9   Inheriting the Question of Technology

Grammatology, Originary Technicity, Ecotechnics

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The Context

When Heidegger's question of technology arrived in French theory through the writings of Bernard Stiegler, Jacques Derrida, Dominique Janicaud, and Jean-Luc Nancy, the context was over layered by the impact of the four volumes of translations into French of Heidegger's writings, under the title *Questions*. *Questions IV* arrived in 1976, providing the 1966–9 versions of the Le Thor seminars given by Heidegger in Provence, and the Zaehringen Seminar of 1973. The active participation of one generation of French thinkers in these late seminars under the leadership of Jean Beaufret is well known. Janicaud, in his study and sequence of interviews, *Heidegger in France* (2001) develops that narrative, marking the emergence of a second generation of French thinkers, including both the four named above, and the rather different critical responses to Heidegger from Jean-Luc Marion and Jean-Francois Courtine, among others. What marks Janicaud and his three companions from these others is their focus on Heidegger's analysis of the arrival of philosophy as metaphysics in the form of technically given, auto-telic relations, in which meaning and the human dimension has gone missing. They variously study how the surmised transformation of meaning systems may rather be thought not as a single destinal occurrence but as a series of disparate, disseminating destabilisations and reconfigurations that necessitate, for Stiegler, a rethinking of the grammar of time itself, and, for Derrida, an emphasis on multiple, self-supplementing and disseminating meaning systems rather than on a single unifying system. In place of the stark focus on a rigidly given technicity, and a turn away from a history of philosophy as a transmission of meaning, the focus moves to instabilities and multiplicities, technicities and turning points, in place of a monolithic notion of technology and a unitary turn (*Kehre*). Granted that Heidegger's own view is that the epoch of the turn may last a thousand years, this version of the question of technology is not obviously incompatible with the analyses offered by Heidegger. It also has the virtue of more obviously providing a conceptuality through which one may begin to make sense of the twenty-first-century context of technical installations, now marked by 5G tele-communication

systems, the internet of things, social media platforms, and big data.

Structure and History: First Set of Forces[1]

The proposal here is to set up a parallelogram of forces, formed out of two vectors. The first vector emerges from a discussion between Jacques Derrida and Bernard Stiegler, connecting the enquiry, begun by Derrida in *Of Grammatology* (1967), and Stiegler's own retrieval of components from the writings of Edmund Husserl, in the analyses proposed in his three-volume, and still incomplete study, Stiegler: *Technics and Time* (1994, 1996, 2001). This conversation arrives explicitly in their jointly authored text, *Echographies of Television: filmed interviews* (1996). Implicit here is a reading of Derrida's own commentary on Husserl's essay 'On the Origin of Geometry' (1964) and his latterly published, but earlier conceived study, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy* (1990).[2] The forces constituting this vector arise from a return to, and release of under-appreciated elements in Husserl's phenomenological enquiries, concerning time, meaning and origins. Husserl's essay, 'On the Origin of Geometry' dates from around the time of the composition of Husserl's *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy* (1939) which, in its title, announces its problem: to assess the degree of tension between an ideal of objectivity and universality, in the natural sciences, and indeed in the whole programmatics of enlightenment thinking, and their supposedly uniquely European originations. Derrida returns to this problematic in the second of the essays published in *Voyous: Rogue States* (2003), which is dedicated to Dominique Janicaud: 'The "world" of the enlightenment to come (exception, calculation and sovereignty).'[3]

   In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida puts together a series of texts, loosely focused on problems concerning structure and meaning, history, and horizonality, which form the context for this discussion. With respect to his invocation of an 'age' of Rousseau, Derrida writes in the opening pages:

> Although the word 'age' or 'epoch' can be given more than these determinations, I should mention that I have concerned myself with a *structural figure* as much as an historical totality. I have attempted to relate these two seemingly necessary approaches thus repeating the question of the text, its historical status, its proper time and space. The age already in the past is in fact constituted in every respect as a *text*, in a sense of these words that I shall have to establish. As such the age conserves the value of legibility and the efficacy of a model and thus disturbs the time (tense) of the line and the line of the time (tense). I have tried to suggest this by calling upon and questioning the declared Rousseauism of a modern anthropologist.
>
> (Derrida: 'Preface' *Of Grammatology* p. xc)[4]

The 'modern anthropologist' in question is Claude Levi-Straus, a short section of whose *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) is analysed in a later section of *Of Grammatology*. The ambiguity of the French term '*temps*' is marked up in the prevarication between 'time' and 'tense,' in the translation. There is similarly a prevarication to be marked in the notion of the '*ligne*' which, as well as the meaning of the common-sense notion of a line as continuity, comprises also a counterpoint to the notion of the point, in the construction of elementary propositions in geometry. The unstated and only partially explored dimension here is the presumption that ethnographies of non-European peoples reveal that, where these peoples supposedly have 'myth' and kinship structures, European peoples have developed a notion of history and industrial production, underpinning their specificity, and indeed their dubious claims to superiority.

In these texts, Derrida develops a critique of any notion of history, predicated on a realisation of a pre-given, pre-ordained essence, and programme for its actualisation. 'Grammatology' then would be the study of the allure of, and fallibility of, such programming, and pro-grammatics. In discussion with Stiegler, a term challenging the status of such programming, given in advance of what occurs, arrives in the form of the notion of an originary prosthetics. These prosthetics consist in the artifice, an adjunct component required as supplement to permit what occurs to function. In place of a primordial nature, or *phusis*, conceived as complete in itself, and a secondary system of *techne*, or artifice, filling out and providing adjustments within and to that system, *techne* as pros-thetics is to be recognised as providing a supplementary precondition, which necessarily precedes the supposedly naturally given order. This then destabilises the supposedly necessary order, first nature and then culture, first *phusis* and then *techne*. They instead arise as a disjunctive simultaneity.

Prosthetics, in the familiar and more limited sense of the practices of sculpting missing limbs, is linked up to a notion of that which precedes the formation of a thesis: in the strong sense of that which may mean-ingfully be claimed, or stated. For there to be a thesis, there must be states of affairs, and access to them; claims about them, and a medium in which to articulate those claims. From thinking language and mem-ory as artifice and as an originary technicity in *Of Grammatology* and indeed in the two preceding essays on Husserl, Derrida joins Stiegler in this view that the notion of an originary prosthetics better captures what is in play. The notion is further elaborated by Derrida in his paradoxical text, *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prosthetics of Origin* (1996), in which he explores the antinomies: 'We only ever speak one language' and 'We never speak only one language.'[5] The focus in that text remains on the constraints and opportunities provided by language use, but with the developments offered by Stiegler, and by Jean-Luc Nancy the domain is expanded to that of systems of coding, in general, and to systems

of meaning, storage and transmission, more broadly understood. There are indications in *Of Grammatology* that Derrida is already thinking through the implications of the contemporary innovations in the life sciences, associated in France with the names of Georges Canguilhem and of Francois Jacob, and in the transatlantic context with those of Watson, Crick, and Franklin.[6] This suggests a connection to a shift in focus in thinking about the sciences, from one on geometry and cosmology, to thinking about genetics, DNA coding and the metamorphoses of living beings.

The studies collected in *Of Grammatology* propose a critique of teleological understandings of meaning and of history, as necessarily bound to suspect notions of completion and fulfilment, of an essence, of humanity or of freedom, or both, and of some ineluctable providence or intention, divine or mundane, which are thereby actualised.[7] Derrida discusses the movement of supplementarity, and its inscription as trace, which, in *Of Grammatology*, is more in evidence than any discussion of the movement called *différance*. The discussion is framed by this invocation of the 'declared Rousseauism' of Levi-Strauss and a reading of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's analyses in his *Confessions* (1770) and elsewhere, of this movement of supplementarity, which turns out to precede what it is supposed to supplement. Cultural life is construed in relation to, and as a supplement to natural givens: but without cultural life, there would be no hypothesising about natural givens. Similarly, analyses are proffered for education, in relation to, and as a necessary supplement for naturally given capacity; and masturbation, or auto-eroticism, is thematised in relation to an eroticism directed outwards and, or reciprocally eliciting the participation of another.

The discussion of Rousseau masks Derrida's on-going reading of the writings of Freud. The encounter with Husserl arrives more directly in the closing pages of the section 'From/of the supplement to the source,' where Derrida invokes his previous readings of Husserl, especially of *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (1929). Derrida writes, with reference back to Kant's enquiries:

> If the space time that we inhabit is *a priori* the space-time of the trace, there is neither pure activity nor pure passivity. This pair of concepts, - and we know that Husserl erased the one with the other constantly- belong to the myth of the origin of an uninhabited world, of a world alien to the trace: pure presence of the pure present that one may either call purity of life or purity of death: determinations of thinking which has always superintended not only theological and metaphysical but also transcendental questions, whether conceived in terms of the scholastic theology or in a Kantian and post Kantian sense.
>
> (Derrida: *Of Grammatology* pp. 290–291)

He continues:

> The Husserlian project of a transcendental aesthetics, of restoration of the 'logos of the aesthetic world (*Formal and Transcendental Logic*) remains subjected to the instance of the living present as to the universal and absolute form of experience. It is by what complicates this privilege and escapes it that we are opened to the space of inscription.
>
> (p. 291)

This is the connection back to Derrida's previous analyses of Husserl, which show how passive syntheses, or auto-affection, are a pre-condition for the positive results of active syntheses, in providing stable objects of attention, and thereby objects of knowing. These are the beginnings of the analysis of an originary prosthetics: the phenomena which present themselves for attention acquire shape and meaning only as a result of appeal to components, surmised, but not phenomenally present. Thus, the phenomenal series of presentations are shown to be held in place by a structuring set of conditions of possibility, not themselves phenomenally presented. Derrida suggests that Husserl, in the essay, 'Of the Origin of Geometry,' analyses how systems of formalisation and inscription are necessary supplements, to processes of empirical generalisation and simple memorisation. Delimiting, storing, and making possible recurrent access to previously acquired theoretical insight are analysed, specifically with respect to axioms of geometry, and to the scientific discoveries of Galileo Galillei.

Excription on the Edge of Phenomenology: Second Set of Forces

The second set of forces arrives from Nancy's disruptive retrieval of Heidegger's redeployment of distinctions between *phusis* and *techne*, between *theoria* and *poiesis*, between *sophia* and *praxis*.[8] Like Husserl, Martin Heidegger supposes that philosophy, at the beginning of the twentieth century, requires a new beginning. In *Being and Time* (1927), Heidegger appropriates Husserl's insistence on this necessity, and proposes to stage that beginning by a return to the Greek origins of philosophy, to retrieve from Plato's dialogue *The Sophist,* an originary and forgotten founding question for philosophy: what is the meaning of being? Heidegger proposes to retrieve an alternative transmission of founding conceptions of Greek philosophy, to put in question what he takes to be a received history of the concept of time. His proposals are, however, put radically in doubt by the question whether or not these terms and origins can be retrieved into a modern idiom, or whether whatever that Greek origin may have been now lies beyond the compass

of modern generations of human beings to retrieve. Nancy, Heidegger and, indeed, Friedrich Nietzsche pose a series of questions to the viability of an appreciation of these Greek origins, with respect to the overlay of Christian doctrine, and theological system. Nancy also puts a focus on the obscuring effects on this transmission in the arrival of notions appertaining to Roman law. Also in play are the distorting effects of a revival and transposition of a conception of Civic Religion, underpinning national identities in the formation of modern states, by contrast to the function of religious practices, and the honouring of ancestors, in Greek city states, such as Athens and Sparta.

By a series of movements, Nancy neutralises the immobilising power of these inherited meanings, and, instead of proposing a return to reading the Greek texts, in which they arrive for attention, he turns the discussion of technics into an enquiry about a dynamic, changing, as opposed to a static, framing for human existing. By contrast to the emphasis on nihilism associated with Nietzsche and Heidegger, Nancy traces out an alternative account of an emptying out of determinacy in sense, and in meaning relations in the world, neither that of a divine *kenosis*, nor that of an absenting of the divine, from whom an order is supposed to have derived. The resulting destabilising of order in the world is to be matched by registering a disruption of concepts of world, and of cosmos, universe and of the worlding of world, *die Weltlichkeit der Welt*. This last is Heidegger's term, in which meaning and sense arrive for attention at the site, Dasein, determinate existing, as invoked by Heidegger, at which questions of meaning and sense arise. Where Nietzsche and Heidegger wrestle with the negative implications of a devaluation of all values, resulting from a weakening of the forces of transmission, and inheritance, Nancy seeks in the consequent degree of disorientation and disruption an enabling opening of spaces, at the limits of sense (*les confins*) and in constellations of concepts, a notion borrowed from Walter Benjamin and T.W. Adorno. In these spaces, meaning may arrive, be generated and reconfigured as arriving incomplete and subject to negotiation, as opposed to programmed in advance by history, or destiny. Essence, or the concept are no longer to be conceived speculatively, as implicitly containing all possible meaning and meanings. Nancy proposes instead the notions of a *partage*, or distribution, and an excription of sense in partial, negotiable determinations of meaning at the limit of articulability.[9]

In the sections of his *The Sense of the World* (1993) in which this is discussed, *Espaces: confins* and *Espaces: Constellations*, Jean-Luc Nancy provides the following schematisation:

Scheme:

Cosmos- myth- given sense
Heaven and earth- creation – announced/desired sense
World- spacing- sense as existence and *techne*.

(But worldliness does not merely succeed, it precedes as well. The world before humanity and beyond humanity is also *our* world, and we are also *toward* it.)
(Nancy: *Sense of the World* p. 45, French p. 75)

Here 'world' occupies the place ascribed in the conversation between Stiegler and Derrida to an originary technicity, or prosthetics. In the preceding section, Nancy makes reference to moves made by Bernard Stiegler, in the first then unpublished volume of *Technics and Time*:

> 'There is a technological *différance*. Or rather: *différance* is technological' - this is the central thesis of Bernard Stiegler in *La faute d'Epimethee: La technique et le temps* (Paris: Gallimard, forthcoming). This thesis, the first no doubt since Simondon (whom Stiegler re-reads) to take into account 'technology' as a proper mode of 'beingness' in general, is thus in solidarity with a thesis on 'sense as consistency of the lack of origin' which leads to certain remarkable statements: 'Sense is the future of signification'; 'sense is always, in fact, the fruit of a … work or mourning for the self on the threshold of an *other* self. Sense is the contestation of established significations for this future of the other.'
> (Nancy: *Sense of the World* p. 179, French pp. 65–66)

The term 'différance,' neither a word nor a concept, is here taken up as a challenge for thinking, not as some determinate content, or fixed operation. The fault of Epimetheus, the brother of the more famous Prometheus, is to have provided human being with no special skill with which to defend and promote itself as a species, no capacity to dig, as does the mole, or to run, as does the antelope. The resulting vulnerability prompts Prometheus to steal fire from the Gods, and to suffer the consequent punishment, his liver devoured each day by the eagles sent by Jove. Where some construe this as a constitutive lack, Nancy thinks in terms of a constitutive finitude and incompleteness. The reference to Gilbert Simondon and to his analyses of the mode of being of technical objects is also striking.[10] As a consequence of footnotes becoming endnotes in the English translation the salience of this remark can go unremarked.

Nancy's analyses both develop and challenge Heidegger's account of nihilism. What Nancy shares with Heidegger is a doubt about any continuing status of meaning, as providing a privileged and reliable domain for the construction of philosophical conceptuality, by contrast to the appeals made by respectively Hegel and Husserl to some such conception of meaning and sense. Heidegger's questioning of technology reveals the arrival of systems of thingly relations which do not presuppose systems of meaning for their mediation and articulation. This Heidegger begins to discuss in his lectures on Kant, *The Question of the Thing, 1935–1936*, and in the essay 'The Age of the World Picture' (1938),[11] both

from before the Second World War, but after his endorsement in 1933 of Hitler. This account arrives as a curious confirmation of Hegel's hypothesis, in *The Philosophy of Right* (1821), that the function of concepts becomes identifiable only when they have ceased to function, as given in the memorable phrase: at the flight of Minerva's owl, at dusk. The status of meaning, as presupposed, arrives for attention when it has ceased to function as the necessary and efficacious supplement. The devaluation of all values announced by Nietzsche, and discussed extensively by Heidegger in the lectures from 1936 onwards, arrives in Nancy's writings, concerning a crisis for the concept of meaning, or sense:

> The 'question of technics'(*la 'question de la technique'*) is nothing other than the question of sense placed within limits. Technology is quite precisely that which is neither *theoria* nor *poiesis*: that which assigns sense neither as knowledge nor as work (*oeuvre*).
> (Nancy: *Sense of the world* (1993) p. 41, French p. 65)[12]

Where *theoria* results in the claims of knowing, and *poiesis* in the composition of works, technology sets up systems of application, classification, and processing, without any fixed result or goal, purpose or finality. The processes are ends in themselves, with an autonomy in modes of replication and evolution. The French 'technique' translates the German '*Technik*,' whereas in English there is substituted the notion of 'technology,' which has the function of rendering even more monolithic what might in fact be a piecemeal and many layered set of processes. There is here an affirmation of a finitude, in place of any infinitisation of meaning and sense, constituting a medium in which to explore and articulate history and meaning as a complete system and totality.

All three thinkers, Derrida, Stiegler and Nancy have critical readings of Heidegger. What is at issue here is as much the differences between them, as the agreement that Heidegger's enquiries, while philosophically significant, are suspect politically. In the highly charged opening to Division Two of *Being and Time* (1927), Heidegger wrestles, I suggest unsuccessfully, with the problem of demonstrating that a complete structure of Dasein has come into view, in the descriptions provided in Division One, such that it may provide the fundamental ontology required to make sense of the deficiencies of previous enquiry, and thus to permit his retrieval of the history of philosophy. Not only does the programme of providing a description of Dasein with sufficient determinacy fail, it is also supplemented in Division Two by Heidegger with an appeal to the role of a hero in providing a vision of the futurity towards which Dasein should direct itself.

> The authentic repetition of a possibility of existence that has been- the possibility that Dasein may choose its hero- is grounded existentially in anticipatory resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*); for it is in

resoluteness that one first chooses the choice (*Wahl*) which makes one free for the struggle of loyally following in the footsteps of that which can be repeated.

(Heidegger: *Being and Time* M and R p. 437, SZ 385)

The prospect of repetitions of choosing fascist outcomes is not to be underestimated, for this hero of course is, for Heidegger then embodied in Adolf Hitler, the leader hailed by him in the 'Rectoral Address' of 1933.[13] The fault of Epimetheus, deemed responsible in Greek myth for sending human beings ill-equipped into the world, is thus converted into the fault of Heidegger, in exposing the European philosophical tradition to a fascist and destructive prosthetic origin.

In the next section this discussion will proceed in three steps: with Heidegger's invocation of a question of technology, and Derrida's response to it; and then with sketches first of Stiegler's rethinking of technics as re-inscriptions of memory, and then of Nancy's thinking of technics, as ecotechnics. In ecotechnics, a worlding of a world arrives, no longer secured by some phenomenologically given thrownness into, and projection of, meanings, as thought by Heidegger, nor yet to the articulations of a transcendental subjectivity, as thematised in descriptions of passive and active syntheses by Husserl. For Nancy, what is written (*écrit*) arrives at the limit (*excrit*) of what is thinkable and experiencable, moving out and away from a given domain of stabilised meaning, into the exploratory and innovatory mode of what is yet to come. There is a link here from notions of meaning and invention as *ex-crire*, developed by Nancy in his readings of Georges Bataille and of Nietzsche, to a notion of experience as an *ex-per-ire*. Writing and experience thus arrive in orderly form out of limit experiences, out of a circum-navigation of a limit, *peras*, of what can be registered and made sense of, at given points in time and history.

Technology in Three Steps

A first sketch in Heidegger's lecture 'The Question of Technology' (1953) arrives in 1949, under the title *Das Ge-stell*, the framework, as part of the series of Bremen Lectures,[14] in which Heidegger controversially likened to mechanised agriculture the Nazi persecution of European Jews, and their treatment of bodies after death, in the Nazi death camps. This quite properly provokes outrage, especially since Heidegger never clarified his relation to supporting Hitler, as *Fuehrer* of the German Reich, nor yet his membership of the Nazi party. The more recent revelations of his endorsements of a kind of anti-Semitism, in the *Black Notebooks* (GA94–96),[15] his working notebooks, has not surprised those, who already had a sense for his abhorrent political allegiances. It has been recently anatomised by Jean-Luc Nancy in his text, *The Banality*

of Heidegger (2015), as another version of the banality, which Hannah Arendt identified in her rightly famous analysis of evil in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963). There, she records in painful detail Adolf Eichmann's inability to connect his concerns with schedules, round-ups, and transport of Jews to the camps, to the absolutely inadmissible programmes of persecution and genocide. Heidegger suffers the same inability to connect his simply ignorant and dangerous notions of Jewishness and Judaism, and his ethnically narrow notion of Germanness to the horror of the camps. His political commitments and anti-Semitism had been matter for public discussion at least since 1953, when Jurgen Habermas responds to the publication of Heidegger's Summer Semester 1935 lectures, *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA 40), with its infamous phrase about the 'inner truth and greatness of the Nazi movement,' which Heidegger astonishingly seems to have added post-war for the purposes of clarifying his stance.

Heidegger identified with the Nazis, and with Hitler, as critics of, and as forces ranged against a spread of technology, and a surmised resulting abandonment in the modern world of meaning and value. This stance contrasts starkly to the more obvious analysis of them as subservient to, and actively promoting forms of technology, which permit and promote the bleaching out of all meaning from human transactions, rendering the human inhuman, both as persecuted and as persecutor. Derrida, Stiegler, and Nancy are acutely aware of, and critique Heidegger's political alignments and affiliations, on more than one occasion, both collectively and severally. Derrida in his study *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question* (1987) analyses the twisting together of four threads in Heidegger's analyses from the thirties: the mode of questioning, the theme of technology, a lack of thinking about animality, and:

> The fourth thread finally leads through the thinking of epochality in itself and in the way it is put to work into what I shall call a little provocatively the hidden teleology or the narrative order.
>   (Derrida: *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question* p. 12)

'The age of the world picture,' invoked by Heidegger in 1938, can be shown to transmute into the surmised *Er-eignis* of a withdrawal of being, and an arrival of Heidegger's affirmation, never fully renounced, of a certain Nazism. Derrida proposes this nexus of concerns in order to interrogate the conjugation of Heidegger's invocations of a notion of spirit, doubly inscribed in Christian doctrine and in Hegel's phenomenology, which is more usually avoided by Heidegger, and, controversially, the flames of the fire, in which divinity is announced and departs, in both the *Bible* and the *Gospels*, and in which the Nazis attempted to conceal the full extent of their crimes. For Derrida, too, the flames of the camps still burn.

The pure concept, and essence is contaminated by its implication in a technique of questioning and a technical apparatus of elaboration and articulation:

> Contamination then of the thought of essence by technology and so contamination by technology of the thinkable essence of technology-and even of a question of technology by technology, the privilege of the question having some relation already, always with this irreducibility of technology.
>
> (Derrida: *Of Spirit* p. 10)

From a focus on the Greek notion of *techne*, as skill and artifice, acquired in addition to, and as supplement to natural endowments, the move is to some hybrid construction, in part retrieving the Greek conception, but more significantly affirming a transition from industrial capital and conceptions of production, as developing out of long standing processes of craft and subsistence agriculture, to information and bio-technologies, which radically transform such practices. The term 'production' continues the logic of innovations arriving out of a fixed given set of relations, as opposed to a configuration where there is no longer a pre-given natural order to which artifice and techniques of management and co-ordination, breeding, and husbandry are an addition; instead that order is always already artificial and technically construed. The model is that of the land as regularly reconfigured and to be redistributed by the regular inundations of a river in flood, as opposed to a landmass with no internal dynamic and system of alteration. It is a globe in flux as a result of the movement of tectonic plates as opposed to a fixed universe of imperial and Roman order.

In the Introduction to volume three of his enquiry, *Technics and Time*, *Cinematic Time and the Question of Malaise* (2001), Stiegler identifies a shift in the focus of his analysis, from supposing that there are epochal shifts to be analysed, with a transition for one system of technics to another. In the previous volumes he had sought to tie a notion of becoming technical into the opening up of a 'new unity of space and time,' 'a new psychic and collective individuation,' opening up a future horizon within which to make sense of unprecedented innovations in human activity. He arrives in this third volume at the view that this becoming no longer produces such a future horizon, and that this is to be regretted. By contrast, Nancy explores a notion of futurity as that which is necessarily already open in the indeterminacies of a current configuration of codes and inheritances, which because hybrid and in conflict with one another, must resist any such horizonal unification. Both attempts to think futurity may be seen as responses to Heidegger's thinking of time and technology, specifically Heidegger's attempt to think futurity as the primary dimension of time, and to Derrida's insistence on broadening the scope of what are taken to be writings with philosophical salience.

In his Introduction to that third volume, Stiegler cites himself, from *Technics and Time* volume one, and then puts in question his own analysis:

> The first 'moment' of such epochality is that of a process that could be characterized as *becoming technical*; the second is that of the *transformation of this becoming into a future*.
>   Today, the conditions of the second re-doubling are not integrated.
>   The re-doubled double has no place. *Becoming*, which has been *disrupted*, does not produce a *future*.
>
> <div align="right">(Stiegler: Technics and Time 3 p. 7)</div>

The notion of an epoch then is in common between Derrida and Stiegler, but it is to be thought not in the Hegelian terms of a necessary sequence of such epochs, one following the other and culminating in an actualisation of freedom, as a basic insight specific to Greek culture. It is rather to be thought in terms of the framing or horizon which delimits what can be thought in a given context, granted the grounding principles and meanings, rendering that epoch distinct from its predecessors. This then is to be thought rather in terms of the Husserlian *epoche*, the bracketing of presuppositions concerning what there is, in order to better establish how it comes to be constituted as it is. Both the Husserlian and the Hegelian moves are for Nancy unhelpful ways of thinking such constraints, since they implicitly and explicitly suppose a single coherent structure in which everything might be articulable, as opposed to adequately recognising conflicting strands within one context, and the function of blind spots, of inarticulable secrets held as a cryptic interior of what presents itself phenomenally for inspection. Heidegger analyses this in terms of the *Geheim* (as in the *Geheimstaatspolizei*, more usually known as the *Gestapo*), the secret and concealed nature of a sense of home and belonging; Freud, in terms of the *Unheimlichkeit*, the uncanny arrival of familiar, but suppressed and repressed memories, which then interrupts, and imposes recurrent impasses in living. Benjamin introduces a notion of a contraband of history, which is smuggled across the border from one epoch to another. For the marginal, marginalised figure in history inheritance is always of what has been repressed in previous epochs. For Derrida, the figure of the Portuguese Marrano, who, after the forcible conversion, or expulsion of the Jews, no longer knew exactly in what this Jewish identity consists, is the emblematic figure for such a thinking.

For Nancy, there is here also an unhelpful adoption of a notion of becoming, and an overly rigid notion of the future, as a horizon, as opposed to a notion of futurity, as potentialities, already in play. The use of the term 'moment' perhaps indicates an excessive reliance on a now no longer sufficiently pliable set of Hegelian concepts, for which the whole

consists of a system of moments in process of self-organisation. Stiegler's account is inflected by his increasing focus on what he calls the hyper-industrialisation of temporal objects, and a loss of stability in individuation, especially of human identities. Time ceases to be a dimension of experience, constituted independently of what there is in the world, and the movement of processes of industrialisation is analysed as producing entities, and the form of entities, as commodities. Human lives become functions of the exchange value of their labour-power, both productive and reproductive. These processes of industrialisation and the resulting destabilisations of identities play a constitutive role in forging the sense, directionality, and constitution of time itself.[16] In the previous volumes, Stiegler had invoked Husserl's account of memory to provide a new version of how to think the movement from past to future, in place of the dogmatically thought Hegelian concept of history as the self-actualising idea. Husserl distinguishes from 1904–5 onwards between the primary memory of continuous attention to a meaning content, or state of affairs, as opposed to the work of a secondary memory of recollection, retrieving previously encountered meaning content, into a present context, as *Vergegenwaertigung*. Stiegler ingeniously invents a third, a tertiary memory of shared cultural installations and institutions, and practices, as providing the components of shared meanings, registered both individually and collectively, through which individuals find themselves interpellated as bearers of meaning from which they might prefer to disassociate themselves.

Stiegler comes increasingly to the view that far from stabilising identities, the effect of this tertiary level is to further fragmentation; that it generates conflictual strands of meaning and identity, as opposed to providing a coherent, organising horizon through which human societies may give themselves a sense of collective meaning and purpose. Stiegler develops Derrida's notion of the supplement as *pharmakon*, the cure which may also endanger life, into an analysis of contemporary society as systemically pharmacological, addicted to various disenabling substitutes and palliatives for an increasingly stressful, dysfunctional modes of life. Again here, where Stiegler identifies a deficit, or default, Nancy identifies a potentiality and positivity, while not underestimating the degree of stress and danger, in an underdetermined opening. They both take up some distance from Heidegger's appropriation of Hölderlin's observations, that rivers may flow backwards, thus giving access to a source, and that where there is danger, there also grows a healing power. Adorno is more coruscating on the inadequacies of Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, who, as the poet of a German resurgence after the Napoleonic occupation, might be thought to lack contemporary actuality. Where Heidegger repeatedly and, it has to be said, ploddingly reads Hölderlin, Adorno and Derrida are rather more struck by the poetic insights of Paul Celan.

Stiegler deploys Husserl's account of memory, and Derrida's account of an originary technicity, in systems of record and writing, which, while presented in *Of Grammatology* (1967) remains to be developed. Where Derrida responds to Heidegger on technology in company with Rousseau and Freud, on the logics of eroticisation and the techniques of psycho-analytical innovation, Stiegler circumvents the appearance that Heidegger's account of time and technology is complete in itself, by demonstrating the potential in this redeployment of elements from Husserl's more cautious, and always provisional and incomplete analyses of time and memory, of passive and active synthesis. The joint work of Stiegler and Derrida, to which the joint publication of *Echographies of Television* bears witness, is an indication of how adopting a form of dialogue in presenting results obviates the impression that the one authority can speak and innovate for all. This insistence on the collective nature of all intellectual work, even when or perhaps especially when only one signature appears at the end of a publication is insisted on by Edmund Husserl and put again into focus in Jean-Luc Nancy's reading of the second moment in Heidegger's analytic of Dasein: *Mitsein* (being-with).

Nancy's preoccupation with Dasein (being-there) as *Mit-sein* is well enough known, but the implications of this interruption of the drive in Heidegger's analytic of Dasein towards the third moment, as being towards, *Zu-sein*, and, specifically as being towards death, are insufficiently appreciated. As in-the-world, Dasein is introduced by Heidegger as *In-sein*, 'being-in,' but this being-in is then differentiated as invested in a questioning of a differential status of entities in the world, and a relatedness to its context, not as simple extension in space, as matches in a match box. Matches in a matchbox, in turn, are to be conceived both as simply occupying space and present at hand, designed to fulfil the human purposes of lighting fires and providing heat and light. Generating a conceptual space, a *Lichtung*, affirmed in *Enstschlossenheit*, resolution, and articulated as *Rede*, at which what there is can present itself, as it really is, then becomes the task for the analytics of *Being and Time*, hence the *pathos* when, in the 'Letter on Humanism' (1946), these clearings turn out to be chance openings in a thick forest, without order and direction. The Black Forest is not a pre-historical *Ur-wald*, but is populated by trees endangered by acid rain, and perhaps by deserters, taking refuge from the fallout of previous historical undertakings and disasters.

Heidegger recognises that instances of Dasein encounter one another, in a mode of *Mitdasein*, if and when those instances accept and affirm those other instances as also the site for a negotiation of meaning. Analyses in sections 25–27 show how Dasein as *Mitsein* overlooks, or takes for granted that the boat by the lake is the neighbour's boat; as *Mitsein*, it functions within, but fails to examine how collective meanings are inherited and shared, or disavowed, and constitute conflicts. A failure to consider how it may be necessary to detach oneself from the collective

prejudices of one's family and neighbours, especially in the case that they turn persecutory and anti-Semitic, is one of the gaping voids, in Division One, of *Being and Time*, to which Heidegger's subsequent Nazi enthusiasm bears hideous witness. Jean-Luc Nancy is alert to the brevity and inadequacy of Heidegger's account of *Mitsein*, even with respect to Heidegger's own aims of distinguishing between a revival, and an immobilising of the Western philosophical tradition. Heidegger's willingness to listen to Japanese visitors, but not to the distinct modes of Germanness, as inherited by German Jews, would be laughable were it not so serious in consequence. Nancy seeks to pause the account of Dasein as staged in *Being and Time* at that point, and already in 1980 opens up an account, which he develops with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, of the distinctive nature of Nazi myth, to which Heidegger succumbs.

Derrida complicates Heidegger's account of technology by noting a technics, in systems of registration, in operation before any arrival of a notion of a natural order of things. The role of textuality, and the status of text, 'in a sense of these words that I shall have to establish,' provides the site, as an alternate to Dasein, at which meaning may be supposed to arrive; and at which nature and culture, *phusis* and *techne*, what is supposed to grow of its own accord, and what is designed to enhance or impede it, emerge as distinct one from the other. Stiegler motivates a pluralisation and multiplication of notions of technicity, as many as there are systems of memorising and memorialisation, in the activation of forms of tertiary memory, alongside continuous remembering and a recollecting which overcomes a break between presentation and past event. The one is the more concerned with the possibility of meaning, and the other with the possibility of continuity. Nancy is plainly sympathetic to both of these moves, the exploration of the textual nature of technologically articulated accounts of sites at which meaning arrives, that which Heidegger calls Dasein, and with the multiplication of technicities, in place of the monolith 'technology.' His notion of ecotechnics, at least as introduced in the 1991 essay, 'War, Right, Sovereignty-Techne,' joins this up to a problem with both sovereignty and presumptions concerning a founding role for meaning in making sense of what there is in the world.

Nancy writes:

> War is nowhere and everywhere, related to any end without any longer being related to itself as supreme end. In a sense, then, ecotechnics is also pure *techne*, the pure *techne* of non-sovereignty: but because the empty place of sovereignty remains occupied, encumbered by this very void, ecotechnics does not attain to another thinking of the end (goal) without end (completion). By way of the administration and control of 'competition' ecotechnics substitutes crushing blows for sovereignty.
>
> (Nancy: *Being Singular Plural* p. 135)

The notion of a pure *techne* of sovereignty indicates the emptying out of any function for assigning meaning to the components in circulation, constituting this configuration. Nancy then continues:

> From now on, then, ecotechnics is the name for 'political economy' because according to our thinking, if there is no sovereignty, then there can be no politics. There is no longer any *polis* since the *oikos* is everywhere: the housekeeping of the world as a single household, with 'humanity' for a mother, 'law' for a father.
>
> (BSP, p. 135)

In the extended analysis which follows Nancy attempts to render the notion of ecotechnics more precise in the following way: 'Ecotechnics damages, weakens and upsets the functioning of sovereignties except for those that in reality coincide with ecotechnical power' (p. 136). This powerful combination of themes plainly requires further analysis, at much greater length than available in the closing section of this essay. There is also a delicate balance to be struck between this diagnosis of a emptying out of meaning, and a hypertrophy of meaning imposed in interpretive overload.

The analysis permits Nancy to bring together responses to Derrida and to Stiegler, with these criticisms of Heidegger's notion of Dasein, the questioning of technology and the attention to the inadmissible political allegiance of Heidegger's life choices. Concerns raised by the evidence of a despoliation and degradation of the ecosphere, the plastic bag perhaps even more ill augured than the atomic bomb, are linked to a failure of any politics based on concepts of sovereignty to provide the means and the conceptuality to analyse what is at stake. The intent of this paper is to indicate that how conjoined readings of Heidegger, and of texts of Freud and Rousseau, permits Derrida to develop his account of meaning and textuality, as a development of, and critique of Heidegger on technology, and then to show how Stiegler and Nancy go to work both within, and on the edge of this innovation. As is well enough known, Derrida became uneasy about Nancy's innovations, already in comments concerning the use of the terms, fraternity and generosity in Nancy's *The Experience of Freedom* (1988), and subjected them to further critique in his text, *On Touching: Jean-Luc Nancy* (2000). Nancy, at first perhaps somewhat disconcerted by the critique, has since then good humouredly observed that while Derrida may be concerned with Heidegger's neglect of the animal, in the account of meaning and the planetary spread of nihilism, he, Nancy, is concerned with attending to the destiny of the stone, presumed by Heidegger to lack worldly meaning. He proposes to attend to the destiny of rocks, indeed perhaps of the geology which bends and shapes the surface of the planet, on which all of these moves are in play.

A full account of Nancy on ecotechnics would provide a context for making sense of the otherwise baffling claim made in the supplementary section of Nancy's *Experience of Freedom* (1988):

> In this sense, the stone is free. Which means that there is in the stone- or rather, *as* it is – this freedom of being that being *is*, in which freedom as a 'fact of reason' is what is put at stake according to co-belonging.
>
> (Nancy: *Experience of Freedom* p. 159)

Thus Nancy's chosen companion, preventing the terms of Heidegger's enquiry from taking over, closing down thinking in favour of choosing a hero, where Derrida picks Freud, and Stiegler Husserl, is, of course, Immanuel Kant, as shown here by this reference to Kant's account of freedom, as 'a fact of reason' in his *Critique of Pure Practical Reason* (1788).[17] Nancy then continues:

> And this could not be without consequences for the question of technology (and on the at once open and aporetic position of this question in Heidegger). Not that we have to protect nature *against* technical exploitation (when something of this sort has to be done, it is always once again a matter of technology); but in technology we liberate, and we liberate ourselves to the freedom of the world. It is no surprise that this can cause anguish and profound ambivalence.
>
> (EF p. 160)

This essay is the beginning of the attempt to make sense of these three moves, in the challenge to Heidegger, thinking textuality, multiplying technicities, and attributing a certain kind of freedom to stones, to rocks, to geology. Heidegger's attention to a contrast between *phusis* and *techne*, for the Greeks and, in particular, for Aristotle, and its re-turn in the break between Dasein, and inert matter, is treated by all three with respect, but it may also be inseparable from his enthusiasm for the Nazi cause, an enthusiasm roundly deplored by Derrida, Stiegler, and Nancy. As a result of this discussion, some connections between a supposed but delusory neutrality of questioning, a failure to think the hazards of *Mitsein*, as an unquestioned belonging together, and a sus-ceptibility to repulsive political allegiance, may have come into view. This discussion may then provisionally conclude with a further citation from Nancy's 1991 essay, 'War, Right, Sovereignty – Techne,' where the transition from questioning or thinking technology, to tracing an emer-gent notion of ecotechnics once again comes into focus:

> What is called 'technology,' or again what I have called ecotech-nics (in itself which would be liberated from capital) is the *techne* of

finitude or spacing. This is no longer the technical means to an End, but *techne* itself in its in-finite end, *techne* as the existence of finite existence in all its brilliance and violence. It is 'technology' itself, but it is a technology that, of itself, raises the necessity of appropriating its meaning against the appropriative logic of capital and against the sovereign logic of war.

(Nancy: *Being Singular Plural* p. 140)

This then would provide a focus for a longer, detailed reading of the writings of Nancy.[18]

   This notion of ecotechnics is Nancy's unique contribution to the task of providing a critical response to Heidegger's insistence, that, in the modern epoch, technology no longer lies at the behest of human beings but rather frames the context in which human beings experience what it means to be human. Ecotechnics thus is to take its place alongside Stiegler's emphasis on an originary technicity and Derrida's serial innovations, grammatology, and supplementarity, dissemination, and destinerrance, as devices through which to think about stretching, distorting and transformatory effects on meaning relations, and on the relations of human beings to themselves, and to their surrounds, in the current context of fifth-generation tele-communications. The reconstruction provided in this paper of the lines of discussion in play between these three discussants thus contributes to an account of the significance of Nancy's contribution, which may otherwise be overlooked. The proposal would be to complicate the reception of Derrida, Stiegler, and Nancy, in the English-speaking world, by reading them as jointly inheriting a question posed to philosophy, by Heidegger, made all the more pressing in France, in a context informed by the legacy of Nazi Occupation, and the deportations, and the extra-judicial murders effected by Heidegger's chosen hero.

Notes

1 An earlier version of this paper was delivered by invitation of Mahon O'Brien at the University to Sussex, May 2016: I am grateful to him and to the participants at the conference 'Heidegger and Technology' for comments and suggestions about its structure and argument.

2 See Jacques Derrida: *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry an Introduction* (1962) translated by John P Leavey (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1978) and Jacques Derrida: *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy (*1990) translated by Marion Hobson (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press 2003).

3 See the second essay, in Jacques Derrida: *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (2003) translated by Pascale Anne Brault (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2005), and Dominique Janicaud: *The Power of the Rational: Science Technology and the Future of Thought* (1984) translated by Peg and Elizabeth Birmingham (Bloomington: Indiana University Press1994),

and Dominique Janicaud: *The Shadow of that thought* (1990) translated by Michael Gendre (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 1996).

4 See Jacques Derrida: *Of Grammatology* (1967) translated by Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press 1978).

5 This comes to the fore more directly in Jacques Derrida: *The Monolingualism of the Other: Of the Prosthesis or Origin* (1996) translated by Patrick Mensah (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 1998).

6 See the discussion of this by Christopher Johnson: *System and Writing in the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993), especially Chapter 5, Evolution and the life sciences. Johnson writes of a change of paradigm to which Derrida is responding in 1967, by citing the work of Michel Serres:

> According to Serres, historically and chronologically this change of paradigm dates from the late nineteenth century but it receives decisive and widespread validation during and after the Second World War with the emergence of the new sciences of information theory, molecular biology and cybernetics.

(p. 3)

7 The recent publication and translation of Derrida's 1964–65 lectures, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History (*2013) translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press 2016) has made this easier to detect.

8 As markers for three stages on Heidegger's trajectory of re-thinking these Greek distinctions, there are the following texts: Martin Heidegger: *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy* (GA 22, 1926) translated by Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 'On the Essence and Concept of *phusis* in Aristotle's Physics B, 1 (1939) in Martin Heidegger: *Pathmarks* (1967) translated by Will McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) and Martin Heidegger: *What calls for thought* (GA 8, 1951–1952) translated by J Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row 1968).

9 'Excription' usually arrives in English with an added 's,' that is as 'exscription.' The point of transcribing it without an 's' is to draw attention to the manner in which it marks a transition in language use from actual writing, inscription, and description, to a reflexion on limit conditions, where meaning systems falter, and the word breaks off. These are the stakes of an impossible necessity of providing an account of conditions of possibility for determining meanings, where those meanings, and meaningfulness itself, are in process of emergence and attrition.

10 Simondon published his *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Aubier: Paris 1998) in 1953, and *L'individu et sa genese psycho-biologique* in 1964 (PUF: Paris 1964).

11 See Martin Heidegger: *Die Frage nach dem Ding: Zu Kant's Lehre von den transzendentalen Grundsaetzen* (GA 41, 1935–36) original title *Basic Questions of Metaphysics* (1962, 1984) translated by W. B Barton and Vera Deutsche as *What is a Thing?* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery 1967).

12 See Jean-Luc Nancy: *The Sense of the World* (1993) trans. and with a foreword by Jeffrey S. Librett (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). Here there are to be found resonances of his enquiries concerning technics and meaning dating back to the 1991 essay 'War, Right, Sovereignty-techne,' printed in *Being Singular Plural* (1996) translated by Robert D Richardson and Anne O'Byrne, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2000), and indeed in the 1986 text, 'The forgetting of philosophy,'

translated by Francois Raffoul and Gregory Recco in Jean-Luc Nancy: *The Gravity of Philosophy* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press 1997).

13 And see the discussion in Joanna Hodge: *Heidegger and Ethics* (1995), especially Chapter 4, of a confusion of linguistic and ethnic Germanness: Heidegger makes claims for the philosophical power of the German language, which any native speaker may acquire irrespective of genes and ethnic specificity. Even Saxons have been known to be philosophically gifted.

14 See Martin Heidegger: *Bremer und Freiburger Votraege 1: Einblick in was ist, 2. Grundsaetze des Denkens* (GA 79: 1994) edited by Petra Jaeger, and in particular see *Das Ge-stell* pp. 24–45.

15 See the Black Notebooks (*Schwarze Hefte* (GA 94, 95, 96) (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann Verlag 2015-) and see the excellent review article in the Los Angeles Review of Books (2014) by Gregory Fried 'The King is Dead: Heidegger's Black Notebooks' https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/king-dead-heideggers-black-notebooks/#!

16 It is curious that there is here no reference to the study by Eric Alliez: *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time (*1991) trans. Georges van den Abbeele, (Minneapolis MS: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

17 See Kant: Critique of Practical Reason (1788): Preface:

> now practical reason of itself, without any collusion with speculative reason, furnishes reality to a supersensible object of the category of causality, namely to freedom, (although as a practical concept, only for practical use) and hence establishes by means of a fact what could only be thought

Gregor trans. p. 5, AK 5. 6.

18 This is underway in a monograph provisionally entitled *Political Ontology: Reading Jean-Luc Nancy*.

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