The familiar accusation against Heidegger that the existential analytic of Dasein to be found in *Being and Time* amounts to an egoism is almost as old as *Being and Time* itself. This is clear from his 1928 lecture course now known under the title *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Heidegger there dismissed this and other related objections on the grounds that they arose from a primitive misunderstanding of his enterprise (GA 26, 240/186). A footnote to *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* shows that in 1929 Heidegger was still sufficiently incensed by the criticism to promise a special publication which would attempt to confront these confused objections (KPM 211n/242n). The promise was never fulfilled. Nevertheless, there is sufficient material in *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* to make it possible to reconstruct Heidegger’s response to the criticisms and indeed to reopen the vexed question of the place accorded to ethics by *Being and Time*.

The objection of egoism—and it has grown in currency rather than declined—took its starting-point in Heidegger’s claim that it belongs to the essence of Dasein to be concerned about its own Being (GA 26, 240/186). Heidegger could have pointed out that in the course of the analysis of Mitsein in *Being and Time* he had also said that “Dasein is essentially for the sake of others” (SZ 123/160). But this would have been to meet the criticism on its own level. Or rather it would have left the question of levels unclarified. Heidegger preferred to try to answer the objection by focusing on the character of ontological statements. To say on the ontological level that Dasein is concerned about its own Being would not exclude the possibility that in fact
it might be concerned with others. In other words, the charge of ethical egoism arose only because certain crucial distinctions had been overlooked. The objection confused the elucidation of existential structures for the assertion of an existentiell egoism (GA 26, 240/187). The corrective, as he advised in *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, was to address Dasein in its “metaphysical neutrality” (GA 26, 246/191).

Throughout *Being and Time* Heidegger had warned against compromising the purity of the ontological analysis by failing to exclude certain ontical connotations from its language. So, for example, the ontological term ‘care’ (*Sorge*) was not to be associated with words like ‘worry’ (*Besorgins*) or ‘carefreeness’ (*Sorglosigkeit*) (SZ 192/237). Similarly, he advised that his descriptions of fallenness did not amount to a “moralizing critique of everyday Dasein” (SZ 167/211 and 175/220). Linking the charge of egoism with that of solipsism, Heidegger in 1928 complained against his unnamed critics that he had pointed out “many times, even ad nauseam that this Being qua Dasein is always already with others and always already with beings not of Dasein’s kind” (GA 26, 245/190). It was his critics who, in their attempt to understand what was meant by *Dasein*, had inappropriately imported the standard idea of a solipsistic subject. Heidegger insisted therefore that it was not he who had been blind to the phenomena, but rather his opponents who had ignored his attempt to distinguish ontological questioning from subsequent levels of inquiry such as anthropology or ethics (GA 26, 171/136). Ontological questioning was “prior to every psychology, anthropology and characterology, but also prior to ethics and sociology” (GA 26, 21/17). The failure to make this distinction between two orders of discourse could only result in “confusions” (KPM 213/245). To understand the word ‘care’ in an ethical sense, rather than as the Being of Dasein in its structural unity, would render impossible from the outset any understanding of the existential analytic of Dasein. “No one dominated by an attitude inspired by a Weltanschauung, i.e., an attitude which is popular and ontic, and particularly no one dominated by an attitude—whether approving or disapproving—inspired by theology, can enter the dimension of the problem of a metaphysics of Dasein” (KPM 214/245). The metaphysics of Dasein was in this way set apart from all worldviews. Or rather it sought to attain the realm in which ontical interpretations of Dasein, and hence worldviews, must move (SZ 200/244).

Evidence of Heidegger’s concern with the problem posed to philosophy by the proliferation of worldviews has long been available. The recent publication of some of the lectures from Heidegger’s first period teaching at Freiburg shows just how early that concern arose. And the publication of the Marburg lectures has shown for the first time just how complex Heidegger’s response to that problem was in the late 1920s. Heidegger did not simply set fundamental ontology as the science of Being against the conception of