HEIDEGGER'S DASEIN-ANALYTIC OF INSTRUMENTALITY IN *BEING AND TIME* AND THE THINKING OF THE "EXTREME DANGER" OF THE QUESTION OF TECHNOLOGY, AND FREDERICK TONNIES' *COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY*

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Heidegger's thinking, from its inception in the "universal phenomenological ontology" of *Being and Time* to its later obsession with "the question of technology," is oriented by "the question of being."[1] In contrast to the superficial chatter of everyday life, and in contrast to the methodologically "correct" hypotheses of natural sciences regulated by strict correspondence and coherence theories of truth, Heidegger aims for the *revelation* of a deeper disclosure: truth as the manifestation of the being of beings. Such revelatory disclosure is contrasted to the more abstract and derivative possibilities of grasping available to "representational consciousness," by means of its coordination of propositions haphazardly in opinions or rigorously in knowledge. What Heidegger comes to call "thinking" (*Denken*), in contrast to the latter, is a more sensitive hermeneutical receptivity attuned to the ultimate source of meaning as such, the "ontological difference" between being and beings.

Thinking—unlike representation, which for Heidegger is subjectivist, willful and constructivist—is akin though not reducible to the receptivity of *poiēsis*: a hearkening, attunement, release, openness to the "gift-giving" of meaning which originates not in the human but in being. The famous "turn" (*Kehre*) in Heidegger's thinking, which occurs after *Being and Time*, is precisely this effort to turn from man to being, to listen to being rather than to get caught in the projections of humanism. Just as authentic Dasein in *Being and Time* breaks from superficial chatter and objective knowing, to recover itself as a finite temporalizing whose meaning comes from history, in the later Heidegger we are taught that history itself is "given"—as an "epochal" dispensation—by the "generosity" of being, now understood by Heidegger as *Ereignis* and the *Es gibt*. Being, the verbality of be-ing, the manifesting of manifestation, the outpouring of the "ontological difference"—gives but is never exhausted by any particular historical coordination of sense, such as its constitution of the ancient, medieval, and modern worlds as historical configurations. Not the meaning-bestowing acts of human consciousness, but the meaning-bestowing of being gives forth the ultimate or genuine sense of what is, epochs in which Dasein is but one element—the occurrence of "language"—of the fourfold of mortals, gods, earth, and sky.

There is a unique problem, however, indeed a problem Heidegger calls the "extreme danger," that comes into being with the current *modern* dispensation of meaning, an epoch Heidegger calls the "age of technology," "technological being," or even more simply, "technology." Unlike the ancient world, which was oriented by *physis*, or the medieval epoch which was oriented by *theos*, the modern epoch is oriented by the *anthropocentric*, by human willfulness, a willfulness which finds its apotheosis in the dialectic of scientific knowing and technological know-how. The problem is that technology—a pure, absolute or total instrumentality: means without end—is representational consciousness gone mad, that is to say, representation without exit, what Heidegger calls "Enframing" (*Gestell*). As such it is the "extreme danger" because it represents—literally represents—the closure of the historical epoch-giving generosity of being. The modern age *qua* the age of technology, the age of efficiency, the age of the entire world as "resource" or "standing reserve" for human construction and consumption, thus appears as the last and final age, the end of history, the end of times—and thus at the same time the eclipse and "forgetfulness of being." "The essence of technology, " Heidegger writes, "lies in Enframing [*Gestell*]. . . . The coming to presence of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility that all revealing will be consumed in ordering, and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing-reserve."[2]

In sum: even though technology is itself given by being, as are all historical configurations of sense, it is the peculiar gift of being that ends the very gift-giving of being. Endless means without ends, endless instrumentality, like the ceaselessly multiplying brooms of the Sorcerer's apprentice, it cannot end. Technology is the Trojan horse of being, or the horse power that bites the hand that feeds it. The "extreme danger" is the prospect of a total eclipse and absolute forgetfulness of being.[3]

Nevertheless, insofar as Heidegger has "seen" this problem there remains a glimmer of hope: the "saving power" of thinking itself as a still open attunement to being's generosity, an attentiveness going counter, then, to the willfulness of technology and human construction.[4] In this way Heidegger's thinking resembles the poet's: it listens, though to being rather than to the Muses; and it is able to listen because it rejects the obviousness and predictability of common sense and the methodic or mathematical sciences. The saving power of thinking is an attunement to the "essence" of technology, because, as Heidegger repeatedly declares, "the essence of technology is nothing technological."[5] Thinking the essence resembles, and is perhaps the same as, the phenomenological hermeneutics, the "fundamental ontology," of *Being and Time,* insofar as both are meant to be openings to the question of being, but no longer as the earlier preparation of Dasein for such listening, but rather now as an openness to the "freedom" of being's generosity, to the slim but all-important chance for the giving of a new post-technological historical epoch.

Understanding of the "Ready-to-Hand" and the "Totality of Equipment" in *Being and Time*

Many questions can and ought to be raised about the viability or the advisability of Heidegger's project. For instance: Is it really the case that Western thought can be broken up into three neat epochs, the ancient, the medieval, and the modern? Is contemporary Western sensibility the product of such a monolithic epochal and intellectualized history, despite the weighty precedence (think of Hegel, Marx, Spencer, Comte, et al.) and the seductive simplicity of such a history? Are so-called epochs and is history itself gifts of being, or is not this entire perspective, with its alleged turn from man to being, yet another instance of the typical transcendental move of German idealism, a hidden projective reification, itself an extreme "egoism," as Santayana called it, now newly wrapped in phenomenological garb? Or, another question: Is not such an ontology yet another instance of, rather than an escape from, the vanity and hubris of the long history of philosophy's prejudice for intelligibility—in Heidegger's case the authority of *disclosure* and *revelation*, both forms of *comprehension,* the privileging of "essence" when precisely the search for essence is another mirror of the human mind's hunger for sense? Penetrating, critical and needful as are such questions (and there are many others), they are not the question I am going to raise today regarding Heidegger and technology.

Rather, my question is *prima facie* more modest and less critical, in any event less ponderous. It is the following: Why does Heidegger characterize the root meaning, the essence, the *Geist*, as it were, of the modern epoch as "technological," with the concomitant and debilitating disparagement of representation as subjectivist, willful, constructivist, etc.? What is the basis of this judgment and evaluation? Where, more specifically, does it come from in Heidegger's own work? The answer to this question is not difficult to discover. It seems to me that the source of Heidegger's later "question of technology" is to be found in the earlier analyses in *Being and Time* of "The Worldliness of the World," and there, more particularly, in the brilliant phenomenological descriptions of the thing as "ready-to-hand" (*Zuhandenheit*) participating in—finding its sense in—the world as a "totality of equipment."[6] It is the latter, it seems to me, the "totality of equipment" described in relation to Dasein in *Being and Time*, which becomes the "age of technology" described in relation to the gift-giving of being after the *Kehre*. Let us turn therefore to these analyses found in the early sections of *Being and Time*.

Reversing the root prejudice of a long philosophical tradition, for Heidegger Dasein is from the first "in-the-world," and only secondarily does it represent itself as a subject opposed to objects. As a good phenomenologist,

Heidegger digs beneath the Cartesian or substantialist notion of subjects and objects which implicitly determines contemporary common sense, the so-called "natural attitude," as well as the natural sciences. Though he is informed by Husserl's central notion of *intentionality*, Heidegger critically strips the latter of the second-order representational and methodological formalities to which an emphasis on transcendental subjectivity as conscious meaning-bestowal led Husserl. That is to say, Heidegger digs deeper than the representational or "doxic" prejudice to which Husserlian phenomenology succumbed. Thus his analytic is "existential," for it begins with the phenomenologically more grounded recognition of Dasein as an ecstatic or projected being-in-the-world. Dasein is no isolated subject facing or opposed to objects, leaving philosophy stymied with a rearguard effort to somehow link these two entities which are already and irrevocably sundered from the start. Rather, Dasein is in-the-world from the first, spread out "there" (*Da*) in its "being"— Dasein "ex-ists" or "is" as a being-in-the-world. What is unique about Dasein's way of being, however, is not simply its ecstatic or existential character, but rather that "it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it."[7] "*Understanding of Being,*" Heidegger emphasizes, "*is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being. Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is* ontological."[8] (It is to this, let us add, that we referred above in suggesting that Heidegger, too, and from the very beginning of his philosophical project, is implicated in the philosopher's root prejudice in favor of intelligibility.)

Dasein's originary understanding of being-in-the-world is anything but theoretical. One of the strengths of the existential analyses found at the beginning of *Being and Time* lies precisely in drawing attention to the primordial character of the world of tools and instrumentality, which means viewing the latter no longer as derivative properties of things, as attributes, say, added to objects which first present themselves as "present at hand" (*Vorhandenheit*) or as "objects" of theorizing. Rather, approaching things from within the *epoche* of the ontological-phenomenological perspective, i.e., "thrusting aside our [every-day] interpretive tendencies,"[9] Heidegger uncovers the instrumental world—the world of things "ready to hand" (*Zuhandenheit*)— as Dasein's initial environment of meaning, its original understanding of being.

Heidegger's analyses are now familiar. What has to be emphasized, however, are three points. First, that the primordial world of Dasein is a world of praxis. Second, that in such a world things make sense—are part of an ontological understanding— not through representation but through their use. And third, that this use requires and calls into play an entire *world* of instrumentality. That is to say, for Heidegger, Dasein's worldliness begins with the inter-referentiality of equipment, taking things as tools, equipment or gear (*das Zeug*), the "ready to hand" as a node in the "totality of equipment." Equipment makes sense as part of a world of equipment, and that world is Dasein's initial world of significance. "Taken strictly," Heidegger writes, "there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to . . .' ["*etwas um-zu*"]. A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability."[10] Already, then, if we do not see precisely the specific world of technology, we do see the world of instrumentality, of which technology is the absolute instance, as the primordial world of Dasein. The world of Dasein's being-in-the-world, then, is not first a world of objects, "present-to-hand," represented, or the theses posited by a theoretical consciousness, but rather an engagement within a world of instrumentality, of means, utility, a practical world. One thing, as it were, leads to another: the hammer hammers the nail, and is "understood" in such hammering; the cup holds the coffee, and is "understood" in its serviceability; the house shelters the family, and is "understood" in its protective sheltering. The two worlds or referential totalities— that of instrumentality and that of representation— are of course simultaneous; Heidegger's distinction is an analytic one; but the world of praxis constitutionally precedes and conditions the derivative or second order world of theory. It is not a world of inadequate intelligibility in rela-

HEIDEGGER AND TONNIES

tion to the primacy of the latter, as philosophers had hitherto argued, but rather a world with its own integral form of intelligibility, that of instrumental *praxis,* whose primacy makes it the source from which representation, in its own specificity, derives and determines its significations.

Now the point I wish to draw from all the above, that is, from the early analyses of the tool and instrumentality in *Being and Time* and the centrality of the question of technology and its extreme danger in his later thought, is that they are *strictly parallel*, two faces of the same coin as it were, one existential and the other ontological. To be sure, *Being and Time* is for Heidegger a "preparatory" analytic, preparing the "transcendental horizon" from within which he is able to ask the real question, the deepest or most fundamental question, namely, the "question of being," which is also the "question of technology," the question raised in all Heidegger's later works. In this, in first preparing the route and then engaging in what it opens up to, Heidegger's thought is like Hegel's, whose *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the historical-intellectual ladder one must climb to arrive at the pure Concept, which is itself elaborated in its pure truth in the *Science of Logic*. In Heidegger's case, however, *Being and Time* serves as the existential "Dasein analysis" which is the necessary prolegomena, the necessary preparation of Dasein itself, which is to say, of the "understanding of being" which Dasein is, for the possibility of properly asking the question of being from the point of view of being rather than man. Or to say this differently, the "mortals" of Heidegger's later "fourfold" of mortals, gods, earth and sky, are Dasein understandingly awakened to itself as historically situated anxious being-toward-death in *Being and Time*. After his analysis of "worldliness" in *Being and Time*, where we discover the primacy of the instrumental world, Heidegger turns successively to Dasein's "existential understanding," Dasein's "finite temporalizing" and finally to the manner in which Dasein is embedded in "historicizing," as the ever more profound horizons in which being manifests itself. Through all this development, however, we must not forget that the entire edifice began with and is built upon tools and the "referential

totality" or instrumental world within which tools make sense.

In *Being and Time,* given its limited propaedeutic objectives, the analysis of tools and the world of instrumentality ends up by referring to Dasein. The "in order to" of instrumentality refers finally to Dasein: "the 'for-the-sake-of' always pertains to the Being of Dasein,"[11] Heidegger writes. But he adds an important qualification: "We have thus indicated the interconnection by which the structure of an involvement leads to Dasein's very Being as the sole authentic 'for-the-sake-of-which'; *for the present, however, we shall pursue this no further.*"[12] When Heidegger does pursue this further, that is, when he has completed the Dasein-analytic of *Being and Time* and moves to the "question of being," it should come to us as no surprise, then, that the analyses of tools and the totality of equipment which appear at the beginning of *Being and Time*, and are left referring to Dasein, for the first time take on their full ontological significance as an instrumental world given by the historical-epoch-giving generosity of being—that is to say, as the age of technology. So, the answer to my initial question regarding the source of Heidegger's global determination of the current epoch as the "age of technology" is that it comes from the analyses of being-in-the-world as instrumentality which were left unfinished—lacking their full ontological contextualization—in *Being and Time*."[13] Dasein, in other words, begins in the instrumental world because, as we are only later in a position to discover and appreciate according to Heidegger's thought, that is precisely and specifically the historical world that being is presently giving to modern man.

Now we can ask a new question: Why is it important to see this link, this parallelism? It is important, it seems to me, because of the possibility—one which I believe is real—that the so-called "extreme danger" which Heidegger raises in his later "question of technology" arises from an internal error in Heidegger's own thought. That is to say, more specifically, the meaning and evaluation of technology as the "extreme danger" in his later thought is produced by *phenomenological failures, inadequacies*—analyses not fully carried through, the fixation of derivative structures as primary and total—in the earlier descriptions in *Being*

and Time of what is alleged to be Dasein's originary worldliness, the worldhood of tools and instrumentality. In other words, my claim is that the "extreme danger" Heidegger articulates and fears in technology is the result not of technology but of his own errors as a phenomenologist, the return of the repressed, as it were. Let me add straightaway, lest I am accused of naiveté or philosophical sleight of hand, that, even to go beyond Heidegger-qua-ontological-phenomenologist by uncovering deeper and therefore superior phenomenological analyses, or to see and evaluate technology in a non-Heideggerian light altogether, i.e., outside of the framing of the issue in terms of an occlusion or forgetfulness of the "ontological difference," it remains true nevertheless that technology certainly has its dangers. But the main point of my claim is that these dangers, such as they are, would no longer be the "extreme danger" that Heidegger alleges, and that Heidegger's extreme danger is one that he has precisely brought down upon himself.

Questioning the Question of Technology

It seems to me that at least two fundamental questions can be raised regarding the adequacy of Heidegger's analyses. One is phenomenological directly, having to do with the description of "worldhood," and hence closer to Heidegger's early analyses in *Being and Time*; the other is sociological-historical and hence phenomenological indirectly, having to do with the history of being, but for this reason, too, it is closer to Heidegger's later proposals regarding the essence of technology. Needless to say, for reasons of time, in the present context these two questions can be raised and developed only very briefly.

Regarding the first: one must ask—with a view to "the things themselves" —whether or not Heidegger's phenomenological analyses of worldliness are deep enough? I think a convincing, indeed a compelling phenomenological case can be made that Heidegger overlooked a deeper constitutive layer of signification regarding being-in-the-world, namely, the significance and import of embodiment. Human sensibility, these phenomenological analyses would show, does not find its basic constitutional significance

from work, from praxis, from tool use, from the world as a workshop, but rather from sensibility itself, from the sensuous "intertwining," as Merleau-Ponty called it, or the initial "enjoyment" (*jouissance*) as Levinas described it, of the sensational intimacy of sensing and sensed: the hand that touches the other hand is also touched by that hand. By uncovering and distinguishing a deeper layer of worldly being, the meaning of work and the instrumental world would then have to undergo significant phenomenological revisions as far as Heidegger's analyses go. The practical "understanding" of the hammer in hammering, for instance, would have to be supplemented—and revised—in view of the sheer sensuous "enjoyment" of hammering. It is impossible here to elaborate the phenomenological analysis of sentient being-in-the-world and its consequent impact on praxis. In compensation, however, I refer readers to the illuminating analyses of worldliness and sensibility found Maurice Merleau-Ponty's great phenomenological work, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), and finally to the no less brilliant phenomenological analyses of worldliness and sensibility elaborated in Section Two of Emmanuel Levinas's *Totality and Infinity* (1961), two major studies in phenomenology to whose analyses of sensible being-in-the-world Heidegger, apparently, never responded.[14] The latter, allow me to add, and the whole of Levinas's philosophy, by beginning with human being as self-sensing, appreciates in a way that Heidegger's thought does not the problem of suffering, which for Levinas raises profoundly moral issues. Beyond tool-use, where the body seems to be reduced to its hands, the body appears again in Heidegger when he discusses Dasein's awakening to its "authentic" being: as anxiety (*Angst*), not an anxiety for the suffering of others, but rather an anxiety over its ownmost being-toward-death, its care for itself. One would not be exaggerating a great deal to say that Heidegger's ontological-phenomenology has no serious account of human embodiment in its sensuousness.

Regarding the second question: one must ask—but now with a view to the social-historical context—whether or not Heidegger's thought—and most especially its claim regarding technology as a cul-de-sac for being,

i.e., the "extreme danger" —has been unduly and unwittingly influenced by a "worldview" then current in Europe and especially in post-World War I Germany regarding the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, the disparagement of so-called bourgeois values and liberal democracy, as well as of scientific rationality. More broadly, I am referring, of course, to the common romantic-nostalgic tendency to valorize selected dimensions of the pre-modern world to the detriment of certain new and problematic dimensions of modernity, dimensions which contributed to the mass horrors of the Great War and its economic consequences in the Great Depression. To explain what I mean further, with a view to Heidegger's conception of the thing and the referential totality of the instrumental world, I turn first to Marx and then to Frederick Tonnies.

Long before Heidegger, Adam Smith and even more emphatically Karl Marx distinguished between the "use-value" and the "exchange-value" of a commodity. Use-value, like the ready to hand, and as its name implies, refers to the usefulness of a thing. A hammer is valuable because it can be used to hammer nails. Some hammers are more or less valuable than others because they are better or worse at hammering. Exchange-value, in contrast, like the present-at-hand for representational consciousness, would be a thing's objectified value in a market economy. A hammer, however well or poorly crafted and functional, is also an item that can be bartered for other commodities, or bought or sold at a monetary price, both of which establish its equivalence—and exchangeability—with other objects. "We have seen," Marx writes in *Capital,* "that when commodities are in the relation of exchange, their exchange-value manifests itself as something totally independent of their use-value."[15] For Marx "value" remains the middle term linking use-value and exchange-value, and such value derives from labor, from the labor put into a thing to produce it. This is Marx's famous "labor theory of value." For Heidegger, too, there is a middle term: being. The world of praxis and the world of representation are both "worldhood," the manifestations of being which in *Being and Time* Heidegger uncovers as the "referential totality which constitutes significance."[16] For Marx, the proletariat, or, for Marxist-Leninism, the "party vanguard"

has special insight into the deceptions and oppressions which mask the true value of things, i.e., their labor value. The representations and values of the bourgeois, in contrast, only serve to mask oppression, the unequal ownership of the means of production, which separates labor value from exchange value. Likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, for Heidegger the "thinker" alone has the special insight, granted by the grace of being, to see through the closure or forgetfulness of being despite the pervasive unending "extreme danger" of the age of technology. So, a first problem, which I will articulate as a question: in any totalized vision of the world as a whole (capitalist, technological), where or how can one find an Archimedean point, as it were, both to make total claims in the first place and, no less important, to criticize the totality? If for Marx everything is determined by the dialectic of Capitalism, then from whence or how does one stand outside of or otherwise than Capitalism to see it and to criticize it? If for Heidegger everything is determined by being's epoch of technology, then from whence or how does one stand outside of or otherwise than Technology to see it and to be open to moving beyond?

Now Marx is quite clear that he wants a revolution: the overthrow of capitalism, whether by human will or by dialectical necessity (an issue one can debate forever). What is not in doubt is that capitalism is not only doomed, owing to internal contradictions, but it is bad, evil, wrong, unjust, oppressive, because it alienates and dehumanizes everyone, owners and dispossessed alike. Marx is clear, however, that capitalism is evil and that it produces—dialectically—its own demise. But what about Heidegger's thinking? Is it not apparent that Heidegger is being more than slightly disingenuous when he asks readers of his "fundamental ontology" and listeners to his "thinking" to bracket out—as merely "ontic" —the entire realm of moral judgment? Heidegger tells his readers in *Being and Time* that the distinction between the "ontic" and the "ontological," and the distinction between the "inauthentic" and the "authentic," to take only two instances of the dyadic form of thinking that runs through the entire text, are not *moral* distinctions.[17] Nevertheless, can there be any doubt that Heidegger *values* the ontological over the ontic, as he values the authentic over

the inauthentic (which latter, the inauthentic, is even explicitly called a "deficient" mode of being)? To be sure, Heidegger would have us believe that he is simply describing or reporting the voice of being, from the heights of authentic or genuine thinking, as it were. But even so, the descriptions and reports are very obviously permeated with valuations. It is certainly *better* for Dasein to be authentically, resolutely to be its ontological understanding of being, rather than to be lost in inauthentic chatter or abstract scientific calculation. It is better not only for Dasein but for being as well. No one who has read *Being and Time* can miss such a value judgment or pretend that it is not a valuation. In Heidegger's later thought the judgmental tone goes up several notches. It is clearly for the sake of being, better for being, that mortals, that is, the thinker where language truly languages, helps release being from the closure of technology. Being can then and only then truly be, giving generously of historical worlds, or at least of the next world beyond the modern technological closure. The thinker frees being for its own freedom. Like Marx, Heidegger's ontology is neither value free nor morally and politically neutral. Thus the second dimension of this question regarding Heidegger's question of technology: why this pretence to neutrality, to an indifference to moral judgment?

It is here precisely that we must invoke the larger social and historical context of Heidegger's writings, a context particularly relevant with regard to all the parallel dyadic distinctions and evaluations (ontic/ontological, demise/being-toward-death, authentic/inauthentic, time/temporalizing/ historiography/historicizing, thinking/representation, technology/essence, etc.) which run through all of his writings and give them their peculiar valence and orientation. In a social-economic register it is clear, too, that a similar set of distinctions and evaluations (commodity/humanity, alienation/integrity, division of labor/wholeness) run through Marx's writings, most evidently in his early 1844 Manuscripts, with their critique of man's self-alienation.[18] Let us note first that these dyads and valuations are not the inventions of Heidegger or Marx. In fact, they are borrowed from, and are found in, many diverse nineteenth and twentieth century writings, and are perhaps the great theme of

nineteenth century European thought and literature. Indeed, their lineage runs even deeper, for they are appropriations and prolongations of much older sociological-historical distinctions, elements of which existed as long ago as ancient Greece, but which increasingly became elaborated, rhetorically sharpened, and popularized in nineteenth and twentieth century European social thought as a critique of modernity. As an object of scientific study they are perhaps most clearly articulated in an influential book which was no doubt familiar to Heidegger: Ferdinand Tonnies's *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887; translated into English in 1957 as *Community and Society*).[19] Whether Heidegger was or was not familiar with this particular book, the social types it describes are fully at work in orienting all his thought.

The title of Tonnies' book refers to two social types—indeed two sorts of societies—distinct and opposed to one another. *Gemeinschaft* or "community" is society understood or lived as an organic wholeness; familial, neighborly and *Volkish* interpersonal relations, that is to say, people with close knit personal bonds; guided by and obedient to tradition or so-called "natural law"[20]; people living and working in small communities, working in crafts, people familiar with one another over lifetimes and across generations. Though he does not acknowledge it, it is precisely this social complex of meanings that Heidegger invokes when he speaks so tenderly of being "at-home" (*zuhause; heimlich*), of "homecoming" and "enrootedness," whose loss (*Heimat-losigkeit*) he bemoans in the face of the alienating large scale, the efficiency and the abstractness of technological "Enframing" (*Gestell*). The latter falls under the other social type described by Tonnies: *Gesellschaft* or "society." *Gesellschaft* is society as an aggregate of individuals, monads, human atoms, the lonely crowd; alienated individuals and interest groups; the anonymity of mass production and mechanical activity; merely formal and legalistic relations and freedom; artificial and superficial bourgeois ambitions and consumerism; the abstractions of scientific rationality; indeed, precisely the entire realm of Heidegger's "representational consciousness." But there is more that links Heidegger's dyadic thought to Tonnies' distinction. Ac-

HEIDEGGER AND TONNIES

cording to Tonnies, one can also distinguish *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* in terms of an opposition between city and country, the cosmopolitan and the rustic and/or national (e.g., "blood and soil"), or as one might say today, the global and the local. (I do not have to mention, for it is well known, and at what cost, the extent to which precisely the above "sociological" distinctions and valuations—with all that they contain of the mythological—determined so called "national-socialist" ideologies and regimes of twentieth century in Europe.)

This sociological distinction between community and society is surely at work in Marx, too, as I have indicated, as when he denounces the "alienation" and "dehumanization" of a capitalism driven by exchange-value rather than use-value, and speaks for the sake of a messianic-revolutionary regeneration of humanity in a future and final Communism (about which, owing to the totalizing of capitalism, Marx has next to nothing to say). It strikes me, and this is my critical thesis, that precisely this same dyadic and totalizing thinking has been adopted even more thoroughly and is at work even more profoundly in Heidegger's question of technology. I am referring not only to the structure of his thinking, though I refer to this primarily, but also to his language, the metaphors and examples, for instance Van Gogh's painting of peasant shoes contrasted to the hydro-electric plant on the Rhine, for all these replicate—ostensibly on a higher more exalted philosophical plane, to be sure—the familiar sociological distinctions of Tonnies: the cold, new and spreading anonymity of *Gesellschaft* denounced in the name of the lost world of a warm and friendly *Gemeinschaft*, the loss of manners, the loss of chivalry, a yearning for the quieter, slower "good old days." I wonder if we should distinguish not between the early and the later writings of Heidegger, but rather between the young and the old, the youthful and the jaded - except that from this point of view all of Heidegger's writings are an old man's grumblings from their very inception. One pictures Heidegger astonishing his fellow German intellectuals at Davos in 1929 because he was wearing lederhosen, because he interpreted Kant in terms of imagination and not rationality (in sharp contrast to Cassirer)—in other words, Heidegger's so called "stardom" and

"kingship," as it were, came not from the vision of a new future, as one might mistakenly think today, but rather and precisely from a mourning for an imagined past, the bygone days, from a denunciation of the present, indeed a well-worn denunciation of modernity and Enlightenment coming from a yearning for a return to the diminishing and dimming of a fancied braver and more glorious *ancien regime* (a sentiment, let me add, very much in step with larger social-ideological trends in Germany at that time).

It is because of the sheer obviousness of Heidegger's appropriation of this perennially popular fancy of the lost idyllic past, the lost Eden, in terms that Tonnies's study has made precise for nineteenth century Europe, yet with no acknowledgement of it whatsoever on Heidegger's part, and because of the enormous influence—deleterious, it seems to me—that it exerts on all of his thought, providing it with its fundamental orientation, and even more deeply because of the ethically problematic character of this oppositional thinking and evaluation, that I raise the following fundamental question and challenge: Is not this dyadic opposition, by the way it orients Heidegger's entire project, precisely nothing more or less than *a romantic fantasy supported by no more than a sentimental nostalgia*? And as such, is it not this, rather than the so-called "epoch of technology," that is the real danger of his thought? Furthermore, and given that this is the case, is it not a deeper insight than those entertained by Heidegger to realize that *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* are dialectical partners, circus mirror images, each the remainder produced and necessitated by their mutual abstraction and artificiality? And, because I believe that this is indeed the case, must we not realize that despite or perhaps because of its imaginary and mythological roots there is no conceptual opposition more profoundly *modern* - and hence more technological, to use Heidegger's term—than this one? Does not precisely *this* fantasy establish a far more profound and impenetrable masking—or "forgetfulness" or "superstructure"—than that which it pretends to surpass?

To radically demonize the whole of modernity in the name of imagined pre-modern forms, offered as revolutionary or revelatory possibilities, is really but another way—par-

ticularly tempting to philosophers apparently - of opting out of the always difficult and concrete engagements, the always singular obligations and responsibilities, which arise in the face of the many real accomplishments and problems that arise owing to the complexities, novelties and altered scales of life in modern times. Heidegger's question of technology is not only totalizing, not only yet another version of the philosopher's prejudice for intelligibility (explanation, understanding, thinking) as the solution to all the world's woes, but for these very reasons it endorses and enforces an intellectual (and practical) paralysis, and thereby once again perpetuates—from the pretended heights of "thinking"—the very world it intends to question.

Let me not be mistaken: I have nothing to say to disparage poets and poetry, or the arts more generally. Nevertheless, poets are not the saviors of the world, and certainly not the only response to certain problems arising from contemporary technologies. And that is to say, also, with regard to Heidegger, neither are "thinkers," especially those who fall dotingly into commonplace fancies regarding the "good old days" before factories, airplanes, television, cell phones and the internet. At the heart of my presentation I have tried to show, regarding the "extreme danger" which Heidegger fears, that it is Heidegger who hoisted himself on his own petard, having shut Dasein in a workshop in *Being and Time,* he has only himself to blame when later he is dismayed that according to his own lights the entire modern world is but the trap of Technology. The later totalized "epoch of technology" is a figment of Heidegger's own failure earlier as a phenomenologist. But it is also the reflection, as I have also tried to show, of a presupposed dyadic conceptualizing which runs through all of Heidegger's work from *Being and Time* to the later thinking of the question of technology, a reflection, both in its heuristic simplicity and its unacknowledged but obviously romantic valuations, of a very modern nostalgia—one especially exasperated and prevalent in post-WWI Germany—which pits the fantasized idyll of a past of happy *Gemeinschaft* against a no less fantastic present of a completely alienating *Gesellschaft*, as these two types have been clearly presented in the work of Frederick Tonnies.

ENDNOTES

1. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 62.
2. Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 33.
3. Ibid., 28, 31, *et passim*.
4. Ibid., 32.
5. Ibid., 35.
6. *Being and Time*, Part One, Division Three; 91–149.
7. Ibid., 32.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., 96.
10. Ibid., 97.
11. Ibid., 116–17.
12. Ibid., 117 (my italics).
13. Clearly, then, I disagree with the creative and sometimes rhetorical reading of Heidegger on tools, instrumentality, and technology by Graham Harman in *Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (Chicago: Open Court Publishers, 2002), in favor of what I take to be a more textual-hermeneutically sound reading of *Being and Time*, my own here and that of many other commentators, for instance, Michael Zimmerman in *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity: Technology, Politics and Art* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). While Harman no doubt wants to save Heidegger from certain unfortunate consequences of the analysis of instrumentality in *Being and Time* by harmonizing it with Heidegger's later—after the *Kehre*—analyses of technology, it is more accurate and illuminating, it seems to me, to reveal how the former analysis grounds, exacerbates and ultimately produces the difficulties regarding technology which Heidegger finds himself in later. As we know, Heidegger himself came to bemoan the subjectivist tendencies of *Being and Time*, which does not mean, however, that he escaped them.
14. I would also mention, in this regard, Herbert Dreyfus's argument that the reason computers do not have human intelligence is not because they

are not sufficiently quick or complex, but because they lack sensuous embodiment. See, Herbert Dreyfus, *What Computers Can't Do* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972).

15. Karl Marx, *Capital,* (New York: Vintage, 1977), 128; chapter 1, no. 1, paragraph 12.

16. *Being and Time*, 160. Friedrich Nietzsche, in *On the Genealogy of Morals,* conjoins representational consciousness and economic exchange by suggesting that thinking itself originates in economic transactions, that is to say, in finding equivalences, "this for that," three pigs for a horse, which by a natural abstraction becomes "this as that," a horse is . . . "Setting prices, determining values, contriving equivalences, exchanging—these preoccupied the earliest thinking of man to so great an extent that in a certain sense they constitute thinking *as such*." (Second Essay, Section 8; Kaufmann translation). Beyond the truth or falsehood of this suggestion, it is certainly clever. Especially so when we consider the satisfaction Nietzsche must have had throwing it into the face of the vulgar anti-Semites, whom he despised, from his own "nation of thinkers" (Wagner included) who had only contempt for the Jew they reduced to the stereotypes of the cunning businessman, the loan shark, the shyster – lacking entirely the humanity and compassion a Shakespeare was able to compose for his Shylock.

17. See, e.g., the particularly tortured analyses of Dasein's "guilt" (*Being and Time*, 325–35).

18. See, Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, ed. Dirk J. Struik, trans. Martin Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1964); and Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1961), which also contains translations, by Tom B. Bottomore, of Marx's "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," and other relevant writings.

19. Ferdinand Tonnies, *Community and Society,* trans. and ed. Charles P. Loomis (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).

20. The proponents of "natural law" theory, for instance Leo Strauss, are in truth making a *theological* defense of *Gemeinschaft,* for they cannot—in the final account—justify the "naturalness" of natural law in any other terms than those which are used to "justify" divine providence or the will of God. After all, no one is compelled to cut a chicken at its joints. In this instance, ironically, theology is more honest than philosophy. Heidegger, who has the integrity to not explicitly revert to natural law theory, instead brushes rather closely with the language of theology (e.g., the "saving power" of being; "only a god can save us now").

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