability to live and act.

But let us look at the situation "first personally," as Korsgaard would say. The problem of the normativity of one's practical identity arises only for the reflective agent who has put her identity in question by distancing herself from that identity through adopting a second-order intentional attitude toward that identity. (Whether or not we are right in accepting the contingent identities we happen to have is not a problem for the rest of us, who unselfconsciously act in terms of that identity. And, given that the intermediate Kantian position on what it is to be essentially reflective allows for the possibility that there are some first-order acceptances that we never reflect on, there is no reason to think that some, or most, of us aren't in that position.) But since at that point the agent lacks any unreflected practical identity, she has no reason to live or act, as one has such reason only if one has some unreflective practical identity.

Now, of course, were the agent to at that point accept some practical identity, she must do so in terms of accepting some other typing of herself in terms of which it is right to adopt some such identity. And there is no reason to think that this other type might not be the type "reflective human animal that needs to adopt some practical identity in order to live and act." But in the circumstances in which the problem arises, the Korsgaardian reflecting agent has distanced herself from her human nature by viewing it from the outside, so even this impulse, to act as a rational animal, doesn't dominate her. It is questionable whether she should be a human being who can live and act. And, since some practical identity is only necessary for those reflective agents who live and act, the questionableness of this identity undercuts that identity as a reason to adopt some practical identity. So, given a Korsgaardian concept of reflection, the first-personal problem of whether or not one should adopt some practical identity cannot be solved by appealing to our rational animal nature.

At some points Korsgaard talks as if this naturalistic typing is independent of our reflective commitment to the type. "You are an animal of the sort I have just described. And that is not merely a contingent conception of your identity, which you have constructed or chosen for yourself, or could conceivably reject. It is simply the truth."[16] Now, were it the case that my falling under this naturalistic type was a simple fact about me that does not depend on my acceptance of that fact, then this would solve the first-personal problem. The fact that I am an animal that will act so as to stay alive by acting on reasons implies that I will adopt some practical identity, given that adopting a practical identity is necessary in order to live and act as such an animal. But given Korsgaard's conception of reflection, there can be no such naturalistic facts that are determinative of what we should do. The mere fact of my ability to adopt a second-order attitude toward my belief that I am such an animal makes it questionable whether or not I ought to have this belief. First, my reflecting self recognizes that I might not have

good grounds for believing that this belief regarding myself is true. And, more importantly, even if it is true, this by itself does not settle for my reflecting self whether or not it is good for me to believe it or act in terms of this belief. (Consider, for example, the case in which it turns out that it is a simple fact about the human animal that we have a tendency toward murder and mayhem. Once a Korsgaardian reflective agent reflects on that fact, it ceases to dominate her.)

So Korsgaard is confronted with a dilemma. Either our animal nature is a simple fact that does determine what we ought to do, in which case she must abandon her concept of what it is to be a reflective agent, or she maintains her view of reflection, in which case nothing about our animal nature can determine what we should do.

Nor should it be thought that Korsgaard can solve the normative problem at least for those who do, in fact, accept some practical identity. At points it seems as if she thinks that the fact that an acceptance of our nature as reflecting animals who need to adopt a practical identity in order to live and act could provide a reason for adopting some practical identity implies that it does provide a reason, implicitly or explicitly, for any agent who does in fact adopt such an identity. If it did, then even if from the first-personal standpoint such a typing could never fully warrant the adoption of a practical identity, the fact that most of us do accept such an identity would imply that we ought to adopt the principles associated with this type, whether we recognize this or not. But, given that Korsgaard is willing to admit that there are some first-order acceptances that are never actually reflected on, which is an implication of the intermediate, Kantian conception of what it is to be essentially reflective, the most she can claim is that our reflective animal nature might serve as a reason to adopt some practical identity or other. It could serve as such a reason for a reflective thinker who self–consciously accepts such a typing of herself, who would thus have a reason to adopt some practical identity. But in other cases an agent might adopt some practical identity for some other reason (e.g., she understands herself as being called by God to do so), or for no reason at all. As it is not necessary that I reflect on my practical identity, I may simply be unreflectively caused to have that identity by my contingent place in history and the way I am viewed by others. And, for Korsgaard, an agent has a reason to act only if she implicitly or explicitly accepts that reason. So, pace Korsgaard, it can never follow from the fact that I have some practical identity that I in fact have a reason to respect humanity in myself and others.

It follows, then, that Korsgaard's conception of what it is to be a reflective agent gives rise to a normative problem that cannot be solved if we are Korsgaardian reflective agents. Whether she acknowledges it or not, this notion of reflection commits Korsgaard to an extreme form of existentialism, in which one is only what one accepts oneself to be, and one never has

a final reason for accepting oneself as any sort of being in particular. Perhaps paradoxically, one can escape this extreme existentialism by appealing to an alternative notion of reflection drawn from a thinker who is sometimes thought of, or accused of being, an existentialist, Martin Heidegger.

III. HEIDEGGERIAN REFLECTION: THAT FOR–THE–SAKE–OF–WHICH WE ACT

In an extended discussion in the lecture course published under the title *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* Heidegger specifically considers the way in which human beings reflectively intend themselves, and contrasts his notion of how this happens with Kant's.

> The self which Dasein is, is there somehow in and along with all intentional comportments. To intentionality belongs, not only a self–directing–toward . . . but also *the associated unveiling of the self* which is comporting itself here. . . . Rather the co–disclosure of the self belongs to intentionality. But the question remains, *In what way is the self given?* Not—as might be thought in adherence to Kant—in such a way that an "I think" accompanies all representations and goes along with the acts directed at extant beings, which thus would be a reflective act directed at the first act.[17]

This passage, which introduces Heidegger's discussion, draws two direct contrasts between Kant's position on the reflective nature of human consciousness and Heidegger's own. First, as opposed to Kant, Heidegger holds that *all* human intentions involve a "concomitant unveiling of the self." But, Heidegger warns us, this claim should not be taken as if it were asserting the strongest interpretation of the Kantian claim that we are essentially reflective, the claim that we explicitly or implicitly think about all of our own intentions. That is, for Heidegger, the self is not primarily intended in second-order intentions directed at our own first-order intentions, which in turn are directed on the world. Rather, for Heidegger each first-order human intention *already* contains a self–referring element, even when it is not reflected upon in Kant's, or Korsgaard's, sense.[18] As Heidegger points out, this leaves us with the question of how the self is given in such first-order intentions.

Here is the preliminary statement of Heidegger's answer to this question.

> We say that the Dasein does not first need to turn backward to itself as though, keeping itself behind its own back, it were at first standing in front of things and staring rigidly at them. Instead, it never finds itself otherwise than in the things themselves, and in fact in those things that daily surround it. It finds

> itself primarily and constantly in things because, tending them, distressed by them, it always in some way or other rests in things. Each one of us is what he pursues and cares for. In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the things we take care of.[19]

For Heidegger, I find myself in things insofar as I pursue and care for them. How is this "reflection" (to use the term Heidegger uses) of ourselves in our preoccupation with things supposed to work?

Instead of developing a conception of reflection that arises out of a focus on the way in which we experience ourselves when we look directly at ourselves, Heidegger tries to develop a perspective on our self–understanding that arises out of a phenomenological description of the way in which we also deal with ourselves when we deal with things.[20] Heidegger asserts that the primary mode of our intending things is by pursuing and caring for them. This view is not really odd or obscure, although the language used might lead one to think that it is. After all, even the standard belief/desire model of intentionality articulates a vision of intentionality that presupposes that intentional agents desire ends, and act in ways they believe will achieve those ends. And all that Heidegger is claiming here is that the basic form of human intentionality involves pursuing certain ends (what one pursues) and caring whether or not those ends come to obtain (the ends matter to the agent). The only thing that Heidegger adds is that we encounter ourselves primarily in the actual acts that arise out of these intentions, rather than by directly looking at the intentions that might or might not give rise to acts. That is, Heidegger thinks that we primarily find ourselves reflected back from the way we intend things in the course of acting unreflectively on our intentions (in the colloquial sense), instead of finding ourselves by looking back at the beliefs and desires that might or might not explain our acts.

But if the primary form of human intentionality is first-order action in pursuit of ends, how then is this different from the animal intentionality that also involves unreflected (in Korsgaard's sense) pursuit of ends, and thus, for Korsgaard, being dominated by impulse? Heidegger's answer to this question turns on the extraordinary character of human ends, and the coordinated distinctive character of the way in which we intend entities in the world other than ourselves when we pursue these ends.

Let's say that I pursue the end of teaching a class. On the traditional belief/desire model, this fact about me would be described and explained in terms of my desire to teach this class. And, were I to reflect on that fact, this would involve my taking up a second-order attitude toward this first-order fact about myself. I would think about my desire, as Korsgaard would say. Heidegger, on the other hand, insists that I am there for myself in my first-order intentions insofar as I act on them, regardless of whether or not I specifically intend my own intentions. Well, when I am not specifically

thinking about my desire to teach class (which must be most of the time if I am to teach at all, of course), what is it like to pursue the end of teaching class? Heidegger suggests that when we pursue the end of teaching a class, we intend the entities in our environment as instrumental or obstructional to the end of teaching that class. When I am pursuing the end of teaching, I intend the text as there to be illuminated, the blackboard as there in order to be written on, the chalk as there in order to be written with. Insofar as I am pursuing the end of teaching by exercising my first-order intention to teach class, I am continually adjusting my behavior in light of the way the things in my environment are intended by me as instruments that can help me achieve the end I am pursuing, or as such instruments get in the way of that end. If I didn't have such intentions directed at things as equipment, I couldn't undertake the necessary modifications in my acts which are involved in pursuing that end. So, Heidegger concludes, insofar as a human agent is actively pursuing an end in light of a first-order intention to act, she intends the things in her environment as equipment to be used in attaining that end.

What is involved in intending an entity as a piece of equipment? Heidegger suggests that this involves intending it as "in order to" be used in a certain way. To intend something as a hammer is to intend it as "in order to" hammer nails with; to intend something as chalk is to intend it as "in order to" write on a blackboard with. "Equipmental character is constituted by what we call *Bewandtnis,* functionality. The being of something we use, for instance, a hammer or a door, is characterized by a specific way of being put to use, of functioning. This entity is 'in order to hammer,' 'in order to make leaving, entering, and closing possible.' Equipment is 'in order to.'"[21] In acting on my intention to teach class, I find myself intending to write on the board, and thus look around for something that could facilitate that end. I hit upon this object, which I intend as "there in order to write on the board," that is, as chalk.

These homey examples illustrate two other aspects of Heidegger's description of the way we intend entities other than ourselves when we act to pursue our own, unreflected ends. First, intending an entity as a tool is holistic in the sense that one never intends only a single tool, but always intends an entity as a tool to be used along with other tools in pursuing an end. What I intend a piece of equipment to be when I intend it as a tool of a certain sort is an entity that is in order to be used with another type of tool, which is in order to be used with another type of tool, etc. This is intended as chalk, that is, there in order to be used to write on a blackboard. This is intended as a hammer, that is, there in order to hammer nails. "Equipment . . . always is in terms of its belonging to other equipment; ink–stand, pen, ink, paper, blotting pad, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room."[22] Because what it is to be a tool is to be a piece of equipment that is typed as in order to be used with other types of equipment, Heidegger concludes that

any human activity involves intending a variety of entities in terms of a contextual whole of "in–order–tos." "The contexture of the what–for and in–order–to is a whole of functionality relations."[23]

The second thesis that Heidegger derives from these examples is that there is a dimension to the "in order to" that defines a type of equipment that transcends the ability of an object to be used in a certain instrumental way. When I intend an entity as instantiating some tool type, that type is defined in terms of a context of functional relations that preadjust the types to one another. A hammer is an entity that is to be used in order to hammer nails. When I intend something as a hammer, I am not merely intending it as capable of being used to hammer nails, except when I am improvising. In fact, defective tools can be tools even if they are not capable of being used to achieve their characteristic ends: something is a defective hammer only if it is to be used as a hammer, and objects that are capable of being used in hammering, such as a rock, need not be hammers. Tools are things which are to be used in certain ways, or should be used in certain ways. Nor am I intending the object through the prism of my own desire to use it in a certain way. I can desire to use the hammer as a paperweight, and it is capable of being so used, but my belief that the hammer can be used as a paperweight characterizes this item as a hammer, I intend it in a way that depends neither upon my desire or the object's capacities. To intend something as a hammer is thus to intend it as an entity it is correct to use in certain situations, with certain other types of tools to achieve certain functionally and normatively described types of ends.

From the standpoint Heidegger adopts, the fact that we intend entities as equipment that should be used in some definite way along with other tools that also are to be used in definite ways is one of the distinctive features of the way in which human beings have first-order intentions directed toward entities. There is an obvious sense in which any animal that acts in order to attain an end, and thus any animal that has desires, operates in a normative dimension. Given the sort of animal that an agent is, some acts, and thus some desires, are appropriate or called for, others are not. Any mouse, for example, ought not to want to cozy up to any strange cat.[24] But, given that human beings routinely intend entities as equipment, they intend those entities themselves as standing under norms of appropriate use that are independent of how the agent herself desires to use that equipment. In addition, these normatively characterized tools fit together into systems of kinds of equipment, and are intended as doing so. Since what it is for an entity to be a token of a particular kind of tool depends upon the way that item is to be used along with other items that also are to be used in definite ways to attain certain sorts of ends, insofar as an agent intends an item as a token of a particular type of equipment, she also intends the "functionality whole" or "referential totality" in terms of which the tool type is understandable.

Heidegger's most general term for such a totality is "world," and what it is to be a human being is understood as "being–in–the–world."

If Heidegger is right, human beings typically intend objects as tools that are to be used together with other tools to attain ends. But what warrants this normative "to be used" regarding the tools, if it is not the desire of the agent? And if it is not the desire of the individual agent that provides the reason that a tool should be used for certain ends, what grounds the fact that those ends are to be pursued? In the text in which Heidegger criticizes Kant's notion of reflection, he considers the case of a shoemaker working in his shop and suggests that, while the shoemaker is not the shoe, the shoemaker finds himself in and through working with his tools to make the shoe. When the shoemaker does this he does so by thinking of, and using, the tools as they are to be used by a shoemaker. The norms that govern both his use of the tools and the ends that they are put to are the norms that also govern the role of being a shoemaker. To be a shoemaker is to use these tools in these ways in order to accomplish this sort of end. So in the very act of obeying the norms of proper tool use for shoemakers, the agent is also obeying the norms for proper behavior for shoemakers. And, since to be a shoemaker is to obey those norms for proper behavior for shoemakers, by acting with tools in the appropriate way, the agent makes himself be a shoemaker.[25]

Heidegger says that there is thus a double intentionality involved in acting with tools as they are to be used by a certain type of agent. One acts in order to achieve the ends which are characteristic of that type of agent, but at the same time one acts for the sake of being that type of agent. I am currently using my computer and my texts in ways that are appropriate for achieving an end, publishing a paper, that is characteristic of a certain type of human agent, a philosophy professor. And that, indeed, is my end. At the same time, however, I do what I do for the sake of being such a professor. It's not exactly that I want to write the paper now. It is a beautiful day, and I would in one sense much rather ride my bike. But I have a deadline (that I have already missed), so I experience the paper as "to be written," my texts as "to be consulted," and my computer as "to be pounded." All of the norms that I experience these items in terms of are rooted in the "world" of the professor, a world that is in part defined by these very norms. But since it is only a particular type of agency that is governed by these particular norms, it is only a certain type of agent that is governed by these norms. So in acknowledging these norms as normative for me by acting as professors act, I also acknowledge the norms of professorial behavior as governing me, and commit myself to being a professor, rather than a bike rider (alas).

At this stage of my career there is of course an institutional sense in which I would still be a professor even if I never wrote any more papers. Were I to do so, however, it would be at the cost of no longer satisfactorily fulfilling the role and function that define what it is to be a professor. I

would become "dead wood." I write this paper for the sake of my being a professor, as well as in order to have it published. As only professors care about such things in this way, the very acts in which I find myself caring about this paper and the tools I use to write it in this way also "unveil" to me who I am. I am the one who acts for the sake of being a professor and who thus finds himself committed to being a certain type of person. My being a professor is thus "reflected back" to me from my concern with things. I know myself to be a professor because I find myself caring about things in the ways professors do, and pursuing the ends that they pursue. This, in Korsgaard's terms, is to find oneself to be committed to the practical identity of being a professor.

IV. HEIDEGGER'S SOLUTION TO KORSGAARD'S PROBLEM

For Heidegger, as for Korsgaard, human being has an essentially "reflective" structure. Since there are many different ways to be a human being, there are many types of person one can act for the sake of being. And, insofar as the agent recognizes these various types, she can also recognize that how she feels and acts constitute her as belonging to one or more of those types. So the way the agent responds to things reflects for her who she is, what her practical identity involves. For Heidegger, as for Korsgaard, it is necessary that every human agent has some self-conception or self-interpretation, some particular way in which she understands who she is. For Heidegger what is distinctive about human intentionality is the way in which we intend objects as equipment to be used in standardized ways that are normalized for agents with some definite kind of practical identity. So every agent with a human kind of intentionality intends things according to some such practical identity. For both Korsgaard and Heidegger, this self–conception is essentially practical, in the sense that to have such a self-conception is to have "a description [of oneself] under which you find your life to be worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking." And finally, for both of these thinkers every distinctively human action takes place in light of, and in a crucial sense is determined by, some such practical self-conception.

Heidegger's notion of the for-the-sake-of-which of our acts thus shares a great deal in common with Korsgaard's conception of our practical identity. There is, however, one crucial difference having to do with their respective understandings of the character of human reflection. For Korsgaard, for us to be human is to be reflective in the sense that we are capable of specifically directing a second-order intention on our own states. For Heidegger, our practical identity is always "unveiled" to us "reflectively" from our deal-

ings with things and each other, whether or not we ever specifically adopt a second-order attitude toward that identity or not. This difference provides the opportunity to advance a Heideggerian solution to Korsgaard's normative problem.

Given Korsgaard's conception of reflection, we are always confronted with the normative problem, whether we recognize it or not. Because we are always capable of specifically directing a second-order intention on our own states, and because all such higher-order intentions "distance" us from our lower-order commitments, and all values are grounded in our commitment to some practical identity or other, we are always faced with the normative problem of which practical identity to adopt. Korsgaard tries to solve the problem for us both by suggesting that it is just a fact that we are animals who need some practical identity in order to act and by providing a transcendental argument to the effect that anyone who accepts any practical identity must also, in some sense, acknowledge the value of her own human rationality. But because Korsgaard herself acknowledges that, at most, part of the reason an agent adopts a practical identity has to do with her instantiating some way of being rationally human, the transcendental argument does not work. And, given Korsgaard's concept of human reflection, the simple, unreflected fact that we are animals of a certain sort can never provide us with the grounds for solving the normative problem.

Heidegger, however, has a different conception of human being and human reflection. While he is quite willing to admit that it is always possible for us to direct second-order intentions back on ourselves,[26] he does not think that this is the essential feature of human reflexivity, nor that it has the consequences that Korsgaard assumes that it does. The fundamental fact of human existence for Heidegger is that we intend things in a normatively oriented world which depends upon our already having been committed to some practical identity or other. This having been "factically thrown" (as Heidegger calls it) into such a world by itself is sufficient to guarantee our own reflective access to that identity, even when we do not specifically intend it as such by adopting a higher-order attitude toward it. And, since all human intentionality is situated in this way in a commitment to some such practical self–understanding, whenever we do specifically adopt a higher-order attitude toward one of our practical identities, we do so in the terms provided by another one of our practical identities. So any distancing and specific reflection which places the value of a practical identity in question is always situated within the normative context provided by another of our practical identities. When we reflect on the value of who we are or have been, we always do so in the light of the values implicit in what we are or are becoming.

Korsgaard says that the fact that you must be governed by some conception of your practical identity is not contingent. But she neither has a

way of understanding how this can be so nor a manner of justifying that this claim is true. Heidegger's understanding of human reflection and practical identity gives us both the grounds on which it is rational to believe that we must have some practical identity or other and a way of understanding this claim. The fact of our commitment to a practical identity always precedes our self–conscious decision to accept that identity. And even when we come to call such an identity into question, as we are surely able to do for each of our identities, we always do so in the name of the norms and obligations inherent in some other one of our practical identities. So, while it is part of being human that we confront the normative question of the value of who we are, we are never placed in the impossible position of having to answer this question without already being something.

EPILOGUE: WHAT HEIDEGGER GOT WRONG

There is substantial irony in using Heidegger in a criticism of Korsgaard. For Korsgaard is essentially an ethical thinker, and Heidegger is infamous for his personal and professional insensitivity to ethical issues. This ethical insensitivity is no accident. It is rooted in several mistakes the early Heidegger made regarding the implications of his own views.

As I have argued above, Heidegger's characterization of human being as being–in–the–world implies that every human being always finds herself committed to some practical identity or other. This is a noncontingent fact of human being that the further fact that we are always capable of adopting a higher-order intention toward our own practical identities cannot call into question. For all such reflection itself presupposes some other practical identity in terms of which it takes place. But Heidegger is also committed to other positions that seem to him to leave only two unpalatable possible answers to the question of whether there can be rational grounds for choosing a practical identity. Fortunately, Heidegger was wrong about this.

First, Heidegger is committed to the sensible position that no particular practical identity is necessary for any particular human being. Although there are public and institutional criteria for determining that I am a father and a Jew, and these public criteria are of crucial importance both to how I am treated by others and the range of personal identities available to me, Heidegger doesn't think that these facts by themselves cause me to confront the equipmental world from the perspective of a father or a Jew. So, Heidegger reasons, it is possible for each of us to find herself no longer caring about things in the way that we must care about things if we are to continue being what we have been. Because he is committed to this view, and because he was heavily influenced by some of the extreme "existentialist" views of Kierkegaard, the early Heidegger came to think that certain psy-

chological conditions, such as depression, in which a person finds herself no longer caring about much of anything, had enormous philosophical importance. Since, Heidegger reasoned, it is possible for a human agent to drop out of each particular practical identity, it is possible for a human being to drop out of all particular practical identities. From this he inferred that our essential being as human is just that we have no natural, essential being over and beyond the necessity to give ourselves a being by adopting a practical identity, and that the psychological states of anxiety and depression reveal this fact to us. On this form of extreme existentialist voluntarism there can be no reasons for or against adopting any practical identity that are not rooted in some other ultimately unjustifiable practical identity. So each of us is responsible for our own selves, even though there are no ultimate reasons for being as we are which could be used to criticize any particular identity we might adopt.

Heidegger was always aware of the uneasy fit between this extreme voluntaristic existentialism regarding the choice of practical identity and his basic doctrine regarding human being that we are all being–in–the–world and that we thus always find ourselves already committed to some practical identity or other. But, since he always remained committed to the positions that all reasons are rooted in practical identities and that all particular practical identities are contingent, it appeared to him that there was no other option except the extreme relativism which becomes apparent in his later writing. On this relativistic view, all reasons are based in practical identities and all such identities are contingent in the sense that it is not necessary that all humans share the same identities, but, given the historical situation of a given individual, it is not contingent that that individual have the identity she has. So a twentieth-century German must see things as a twentieth-century German does, accepting the sorts of reasons that are characteristic of that era, and a fifth-century Christian Roman must see things as a fifth-century Christian does. And there is no overarching framework in which one can judge that one or another of these views is right or wrong.

So Heidegger takes himself to be driven into a choice between the ethically unsavory alternatives of voluntarism and relativism. But this appearance is rooted in a series of logical errors. First, it does not follow from the fact that it is possible to doubt each of our identities that it is possible to doubt all of them at once. The instinct that guides Heidegger when he describes human being in terms of the way things matter to us in our daily activities when we take some practical identity for granted is a good one. And the fact that under duress some of us despair of each of our identities does not imply that we can ever be human without any such identity. Even a depressed person is a person of some type or other. So, pace the existentialist Heidegger, the contingency of every one of our identities does not imply the contingency of the fact that each of us has some identity.

And this fact, that each of us has some practical identity, is rooted in our nature as human animals, just as Korsgaard thinks. The norms and values that are the central features of our use of tools and our pursuit of ends are social norms and values, that is, ways we are to behave in virtue of our places within human societies. And human societies have these sorts of organization because we are animals who make our livings only in and through existing in societies that are organized in this way. Things matter to us as they matter to an animal that finds itself committed to the value of abiding by some set of social norms or other. So whatever it is that we value in virtue of our practical identity, this valuing implies that we implicitly value our social animal nature. Because of this, our animal human nature places constraints on what can count as acceptable human practical identities, just as Korsgaard thinks, and this is sufficient to defeat the sort of relativism that Heidegger was driven to in his later thought.

But Heidegger himself cannot see this fact. He cannot see it because, for all of his self–professed radicalism, Heidegger is still committed to the Cartesian view that there is a fundamental divide between human being and animal nature, and he never questions this assumption. So he is simply blind to the naturalistic basis of the fact that human beings must always have some practical identity or other, and he is condemned to a fruitless oscillation between voluntarism and relativism.

Korsgaard is also trapped between an essentially naturalistic insight, that our nature as human animals implies that we must have some practical identity or other, and her commitment to a modern doctrine, in her case the doctrine of reflective distance. She recognizes the noncontingency of our need to have some practical identity, but, committed as she is to a Kantian concept of human reflection, Korsgaard cannot make this noncontingent fact of human being intelligible. To do so, she would need to adopt the alternative Heideggerian vision of a reflection that occurs in and with human first-order intentionality. The ultimate irony, I suppose, is that Heidegger himself could not see this possibility for development of his views. He was himself also trapped in the same snare because he could not see us human beings for what we are: rational animals.

NOTES

1. Christine M. Korsgaard with G. A. Cohen et al., *The Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101.
2. Ibid., 92.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 93.
5. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), B 131, emphasis added.

6. As the qualifier at the end of the crucial sentence makes clear, Kant is still worried that even this might be too strong.
7. Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity,* 93; emphasis added.
8. See Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity,* 229–30, and "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in *Ethics and Practical Reason,* ed. Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 245–49. This is an entirely implausible picture of the motivational structure of most higher animals. Just as with humans, the actions of such animals frequently have conflicting and obscure motivations, and they often act quite successfully instrumentally through long chains of linked actions. Both of these characteristics would seem to require a more complicated pattern of intentional explanation and motivation than can be supplied by a simple recourse to totally dominating current desires and beliefs, which are supposed to motivate action directly without leaving any shadow of conflict, doubt, or question.
9. See Korsgaard, "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," 221. Korsgaard herself is a bit confused about what is entailed by this notion. She says that a person acts rationally when she is motivated by her recognition that the action she performs is rationally necessary. If she means by "recognition" that in cases of rational action the agent must be motivated by her awareness that her action is rationally necessary, this provides a wildly implausible picture of agents continually going through little syllogisms in their heads, as Korsgaard herself notes. On the other hand, if "recognition" doesn't imply this picture, then it is unclear exactly what work this is doing.
10. Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals,* trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs–Merrill, 1959), 412.
11. Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity,* 99.
12. Ibid., 101.
13. Ibid., 120.
14. Ibid., 121.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 123.
17. Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 158.
18. The fact that Heidegger doesn't understand the reflective nature of human being in terms of second-order intentions directed at our own first-order intentions directed at the world partially explains why it is that he does not describe those first-order intentions in traditional belief/desire terms.
19. Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* 159.
20. Although Heidegger uses a phenomenological method, I have argued elsewhere that there are non–phenomenological reasons to believe that Heidegger's notion of reflection is correct. See, in particular, my "Intending the Intender (Or, Why Heidegger Isn't Davidson)," forthcoming in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity: Essays in Honor of Hubert L. Dreyfus,* ed. Mark A. Wrathall and Jeff Malpas (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), vol. 1.
21. Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* 292.
22. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 97.
23. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* 164.
24. Korsgaard almost completely ignores this normative dimension of first-order animal desire. While there is no normative question for the animal that is "dominated by instinct," there is a normative question regarding what that animal ought to want and to do. It is just that the animal itself does not reflectively consider that question.
25. See Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* 154–77. Notice that the act of being a shoemaker is different from the act of becoming a shoemaker. One actualizes one's possibility of being a shoemaker when someone who has a capacity to act as shoemak-

ers do actually does so (he need not). One actualizes one's possibility of becoming a shoemaker when one learns how to make shoes, and thus gains the capacity to be a shoemaker. Needless to say, Heidegger borrows many of the relevant distinctions here from Aristotle.

26. "Formally, it is unassailable to speak of the ego as consciousness–of–something that is at the same time conscious of itself, and the description of the res cogitans as cogito me cogitare, or self–consciousness, is correct. But these formal determinations, which provide the framework for idealism's dialectic of consciousness, are nevertheless very far from an interpretation of the phenomenal circumstances of the Dasein" (*The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* 158–59).