Protocol, Graduate Seminar – Adorno and Heidegger
Class Session: 6-9 - Date: October, 2010
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Topic: Heidegger on technology and thinghood

Abbreviations
ND = Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*; AP = Adorno, *The Actuality of Philosophy*; TH = Heidegger, *The Thing*; NPT = Adorno, *Notes on Philosophical Thinking*; EF = Adorno, *The Essay as Form*; IM = Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*; LH = Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*; SO = Adorno, *Subject and Object*; MTP = Adorno, *Marginalia to Theory and Praxis*; WCT = Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking;* WSP = Adorno, *Why still Philosophy?*; KCPR = Adorno, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*; KPM = Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*; WT = Heidegger, *What is a Thing?*; QCT = *Question Concerning Technology*; TT = Heidegger, *The Thing*; BDT = Heidegger, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*

Heidegger's *What is a Thing?*

In section two Heidegger repeats the Aristotelian claim that Being can be said in many ways by outlining that we can use the term "thing" in many ways. As Heidegger points out, "thing" can either refer to something present-at-hand, to decisions, plans, etc., or to "something" in general (WT 6). Though the English term "thing" covers well what Heidegger has in mind, we should note that the German term "Ding" has a few connotations that remain invisible to English readers: "bedingt" means "conditioned," "Ding" refers to a middle age place for trials and court procedures (old German towns often contain the word "ding," such as "Unterdingen," "Oberdingen," "Heinrich von Ofterdingen"), "unbedingt" means "absolute," "Ding" can refer to young females, "verdingen" refers to working and selling oneself, "dingfest machen" means to "catch someone," and in colloquial German one can say "Das ist ja ein Ding," which means "What a thing!" or "Dinge besprechen," which means "to talk something over." As Heidegger points out, usually we use the word "Ding" in the sense of something present-at-hand, as something posited. Though the question of thinghood seems to refer to something in our everyday life, given that we mean something that is "around us," Heidegger soon allows us to see that this seemingly simple question is really a fundamental question, which is not easy to respond to. For since the sciences can only address the question of things as a question of kinds (zoological things, physical things, biological things, etc.), the sciences are not able to appropriately respond to the question of what a thing is. In each scientific attempt to find a solution, a species concept is already in play and is presupposed: "We do not ask concerning a thing of some species but after the thingness of a thing" (WT 8). The real question, accordingly, is whether we want to accept science as the measure for such questions or not, and, as Heidegger underlines, the question of whether scientific knowledge becomes the determining way of asking is a historical question. By "historical" Heidegger does not have in mind a reference to the past; rather, he claims that we are asking a historically *decisive* question and that responding to the question will determine the fate of metaphysics and Being. Put differently, the question of thinghood is historical when it is *time to ask the question*. Since Heidegger assumes that a basic transformation of metaphysics into science and technology has happened behind our backs, we are asked to think about what happened there:

> "The answer to the question 'What is a Thing?' is different in character. It is not a proposition but a transformed position or, better still and more cautiously, the initial transformation of the hitherto existing position toward things, a change of questioning and evaluation, of seeing and deciding; in short, of the being-there (Da-sein) in the midst of what is (inmitten des Seienden)" (WT 50)

The question of whether the question of thinghood is a scientific question is important for two additional reasons: [1] it forces us to ask whether metaphysics becomes replaced by science, and [2] it forces us to see that the sciences might be more "real" than we might assume. As Heidegger points out, the "things" around us, such as nuclear reactors, cars, computers, television, radio, airplanes, weapons, materials, etc. are already "scientific" (WT 13-14). Instead of being *near* to the things around us, we instead experience them as something else: science and technology. What he has in mind here, becomes much clearer when we take other essays into account (such as *Language* and *The Thing*): things as the event of world (Heidegger's position) become replaced by things as the essence of representation, calculation, and, finally, standing-reserve. The reification of our world is addressed by Heidegger, though not using these Marxist terms, as the process of "de-worlding." Heidegger's strategy in WT is to lead us to the Kantian question by way of examining how the tradition has addressed the question and to demonstrate that the simple reference to the "things around us" do not lead to anything substantial. He refers to the following two main ways of reflecting on thinghood: [1] the thing as an individuated entity and as an object for demonstratives, as well as [2] the thing as the bearer of properties. In the history of metaphysics both [1] and [2] were combined with the claim that the truth of the thing has something to do with propositions *about* the thing (question of truth). Accordingly, for Heidegger, the "thing-question" is *the* question that must be addressed by philosophy if we want to understand the metaphysical framework within which we exist and if we want to prepare a historical confrontation with our own epoch.

Thinking about things

Heidegger discusses these traditional ways of speaking about things in *What is a Thing?* and in his essay *The Origin of the Work of Art*. He often discusses three major ways in which the tradition addressed thinghood: [1] Material/Form, [2] Bearer/Properties, and [3] unity/manifold. The first metaphysics of things is based on the thing as matter (hyle) and its form, which are "composited" (OWA 152). The thing as formed matter can be laid out in different ways: matter can be formed by "ideas," and when we think in modern terms, a mind forms matter through concepts. However, the matter/form distinction may also turn into a *productive* paradigm, within which everything is something *created* (for use). A subclass of [1], which is only mentioned once by Heidegger in his essay on the artwork, is derived from the first thing metaphysics. The bearer is here understood as a thing or material thing + something signified (meaning). Since the meaning is usually understood as something mental, we can conclude that (what I would call) the semiotic conception of thinghood is based on a mix between material bearer and an idea, which would ultimately lead us back to [1]. The second metaphysics of things is based on the claim that the thing is a bearer of properties and is the oldest definition, as it comes out of either the Ancient term *hypokeimenon* or the Roman translation *subjectum*. The *hypokeimenon*, in addition, is understood as the *ground* of the thing (OWA 149) and in modern philosophy it becomes transformed into the object/primary/secondary/property distinctions. The third metaphysics of the thing is only mentioned in the art essay, but not in *What is a Thing?* This metaphysical paradigm tries to determine thinghood as the *aistheton* and what is perceived through the senses, which then, in turn, is accessible in its unity. The thing is then the "unity of the manifold" (OWA 151), according to this view. As Heidegger already argues in BT, this idea of things is totally inappropriate, as we are never related to things as sense-data and empirical experience. This paradigm essentially does not see the metaphysical underpinnings of itself. Heidegger criticises all of the underlying ontologies as inappropriate, though it seems as if Kant somehow deserves a special place in this picture, given that Heidegger seems to assume that Kant not only brought the metaphysical tradition to new heights, but was also on his way to breaking through the tradition. Though Heidegger admits that "Kant does not pose the question of the thingness of the things that surround us" (WT 128), and that Kant works out the metaphysics of thinghood within the historical

framework of the modern sciences and the reduction of thinghood to nature, Heidegger repeatedly points out that Kant's take on the relationship between concept and intuition deserves special attention. For he states that he cannot simply extend the thinghood of things as natural: "this is impossible because the definition of the thing and the way it is set up include fundamental presuppositions that extend over the whole of being and to the meaning of being in general" (WT 129). What Heidegger has in mind here is that Kant's ontology is not only a single theory about knowledge or experience; but rather, that Kant offers the best example of an underlying understanding of Being that still determines our epoch.

Representation and Nearness

So, what is the alternative that Heidegger tries to work out and offer? Heidegger's answer is simple: what we call a "thing" is not something that has a "fixed" essence and thinghood; rather, it is the unique way in which something reveals itself through and as world. The task is no longer metaphysical; instead, it is phenomenological, insofar as it means to think the thing *as* thing (and not as something different than the thing, such as substance, nature, lawfulness, etc.) (TT 166). According to Heidegger, things are *near* to us (= *not* represented and available as standing reserve) when we realize that they *and us* are being part of an event through which things constitute themselves *as worlds*. Heidegger addresses the "worlding" of entities not only in BT, but also in his later essays. He discusses three major aspects: world as the coming into being of an entity through [1] *poiesis* (four causes), and [2] what he calls the "fourfold." The non-representational "relationship" that we enter towards entities when we see them and us as being part of the event of "the world's worlding" (177) is introduced through the term "sparing" (*schonen*). Sparing is the opposite of making and is closely connected to Heidegger's attempt to shift our description of thinking as thanking (see earlier protocol). As such, sparing (or taking care of) enters into a non-productive relation towards the *essence* of the thing. Rather than *making* or producing the essence, humans allow entities to be what they are, namely, things/worlds, and, as a consequence, the essence can be seen as what it is, namely, as that which "grants" beings their Being (QCT 336). He says: "When and in what do things appear as things? They do not appear (as things) *by means of* human making." (TT 179). In sum, what Heidegger calls for is very simple and yet very difficult: to overcome thinking as representation, which, in Adorno's terms would lead to overcoming reification. Included herein, as he outlines at the end of the technology essay, is a different idea of "essence:" essence no longer is something that is as a universal separated from the individual and existence; rather, it is the *unique* configuration [*Fuge*] of how the dimensions of world play together and come together - poetically. A river for Heidegger (and Hölderlin) is a *place* that allows for a site, which in turn leads to a unique gathering of earth, sky, mortals, and divinities (=measure). "Here, however, we wish to build," as Hölderlin's *The Ister* has it, and, as we know, building for Heidegger is dwelling (BDT 350). Heidegger's claim that things ultimately are worlds (=meaningfulness) whose Being is event comes very close to Adorno's claim that living in a non-reified world would mean that we live in a diversity of objects "not wrought by any schema" (ND 13) and not based on control. Put in Heidegger's words, "to save [*retten*] properly means to set something free into its own essence" (BDT 352).[1]

Kant's Questioning

It is surprising that both Heidegger and Adorno return to Kant over and over again during their lifetime. Although, ultimately, their reaction is negative, we can see why Kant remains a special dialogue partner for both: Adorno returns to Kant, as he rejects any form of Hegelian dialectics. As a consequence, Adorno needs to return to a Kantian philosophy that takes *both* concepts *and* intuition (for Adorno this

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[1] See also last protocol on Adorno's concept of models.

means experience) as two independent sources of knowledge and action seriously. Heidegger returns to Kant for the same reason, though with a different center, namely, for Kant's (implicit) attempt to think the logos and rationality itself *as* finite. Though Kant speaks of spontaneity and receptivity as two different "stems" of knowledge, Heidegger tries to show that in the schematism chapter as well as in other places Kant breaks through this sharp division. The claim that is raised in *Introduction to Metaphysics* is that *noesis* is itself a form of receiving (=*listening* in Heidegger's lecture course *What is Called Thinking*). Indeed, time revels itself as the inner center of *noesis*.

Heidegger's interpretation of the schematism in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*

Coming soon

The problem of schematism in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*

According to Adorno, Kant has (unintentionally) conceptualized what the culture industry realizes: the world gets precensored according to standards that determine *what can be perceived*.:

> "The true nature of the schematism which externally coordinates the universal and the particular, the concept and the individual case, finally turns out, in current science, to be the interest of industrial society. Being is apprehended in terms of manipulation and administration. Everything – including the individual human being, not to mention the animal – becomes repeatable, replaceable process, a mere example of the conceptual modes of the system. Conflict between administrative, reifying science, between the public mind and the experience of the individual, is precluded by the prevailing circumstances. The senses are determined by the conceptual apparatus in advance of perception: the citizen sees the world as made *a priori* of the stuff from which he himself constructs it" (DoE 65)

Accordingly, Adorno now gives the schematism as a cognitive process a wider meaning, as he – in good old materialist fashion – interprets the reduction of knowledge to "mere" cognition as *the same* as social cognition. What can be known is – on the large scale – precisely determined by the process of schematization, through which universal and individual, concept and intuition, as well as intellect and experience, are "framed." This framework is, in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* again conceived as reification (and in the above quote scientific reification): what we experience has gone through a schema that "allows" us to *detect* in our experience only that which was prefabricated through the schema. In an astonishing move, Adorno even gives the famous interpretation of the culture industry a new turn:

> "Kant intuitively anticipated what Hollywood has consciously put into practice: images are precensored during production by the same standard of understanding which will later determine their reception by viewers. The perception by which public judgment feels itself confirmed has been shaped by that judgment even before the perception takes place" (DoE 65)

The inner meaning of the culture industry chapter is clearly centered on the function of the schematism. We might ask: does this really make sense? Are we permitted to interpret the *Critique of Pure Reason* in this fashion? The only way to make a good argument for this materialist interpretation of Kant is again to return to what we said above: we need to show that knowledge has something to do with the primordial relation between humans and nature, i.e., that rationality is intermingled with the natural history of humans. Though Heidegger would have rejected this move, he comes astonishingly close to Adorno here, insofar as Heidegger claims, too, that representational thinking is the metaphysical basis for our own age. In addition, we need to see the relation between time and schematism. A world in which we can only experience what is schematized and filtered in advance will also not establish a non-

schematized relation towards the future, which for Adorno means that we no longer can see the utopian core of our experience. In other words, we no longer are able to *imagine* "that" other world. The problem of a non-schematized future brings us right back into phenomenology, as we can ask in what way future is and can be non-schematized (Husserl vs. Derrida).

Reification in Heidegger

Though Heidegger is not using this term, we can, at this point of our seminar, safely make the following claims: reification in Heidegger means [1] that beings are revealed in a way that their own *revealed* character remains hidden and forgotten, [2] that beings are in danger of losing world in the age of modern technology (although not through all kinds of technology), and [3], that beings are revealed as *material cause* only, and as *mere* materiality (materiality here understood as "stuff"). The simple schema of stuff and matter gets a new sense here, as we are now living in an age in which beings *really* became just "stuff," i.e. something that is available 24/7 for an infinite range of purposes and "forms" that remain *external* to "stuff." In contrast to this move, Heidegger tries to show that things as things depend upon a *non-causal relationship between the four causes* and upon a *non-productive relationship between the four dimensions* of world. So, perhaps (though I am not totally sure) we might say that for Heidegger, the schematization of our experience has something to do with the understanding of Being as causality (from which instrumentality is derived): "enframing challenges forth into the frenziedness of ordering that blocks every view into the proprieive event of revealing and so radically endangers the relation to the essence of truth" (QT 338)

Heidegger on technology

According to Heidegger's notes in the 40s, technology is determined as the "the condition of the possibility of thinghood as effectiveness – force – of beings [Wirksamkeit]" (GA 76, my translation). As such, technology is not understood there as a kind of entities (machines, etc.); rather, it is conceived as a basic form of metaphysics, and, as Heidegger seems to prefer, as the *fulfillment of Western Metaphysics* as a form of absolute subjectivity: anthropology (ibid.) and efficient producing. Heidegger seems to think, in the context of his Nietzsche lecture course, that technology is the most extreme form of making, producing, creating, and as such, it is the most extreme form of subjectivity, the thought of which brings him close to Adorno and Horkheimer, and can be understood as an echo of WWII.[2] The technology essay, which appeared later (1956), shifts the focus back to instrumentality and should be seen within the context of the essay on art and the "Bremen lectures," which are four lectures that Heidegger gave in Bremen in 1949 on "The Thing," "The Danger," "The Enframing [*Gestell*]," as well as "The Turning" (GA79). The most important point to keep in mind is the following: the difference between non-modern and modern technology, according to Heidegger, is based upon two forms of causality: instrumentality is the first form of causality and standing-reserve [*Bestand*] is the second form of causality.

In order to clarify the confusion that our debate produced last week, let us reconstruct what Heidegger does in the technology essay: [1] he states his main thesis that technology should not be understood as [a] instrumental (i.e., determined by a means-end structure), or [b] as produced by human activity. As he further explains, [a] would lead to an essence of technology as *causality* (QT 316) and [b] would lead to an essence of technology as *product* (Heidegger does not mention it, but he has labor in mind here). [2] After his main thesis, Heidegger claims that our understanding of technology as something

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[2] This background would include the militarism, mass killings, breeding (GA 76, 294), biologism (ibid., 305) etc; see also ibid., 304, where Heidegger claims that technology is not a means toward an end in world wars but that it is its basic structure. In addition, he refers to Lenin, Russia and takes the connection of school and factory as a sign of modern technology (ibid., 301).

instrumental is incorrect because we have an incorrect understanding of the four causes introduced by Aristotle in his *metaphysics*. [3] He further claims that the four causes have something to do with "indebtedness," which leads him to his claim that the essence of technology is *poiesis*, which in turn is a form of *revealing* [*Entbergen*]. The essence of technology, accordingly, is a way in which entities *as* entities become accessible. *Poiesis* is the *condition of the possibility* of being related to beings and we should therefore reject Prof. Whyte's thesis that technology has something to do with how I *empirically* experience things in the world. The speed bump, to take up his example, *is* only conceivable *as* a speed bump if it appears within a general schema of matter and form. Of course, we *could* conceive of the speed bump as something outside of modern technology, but we would then no longer speak of a speed bump; rather, we would turn it into something else – a *place*, poetically conceived. It is certainly true that Heidegger is a phenomenologist, but as he warns us already in BT, phenomena usually *do not show themselves as themselves from themselves* (BT section 7). In his later essays Heidegger remains a transcendental philosopher (broadly construed), inasmuch as he tirelessly points out that something (thinghood) makes something else (experience) possible. [4] Heidegger then introduces the essence of modern technology. He claims that modern technology is still a form of revealing, but the revealing is now of a different character, which he calls *challenging* [*Herausfordern*]. This transition is important, as we can reject the claim that the difference between modern and non-modern technology seems to be absolute in Heidegger. It is rather the opposite: there is no essential difference between modern and non-modern technology. What changes, however, is the *instrumentality* itself, which, as we need to recall, is the relationship between the four causes for Heidegger. Consequently, modern technology is characterized by the opposite or destruction of indebtedness, which leads to Heidegger's implicit claim that modern technology is characterized by our *usual* way of understanding the four causes (separate from each other), the main consequence of which is that the *material* moment of beings becomes *separated* from the other three. The cause-effect relation replaces causality as indebtedness and instrumentality. "It seems," as Heidegger puts it, "as though causality is shrinking into a reporting" (QT 328). This separation leads him to introduce the *standing-reserve* [Bestand]. The German word "Bestand" means something that is "just there," positive, stripped from its context. As he underlines, the being od beings as standing-reserve no longer is encountered as a thing [*Gegenstand*], i.e., is no longer encountered as something represented (remember how H. interpreted this in his Kant lecture course); alternatively, it now is encountered on the basis of its *orderability* [Bestellbarkeit] or, perhaps better, on the basis of *availablity*. The difference between positing (Gesetz, setzen) and setting up (enframing, Gestell) is that representation means that the object is, through its lawfulness, *able* to be experienced, and that setting up means that the object is encountered as something that is ordered to do something, i.e., it is something that has to react to our inquiries and to be *available* for humans. I do not see how the speed bump example, even if we see it from a social point of view, breaks out of this schema.

The German term that Heidegger also uses in this context is "Verwahrlosung," which means "in a state of dilapidation" and neglected[3], as well as, literally, "without being kept safe" (as "verwahren" means to "store away" and to "keep safe") (see also GA79, 47). The state of neglect is identical with thinghood as being identical with *available material*. In addition, Heidegger refers to this context at the end of the technology essay when he discusses the concept of essence. Modern technology is a form of the Being of beings that makes them "essence-" and form-less. They no longer find their way into their primordial essences and instead they become *identical* and *uni-form* [GA76, 321: "gleich-förmig"]. Put differently, everything has the same essence and is therefore essentially the same. Uniformity precisely means that entities become *essentially* undistinguishable, which in turn implies, that they do not have no different

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[3] For this, also see Harries 1994, 230.

essences and therefore lose their specificity (see last protocol on Adorno). This sounds *exactly* like Adorno/Horkheimer in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* and this mirrors Adorno's worries in his *Negative Dialectics* that the destruction of the non-identical leads to uniformity. Moreover, as Heidegger says, essence should not be understood as a *universal* (as he rejects in BT the claim that Being is a universal concept); rather, it is that what *permits* being to be (Being) [*Gewährende*]. The German term "gewähren" refers to something that allows something else to be or to do something (essence in the Heideggerian sense); the term "währen" refers to something that remains in its presence (essence in the Platonic sense). "Währen" (presence) has something to do with how something looks (*eidos*) and how it is represented; "gewähren" has something to do with how something can *be at home with itself*. Essence, then, is no longer conceived by Heidegger as something that is universal in contrast to the individual exemplar; rather, essence is the possibility of something to be *itself* in unique configurations. For example, the essence of the silver chalice to which he refers in the technology essay, comes into being through the indebtedness of the formal, efficient, and final cause to the material cause that make up *in their configuration* the world of the silver chalice. *What* the silver chalice *is* is not determined by an abstract essence entitled "silver chalice;" rather, it is that which *allows* the silver chalice to be a silver chalice (and not something else). For example, the silver use for the chalice not only makes it possible that the form of the chalice is indebted to the silver (= it is a form for *this* silver), but also make it possible that the silver can come out and be experienced *as* silver in this configuration of causes, which ultimately reveal the instrumentality of the chalice. Silver as a material – disconnected from a world – does not reveal anything and cannot present itself with its unique features to us. *What* silver is, in other words, can only come out when it is part of the chalice experienced as a world. The essence of the thing, then, *grants* the thing to be itself. Accordingly, the silver chalice essence is not simply there or comes into being through its representational being; rather, the Being of that entity can be addressed as a silver chalice (and not something else) is an *event: the event of worlding.*

In sum, to read Heidegger as an environmental philosopher (the thesis of which Prof. Thompson rejected) makes sense, as Heidegger claims that modern technology is simply a specific form of causality. I do not think that we find a complex ecological theory in Heidegger, but it is clear that the positive outline of thinghood in Heidegger has much to do with a non-exploitative relationship to beings. As virtually all modern technology is based on science and modern science presupposes a new ontology of nature, all modern technology is ultimately a new ontology of entities (with emphasis on material). Nature is here understood as something that has to *respond to our inquiry*, that has to be available for us, and that has to be ready to be used in all kinds of contexts.

We can therefore also reject Prof. Whyte's thesis that it is unclear how we can historically differentiate between modern and non-modern technology. As soon as we admit that there is a difference between these, then we may and should also assume that there is an *ontological* difference between them, and, accordingly, we need to spell the ontological assumptions out. However, this does not mean that we no longer can conceive of beings in a form of non-modern technology; it only means that we need to make a difference between both. For example, it is possible to still experience a world in our modern epoch (see Heidegger's description of the countrypath), but those experiences remain *individual* experiences that remain alienated from the overall system.

Finally, the focus on the material cause should lead to the insight that Heidegger is here concerned with what he calls in the essay *The Thing* "the fourfold," especially the *earth*. Heidegger tries to shift the discussion about the four causes into a new dimension that sometimes he calls "world" (see his essays on language and BT) and sometimes "the fourfold." I contend that all of these essays ultimately are a meditation on the concept (and word) *cause*. As we know, Heidegger takes the history of metaphysics to be based on what he calls "onto-theology," which has one major aspect, namely, that the Being of

beings ultimately was founded upon a first or highest Being, which then leads to the framework of metaphysical concepts, such as cause, ground, reason, object, etc. As a consequence, Heidegger claims that we see a shift between modern and non-modern technology mainly in how entities are understood as *natural* entities. According to Heidegger, a thing can only show itself *as* a thing if it is able to present and reveal the world that allows it to be what it is, namely, a thing. In contrast, modern technology is the understanding of thinghood as available stuff. Earth, however, refers to the material and how it becomes part of a world that is on the one hand measured (divinities), and, on the other hand, finite (mortals). Earth, put differently, makes a *site* possible through providing a place for all dimensions. The more it is integrated into the world, the less it stands out *as* material. The wind is enjoyed and shows itself *as* wind when we are on a sailing boat (though it is used); likewise, the forest and wood shows itself as forest and wood in the roof and sidings of the Bavarian farmhouse. And still yet, the rock shows itself *as* rock in Frank Lloyd Wrights *Fallingwater*. So, the main point that we should keep in mind here is the following: instrumentality as such is *no problem* for Heidegger: we just need to dig deeper into what we mean by instrumentality.

Heidegger and Materialism

From what I have outlined in the last section, it should become clear that Heidegger – with his thesis about the standing reserve – is extremely close to Adorno's reification thesis, understood as the reduction of everything to the availability of matter (and the *causa materialis*) is the best expression of what Adorno calls *Positivism*.[4] The fact that *everything* is ordered to be something (without letting it be) implies that nothing is left that remains hidden and inaccessible. The truth of Being is here the *total accessibility* of entities. Metaphysically put, thinghood is defined in terms of a thing being ready for us to do with it whatever we want. From this point it should be clear why Heidegger is – consequently – skeptical about ethics as a way of "stopping" or limiting the universality of accessibility, as he thinks that *thinking* itself[5], i.e., the metaphysics of our age, *defines* entities as entities in terms of standing reserve. Modern technology, we could translate, leads to the pure positedness of entities and, as a consequence, to their pure availability. Human beings are part of this: they become mere material.[6] To be clear on this point: material can be seen as a mode of poesis and in connection with the other three causes (see above). Material in this sense *allows* us to see the "harmony" of everything in each thing. Material in the modern sense is understood as something disconnected from the other causal aspects and *something to be used up* (including human beings). Pure availability means that the object is *totally* reduced to using it, making it, etc. We can see here that Heidegger holds the same thesis as Adorno: the total subjectivization (in Heidegger: the total availability of everything) leads to a destruction of the object. There is nothing that *hides* itself or, in Adorno's terms, that functions as a remainder to the conceptual grip of rational activity (=labor process). With this shift, the understanding of instrumentality as a form of causality subjectivity has posited itself as the object itself. It is interesting to see that in unpublished manuscripts Heidegger deals with labor much more, which he interprets (as Adorno does) as a subjectivization of the world. Finally, the total availability of all entities has often been diagnosed thus: the capitalist system can expand as long as it is able to transform more and more into commodities, which presupposes precisely an understanding of thinghood as standing-reserve.

Bleibt mir der Erde treu!

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[4] In other writings Heidegger uses the term "Verfuegbarkeit" [availability] instead of Bestand [standing-reserve].

[5] Thinking as making and activity vs. thinking as *letting-be* (to free something); see GA76, 322. Again, letting-be not only means allowing something else to *be* what it is, but also to get involved with [*sich einlassen auf*], concepts that could be reconstructed in terms of Adorno's ND.

[6] This point is repeatedly made by Harries; see, for example, Harries 1994, 229.

We are now at a point – hopefully - where we see more clearly Heidegger's attempt to positively outline a new thing conception. Three aspects are of importance in this context: [1] the relation between essence and beings, [2] the relation between building and sparing, and [3] letting be (free relationship to technology). It seems to me that all four dimensions that Heidegger mentions (fourfold, four causes) are ultimately tied back to what he calls *earth* in the essay on the origin of art, insofar as the reduction of beings to availability and the material cause leads to new conceptions of materiality, of space, of time, and to what we nowadays call "globalization." In the *Ister* lecture, he puts this the following way:

> "To this end, "space" itself becomes reduced to "coordinates:" *x, y,* : - "coordinates" meaning lines of ordered relationality. These coordinates, thought analytically, that is, arithmetically and algebraically, are at the same time numbers that, as they change, in each case determine the location of whatever spatial clement is se located in each instance. If the spatial element is thought of as being in motion, that is, as something that constantly changes its location "in the succession of time," then a fourth coordinate, namely one-dimensional "time," becomes necessary for the complete ordering of the thing that is in motion. It is only most recently that the decisive step was taken of conceiving of time as a "world-line," and of ordering it as a fourth dimension by relation to the spatial coordinates. The four-dimensional spatio-temporal world, and it alone, determines every worldly element as such an element. Yet for calculative observation something is what it is only through what it performs. And performance, that is, labor per unit of time, is determined in terms of the product of force and distance divided by time. The actuality of whatever is actual is determined, that is, measured in terms of the magnitude of its actual effect. And the magnitude of actual effect is not some mere properly of whatever is actual but is itself that which alone is valid as actual. What is actual is nothing other than the quantum of actual effect." (I 40).

Efficiency, accordingly, is not only central in terms of modern rationality; rather, it is central in terms of cause and effect. Heidegger is concerned with space and time as something that *belongs* to something and thereby enters a different relationship to that something. A site, for example, as he explains in the building essay, is something that establishes itself *as* a site only through what Heidegger calls a "locale" and a place. The relationship, accordingly, is one of *indebtedness* between locale, site, and place. This relationship differs from a quantitatively conceived space defined by *logical* (quantity) and causal relations. "Space" is not simply "there" as something *into which* things appear; rather, space *is* only space if it comes into being through *spatial realization* [*Einraeumung*]. Space is the *result*, not the *condition* for a thing such as the vessel or the bridge. What Heidegger means by "void" in his essay on the vessel is more clearly expressed in his essay on building, within which he talks about the *locale* of the bridge. He says:

> "But only something *that is itself a locale* [Ort] can make space for a site [Stätte]. The locale is not already there before the bridge is. Before the bridge stands, there are of course many spots along the stream that can be occupied by something. One of them proves to be a locale, and does not so *because of the bridge*. Thus the bridge dies not first come to a locale to stand in it; rather, a locale comes into existence only by virtue of the bridge" (BDT 356).

Heidegger's thesis is clear: building *lets* a locale be by gathering all aspects of the fourfold (and the four causes) together and allowing them to appear within a unity. Similarly, the space is not "there" before it is filled by the vessel; rather, the space is coming out and *can appear through* the vessel. The craftsman "shapes the void" (T 167) and not the clay. As he puts it in the building essay, it *frees* space by allowing space to *be something spatial* and spatialized/organized [*Eingeräumtes*] (BDT 356).

Conclusion

If we take into account what I have outlined so far, we should come to the conclusion that both the problem of the culture industry within the administered society, as well as technology as causality, can be understood as forces that take hold and control the way in which we synthesize our conceptual acitivities with our experiences. Both cultural schematism and technology determine *in advance* not only how we are in the world, but also *what* "objects" and things *are*, i.e. their objecthood. Both "enframings" take hold of the way in which we *imagine,* which is to say, how we are related to the future, and of what we are able to *experience*. As Adorno tirelessly repeats, our framework does not allow us to experience the *really* new and *really* other. The fact that everything becomes reduced to *presence*, as Heidegger claims, implies that future *as* future – the event, the unexpected, the extraordinary, etc. - no longer can be experienced.[7]

Questions
Jeez... Are you crazy?

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[7] Here we should look for a connection to what has been called in recent French theory "the political" as an event.