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Being interactive: for genealogical destruction of a doubt about the 'interactional' present

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Galtarossa, Ruggero. 2020. “Being Interactive: For Genealogical Destruction of a Doubt About the 'interactional' Present”. Loughborough University. https://doi.org/10.26174/thesis.lboro.13130153.v1.

Being-Interactive

For Genealogical Destruction of a Doubt About The ‘Interactional’ Present

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A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University London

May 2020

Supervisors: Dr Burçe Çelik and Prof Thomas Tufte

Department of Media and Creative Industries

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To Eleftheria, for being there.

And to all the other remarkable people
who will not give in to their present world.
.

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Acknowledgments

According to a running joke from the academia, a PhD student will never fail to let you know that their doctoral experience has been “different” or “special”. Now, far be it from me to resist the temptation: as I look back at the last years of research, I cannot help but think that my experience was somewhat special. Or so it felt back then, as for a long time I was stuck in a vicious circle that, unknowingly, was itself the subject of my research. I shall leave it to the introduction to explain these remarks. Here let me acknowledge the people who were there for me during a time of my life that was indeed – all jokes aside –frustratingly special.

I would like to thank Prof Toby Miller for giving me the opportunity to begin this project, as well as Dr Burçe Çelik and Prof Thomas Tufte for the opportunity to complete it. I would also like to thank all the friends who have been part of my life over the last years. Some of you have only known me as a doctoral student, others have known me forever. Either way, I am grateful that you were there: Batta, Birio, Charlie, Eleftheria, Emily, Eugenio, Gira, Glauber, Jess, Leah, Lilli, Lulu, Maria Chiara, Marina, Menniti, Michele, Miguel, Natascia, Nico, Ollie, and Sgobbi. Finally, I cannot thank my family enough. Thank you, Elena and Chiara, for presenting me with the gift of family in London. And, of course, infinite thanks to mum and dad for always being there: *grazie di esserci sempre*.

Abstract

The thesis pursues a productive dialogue with the critical students who have addressed a seemingly banal and yet challenging question: what is it about interactive media technology that makes present humanity unfree? In order to assess the critical efficacy or meaning of the answers put forward by three disciplines, the thesis turns to Martin Heidegger. From Heidegger's hermeneutics, the thesis gains its method of meaning interpretation, namely genealogical destruction. From Heidegger's philosophy of technology, the thesis learns a long overlooked and in fact *misunderstood* insight about the present debate about interactive media technology. In circular fashion, the thesis demonstrates the validity of Heidegger's insight via genealogical destruction of three concepts that inform some of the critical genealogies of 'interactive' media technology: subjectivity (Neo-Marxism); blackbox (Science and Technology Studies); communication feedback (Media Studies/Computer-Mediated Communication). Upon interpreting the origins of these concepts at the turn of so-called Modernity, the thesis will reach its final insight: a productive dialogue with critical thinking is possible only upon doubting the meaning of the present concept of 'interactivity'. This might seem paradoxical, insofar as doubt already seems an achievement of the self-proclaimed 'postmodern'/ 'amodern'/'posthuman' thinkers the thesis comes into dialogue with. And yet, the genealogists' ontological 'relativism'/'agnosticism'/'interpretative flexibility' conceals a silent Truth, which was born *in continuation* with the modern metaphysics that these thinkers believe to have overcome. Unawarely, the genealogists' thinking is driven by a new Truth, (un)truth or deity to whom they have delegated free thinking: Interactivity. Once applied to the history of technological development, this (un)truth leads them to presentism: the (mis)understanding of past, present and revolutionary future of technological development in terms of the genealogists' ('interactional') present. The genealogists always already apply to history an (un)truth that they have inherited from the present technology that they (mis)understand as 'interactional'. As indirectly noticed by Heidegger in the 1950s, a *vicious circle* brings together present thinking about media technology in 'interactional' terms and the problem that makes the interactive user unfree. As contended in other terms by Slavoj Žižek, the present way of perceiving the problem is itself part of the problem. In light of these insights, the thesis will find it reasonable to raise its final doubt: a doubt about present thinking about the technological world in 'interactional' terms, which is always already a doubt about the meaning of present/'interactive' media technology. This is indeed a doubt, which can only be *raised* in the conclusion. In this respect, the thesis is only the first step of a project of research that must be expanded in the future in order to pursue free thinking.

Abbreviations of Martin Heidegger's works

[AWP] 'The Age of The World Picture' (1977b);

[BDT] 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking' (1971a);

[BN1] *Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938* (2016)

[BN2] *Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939* (2017a)

[BN3] *Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–1941* (2017b)

[BT] *Being and Time* (2010);

[CP] *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)* (1999);

[DD] 'The Thing' (1971e);

[DS] 'Language' (1971b);

[EP] 'The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking' (1972a);

[ET] 'On the Essence of Truth' (1993b);

[KM] *Kant and The Problem of Metaphysics* (1965);

[LH] 'Letter on Humanism' (1993a);

[OCM] 'The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics' (1969b); '

[OWA] 'The Origin of The Work of Art' (1971d);

[PI] 'The Principle of Identity' (1969a);

[PMD] '"...Poetically Man Dwells..."' (1971c);

[QCT] 'The Question Concerning Technology' (1977c);

[SR] 'Science and Reflection' (1977a);

[TB] 'Time and Being' (1972b);

[TT] 'The Turning' (1977d);

[WM] 'What is Metaphysics?' (1993c);

[WPF] 'What Are Poets For? (1971f).

PART 1. WHAT IS WRONG WITH INTERACTIVE MEDIA TECHNOLOGY?

Introduction

0.1. Introducing the final argument: a circular doubt about the 'interactional' present

This thesis was born out of frustration towards the "new" media technologies that are commonly known as "digital" or "interactive" (Gane and Beer: 2008: 87). In this respect, my research always pursued a productive dialogue with Critical Studies. Critical thinkers have recurrently chased a world of freedom and yet, in order to think about a different future, first one must establish what is wrong with the present. In my case:

what is it about interactive media technology that makes the interactive user unfree?

These preparatory remarks might (un)impress the reader as banal observations. Even more so, as I anticipate that the thesis will answer the above question with a *doubt*, which I seem to share – albeit in different terms - with Slavoj Žižek: "what if the way we perceive a problem was itself part of the problem?" (Žižek , 2006: 137). Žižek's doubt seems to point towards a paradox of sorts. Similarly, by the end of the thesis, this paradox will seem to be a *vicious circle*, which seems to prevent critical thinking from theorising an alternative to our present condition of unfreedom as interactive users. As per the thesis title, this is a doubt that can only be *raised* in the conclusion, hence the need "for" future work of research (i.e. genealogical destruction). This is a "doubt about the 'interactional' present": a doubt about the *meaning* of present media technology, which feeds off a doubt about the *meaning* of present thinking about media technology in 'interactional' terms. Clearly, the two parts of the doubt come together in a circle. This seems paradoxical, for I have argued that my doubt is meant to challenge the *vicious circularity* of present critical thinking.

By the end of the thesis, it will be clear that the ingrained (mis)conception whereby circular thinking must be avoided is flawed: human thinking is *inevitably* circular. The thesis does not start off with this insight but will *discover* it upon engaging with Martin Heidegger's philosophy. Neither does the thesis start off Heideggerian but will discover itself Heideggerian upon answering a doubt that, initially, was directed *against* Heidegger's philosophy. Only at this point, does the thesis embrace a Heideggerian-informed method of meaning interpretation (i.e. genealogical destruction), which eventually will enable the conclusion to raise a doubt about the 'interactional' present. First and

foremost, this doubt is inspired by the work of meaning interpretation carried out throughout the thesis: genealogical destruction of critical histories (i.e. genealogies) of present/'interactive' media technology.

The thesis always gives the genealogists of interactive media technology the benefit of the doubt. In fact, only after the thesis has gained a method of meaning interpretation, may the thesis subject their arguments to doubt, and derive from its destruction a broader doubt about the 'interactional' present. Only after the thesis has interpreted the hidden meaning of the genealogists' arguments about present media technology and the meaning of *the relation between* their arguments and present media technology, may the doubt about the 'interactional' present be raised. Here is the meaning of the critical genealogists' arguments about present/'interactive' media technology:

> *as humanity and its technology were always meant to be as they presently are – i.e. interactive - they must continue being-interactive: in order to be free, humanity* must not *be different.*

The critical genealogists are incapable of thinking beyond the present technological condition that makes humanity unfree. This is because they cannot help but think about the history of technological development, including its revolutionary future, in terms of the same technology of their present world. The thesis uses several terms to call the vicious circle of *presentism* that (mis)informs their historical (mis)thinking. All these different terms name the *same* hidden Truth or (un)truth: the (mis)understanding of the history of technological development in terms of the genealogist's present; the (mis)understanding of being-creative (i.e. technology) in terms of the interactional present of Enframing; the interactional (mis)understanding of being-creative as Interface; the present (un)truth of Interactivity.

These different terms name the same vicious circle that prevents the critical genealogists from gaining a historical understanding of present/'interactive' media technology, as well as from thinking about a future of freedom for the interactive user. Once again, these arguments will allow the conclusion to raise a broader doubt about the critical (in)efficacy or meaning of present critical thinking:

> *what if the hidden meaning of the present concept of 'interactive' media technology was Interactivity as the metaphysical truth of our present epoch? What if Interactivity prevented present humanity from thinking differently about media technology? What if, paradoxically, the meaning of our present condition of technologically-induced unfreedom was the same Truth or (un)truth that*

silently (mis)guides present critical thinking? What if, in the 1950s, Martin Heidegger had already critiqued the vicious circle of Interactivity as "Enframing" and yet – paradoxically - the meaning of his critique had been (mis)interpreted in terms of the same (un)truth he had meant to critique: a (mis)understanding of being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing?

This is not to say that Interactivity hangs over the world like a ghost. Similarly, upon referring to 'our' present epoch, I will not impose my truth over the rest of humanity, nor will I claim that Heidegger possessed such thing as *the* Truth. If anything, the thesis will invite you, reader, to subject to *doubt* the dominant (un)truths of the present world, the world itself, and, in fact, my own doubt about the 'interactional' present. Presently, I must ask you to give me the benefit of the doubt. This seems reasonable, for I am requesting you to subject the thesis to its own guiding principle: (the benefit of the) doubt.

Upon raising more and more doubts about the critical efficacy of the genealogists' arguments, the thesis opens several circles, which will be closed via a Heideggerian-informed method of meaning interpretation: genealogical destruction. Upon tracing the historical origins of the genealogists' arguments about interactive media technology, the thesis will gain a historical understanding to interpret the very meaning of 'interactive' media technology. Only this understanding will allow me to put at rest my doubts about the critical (in)efficacy of the genealogists' arguments. Only at this point, the doubt that I share with Žižek will no longer be a doubt: the meaning of the genealogists' critique of interactive media technology is itself part of the problem. These thinkers are stuck in a vicious circle, which prevents them from thinking about present/'interactive' media technology differently: *freely* from the same (un)truth or technological problem that makes the interactive user unfree. Only at this point will it be *reasonable* to raise a doubt about the (in)efficacy of present critical thinking: a doubt about the 'interactional' present.

As the circularity of the argumentation seems to contradict the linear correctness of the academic method, below I map the thesis and explain why, *in its own terms*, its arguments hold true and why its final doubt will be reasonable. The reader is invited to return to the next section any time they might feel lost in the circle of doubt.

0.2. Mapping the circular structure of the thesis: for genealogical destruction of the 'interactional' present

The thesis traces the steps to jump out of the vicious circularity of the genealogists' (mis)thinking. In fact, these are the same the steps that I had to follow myself during my work of research. In this respect, the thesis does nothing more

than retracing – *from the viewpoint of present insight* – the steps that let my research out a vicious circle of self-doubt, which originally was born as a feeling of frustration towards present media technology:

what is it about present media technology that makes humanity unfree?

As I began researching this question, I discovered that critics of new media had been struggling to answer a similar question: "what is it about new media that makes them 'new'?" (Gane and Beer, 2008: 133). As the concept of "new" media has become synonymous with "interactive" media, critical students believe that what defines present media technology in relation to "traditional" ones (e.g. photography, cinema, radio, TV, etc.), is the present form of their interactivity (2008: 87). However, Nicholas Gane and David Beer demonstrate that the concept of "interactive" media remains ill-defined; for this reason, they urge critical thinkers to explain the meaning of "interactivity" itself via a "historical understanding or genealogy" of interactive media technology (2008: 101). As only partially did I grasp the significance of Gane and Beer's call to arms, I thoughtlessly jumped into a different research question:

what is it about interactive *media technology that makes the* interactive user *unfree?*

Gane and Beer identify three theoretical approaches to interactivity as: a political concept for the critique of the present regime of power/capitalism; a criterion to evaluate Computer Mediated Communication (CMC); a technical principle for the design of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) (2008: 97).

As I borrowed this map, I investigated how three disciplines had critiqued the interactivity of present media technology: is the interactive user a Foucauldian subjectivity whose corporality is predetermined/exploited by Capital (Neo-Marxism)? Does the problem have to do with a blackboxed user model that the end user is not free to modify (Science and Technology Studies, STS)? Is the user provided with a medium that hinders proper feedback of interactive communication (Media Studies/CMC)? *In hindsight*, I was stuck in a vicious circle of self-doubt. The more critical genealogies I would address, the less able I seemed to choose an argument and develop my critique accordingly. Although I refused to admit it, I believed that my research was born dead. The critical genealogists had already identified the problem: the interactive user is unfree because Capital has recuperated and corrupted pre-commercial/revolutionary practices of HCI design [In the present thesis, this is the subject of Sections 1.1-1.5]

Albeit unknowingly, my research took a turn as I encountered Martin Heidegger across the milestone texts of a critical school of HCI design. In the early days of the Macintosh Graphical User Interface (i.e. 1980s), some design theorists had already critiqued the exploitative interactivity of commercial Human-Computer interfaces. Several of them had adopted Heidegger's concept of the ready-to-hand/invisible hammer to theorise a liberatory form of interaction between Human and Computer. In fact, I encountered the same reading of Heidegger's BT in Thierry Bardini's genealogy of the Graphical User Interface. [In the thesis, this is the subject of Sections 1.5 and 1.6]

As I ventured in a reading of BT, I was puzzled. It seemed to me that the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer meant to describe the very opposite of a user-friendly/liberatory form of interactivity: technological humanity's condition of *unfreedom*. [In the thesis, this doubt is raised in Section 1.7, explored in Chapter 2, and answered in Section 2.9].

My self-doubt grew stronger, for I discovered that my interpretation of BT clashed against the reading of two influential readers of Heidegger: Hubert Dreyfus and Peter-Paul Verbeek. According to both readings, Heidegger's early concept of readiness-to-hand *does* enable HCI designers to theorise a liberatory form of interactivity. In fact, in the 1950s the later Heidegger of QCT had already foreseen the corruption of present interactivity and critiqued it as the "supreme danger" of the technology of "Enframing"/"Standing Reserve". Once again, I was stuck in a vicious circle. Eventually, my self-doubt turned into a healthier doubt about the dominant reading of Heidegger's later philosophy of technology. [In the thesis, this doubt is raised in Section 2.10, and explored in Chapters 3 and 4].

Upon engaging with Heidegger's later philosophy, eventually I came across a paradoxical *vicious circle*: present readers of Heidegger (critical HCI designers; Dreyfus; Verbeek; Bardini) have misunderstood the meaning of his philosophy of technology in terms of the same (un)truth that his concept of Enframing had meant to *critique*: in the interactional terms of the (un)truth of Interactivity. Even more paradoxically, I realised that - *in Heideggerian terms* - this paradox of vicious circularity made (historical) sense: upon misreading Heidegger himself in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing, his present readers have given full voice to the supreme or *double* danger of Enframing (QCT). In terms of the same philosophy these critical thinkers draw from, i.e. *in their own Heideggerian terms*, the vicious circle of Enframing brings together their (mis)thinking about present media technology in 'interactional' terms and the corrupted 'interactivity' of present/'interactive' media technology that they (fail to) critique. [In the thesis, the destruction of this paradox is the subject of Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3].

At this point, I found myself before yet another paradox, albeit a pleasant one. Via Heidegger's philosophy of being-historical thinking, I had gained –unknowingly at first - the historical understanding to study the meaning of present/'interactive' media technology (Gane and Beer, 2008: 101). This was the same Heideggerian method of meaning interpretation - hermeneutic destruction of epochal thinkers' language - that I had already applied to the present (mis)readings of Heidegger's philosophy [In the thesis, this curious event is the subject of Section 5.4].

Via Heidegger's method of meaning interpretation, I came to realise that a similar, in fact the *same* vicious circle of Enframing concealed itself behind the arguments of the critical genealogists (Neo-Marxism; STS; Media Studies/CMC). Despite their superficial differences, their central concepts ('subjectivity', 'blackbox' and 'communicative feedback') hid the same meaning: 'given that reality is interactive, Interactivity *must* be (the) Real. In order to be free, humanity must continue being-interactive'. What had prevented me from choosing between their genealogical arguments was the fact that their arguments were *not different* from each other. Most importantly, the meaning of their *different* critiques of present/'interactive' media technology was the *same* technological problem to be overcome: the unbearable (un)truth that silently orders present humanity to *be* interactive and *not be* different [In the thesis, this is the subject of Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9].

The interpretation of the vicious circle that (mis)informed the critical genealogists' (mis)thinking encouraged me to raise a doubt. This was a broader doubt about the critical efficacy or meaning of the present way of thinking about the technological world in 'interactional' terms and, contemporaneously, a doubt about the meaning of the present/'interactional' world of technology [In the thesis, this is the subject of the Conclusion].

The thesis undergoes five turning points in the following sections: 1.7; 2.10; 5.4; 10.1; 1.3. It is important to stress that these steps never betray the guiding principle of the thesis: doubt. As explained below, each and every step either gives or reasonably takes away/destroys (the benefit of the) doubt.

Section 1.7. A doubt about the critical efficacy/meaning of the HCI designers' (and Bardini's) theorisation of uncorrupted interactivity as 'ready-to-hand interactivity'.

This doubt is reasonable because raised in circular terms: as the thesis lacks a method to interpret meaning, the thesis *must* answer the doubt in the designers' (and Bardini's) own terms. Similarly, it is reasonable to *raise* the doubt because Heidegger himself clarified that the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer was not meant to be read in practical terms. In terms of the same philosophy these thinkers draw from, i.e. *in their own Heideggerian terms*, their

reading of the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer as a ~~practical~~ experience of *liberatory* interactivity is already doubtful. The doubt is indeed raised in Heideggerian terms and yet, these are not my terms but the alternative HCI designers' (and Bardini's). And so, only insofar as the doubt about the meaning of the Heideggerian-informed concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' *must* be answered in circular terms, is the doubt answered in terms of Heidegger's BT (Chapter 2). The thesis is not Heideggerian (yet). On the contrary, it is raising a doubt about the critical efficacy or meaning of the *Heideggerian-informed* concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity'.

Section 2.10. A doubt about Hubert Dreyfus and Peter Paul Verbeek's reading of readiness-to-hand and Enframing as two different forms of interactivity (respectively, liberatory and corrupted interactivity).

This reading is doubtful not only in terms of my reading of BT (Sections 2.1 – 2.9) but *in its own Heideggerian terms*: Dreyfus misquotes a key passage from Heidegger's OWA, and Verbeek grossly conflates two separate concepts from BT. As the thesis is still lacking a method of meaning interpretation, the doubt must continue being circular (Chapters 3 and 4). Dreyfus and Verbeek's reading of Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology must be interpreted *in its own terms*: in terms of the meaning of Heidegger's post *Kehre* philosophy of technology and via Heidegger's post-*Kehre* method of meaning interpretation (i.e. hermeneutic destruction via being-historical thinking). *In its own Heideggerian terms*, the meaning of the present/interactional reading of Heidegger will reveal itself as a paradoxical/vicious (mis)reading: a (mis)understanding of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the *present* (un)truth of Interactivity that the Heideggerian concepts of Enframing/Standing Reserve had already meant to critique in the 1950s (Sections 5.1-5.3).

Section 5.4. A doubt about the genealogists' critique of 'interactive' media technology as 'blackboxed user configuration' (STS) and 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism): can the genealogists think about an alternative to present media technology or does their thinking betray the same vicious (un)truth of Interactivity that has (mis)appropriated the interactional (mis)readings of Heidegger's philosophy?

By this point, the doubt is reasonable *because* it is raised in Heideggerian terms: Heidegger's method of meaning interpretation (hermeneutic destruction) *always already* gives thinkers the benefit of the doubt. Ironically, the thesis has gained this insight upon *having to* use Heidegger's method to interpret the Heideggerian-(mis)informed concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' (Sections 5.1; 5.2; 5.3). Heidegger's being-historical thinking always already enables

the interpretation to be carried out in circular terms: *in terms of the thinker's (in)ability to think about the meaning of their own thinking*. This is the same (vicious) circle that recurrently (mis)appropriates epochal thinkers' (mis)thinking. As per Chapter 3, the interpretation of this (vicious) circle, which always already transpires through human language, is the object of study of hermeneutic destruction. Interpreted in epochal terms via being-historical thinking, the meaning of this circle presents hermeneutics with a precious gift: the meaning of being(-human) at the time of the epochal thinker's thinking. As per Chapter 3, this is insofar as human thinking is always already appropriated by the same circular Event of being (i.e. truth) that, during the thinker's present epoch, enables beings to come into presence *as* beings. In other words, so-called 'theory' and 'praxis' cannot be set in opposition: hermeneutic destruction does not write a history of ideas but a history of the human being. For the purposes of the thesis, which pursues a historical understanding or critical genealogy of present media technology, this method is redefined as 'genealogical destruction' (Section 5.4). Once applied to the language of present thinkers, hermeneutic/genealogical destruction enables the analyst to gain a historical understanding/critical genealogy of the present meaning of being-human. In this case:

> *what does it mean to be a 'blackboxed' 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism) or 'blackboxed' 'user model/configuration' (STS/Bardini)? What does it mean to be a free/'de-blackboxed' 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism) or free/'de-blackboxed' 'user reconfiguration' (STS/Bardini)? What does it mean to be a free 'interactive user'? In fact, what does it mean to 'critique' the present?*

Section 10.1. Destruction of the doubt about the critical efficacy or meaning of the genealogists' arguments about present/'interactive' media technology.

By this point, the doubt I share with Žižek is no longer a doubt. In light of the work of genealogical destruction from Chapters 6-9, the meaning of the genealogists' critique of interactive media technology is – *in their own terms* - the same Event of Enframing that makes present humanity unfree, and yet has always already appropriated their historical (mis)thinking about technological development (presentism) in terms of Interactivity. *In their own terms*, the genealogists have given full voice to the double danger of Enframing that Heidegger had critiqued in the 1950s.

This interpretation is reasonable because of the insights gained in Chapter 6-9. Chapters 6 and 7 have applied genealogical destruction to the epochal theorists of technology, sociality and power who have thought about the concepts of 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity' in the first place. Upon destroying the historical origins of the critical

concepts of ‘blackbox’ and ‘subjectivity’, genealogical destruction has gained two insights (Chapters 6-7). First and foremost, the meaning of being *free* as ‘de-blackboxed’ or ‘de-subjugated’ interactive user. Secondly, the very meaning of ‘critical’ thinking: what does it mean to ‘critique’ the present? Although the thesis has focused mostly on the origins of ‘subjectivity’ (Neo-Marxist genealogies) and ‘blackbox’ (STS genealogies/Bardini’s), Chapter 9 has addressed some genealogical accounts that belong to Media Studies. Here the thesis has considered a group of epochal thinkers of media/communication who have inspired a claim of the critical genealogists from Chapter 1: the communicative ‘feedback’ of present/’interactive’ media technology is corrupt. By the end of Chapter 9, the doubt that was opened in Section 5.4 has been confirmed. Upon attempting to critique their present world, the epochal thinkers who inspired the critical genealogists gave full voice to the double danger of Enframing.

Heidegger was the starting point for the philosophical development of several thinkers who have come to be known as ‘postmodern’.[1] And yet, *in their own terms*, their reappropriation of Heidegger’s philosophy gave voice to his concerns about the double danger of Enframing. The same applies to other thinkers analysed in this thesis, who do not draw from Heidegger. On one hand, ‘postmodern’ thinkers believe to have given up modern truths via a revolutionary project of ontological ‘relativisation’. However, once their thinking is interpreted via genealogical destruction, namely *in its own terms*, their ‘postmodern relativism’ reads as a *continuation* of modern humanity’s drive towards total control over beings. The hidden meaning of their (mis)thinking is the *double* danger of the Standing Reserve described by Heidegger’s critique of Enframing: their ‘postmodern’ thinking believes to have relativized modern Truths and yet, upon (mis)thinking so, encounters itself at the Interface of inter-relations with other beings as interactive master/creator of truth. Once applied to the history of humanity, this dangerous (mis)understanding leads these thinkers towards *presentism*: the (mis)understanding of the past and future in terms of their own (interactional) present (of Enframing). As these thinkers pre-project the meaning of history in terms of the (un)truth of their present world of Enframing (i.e. Interactivity), a silent order transpires through the relativist facade of their language:

[1] The thesis gives special attention to the nexus between Heidegger, Michel Foucault and Bruno Latour. Due to lack of space, the thesis identifies but must pass in (partial) silence over some thinkers who were highly indebted to Heidegger (e.g. Merleau-Ponty). In the case of Jacques Derrida, the thesis takes on a middle ground. Even though it is not possible to open a debate with Derrida, a reasonable doubt *must* be raised, insofar as his deconstruction of Heideggerian hermeneutics indirectly undermines the *Heideggerian-informed* enterprise of the thesis.

as the human being was always meant to be as it presently is, i.e. interactive, it must continue being-interactive. To be free, humanity must not be-different.

Chapters 8 and 9 show that the critical genealogists from Chapter 1 have inherited the (un)truth of Interactivity via the concepts of 'blackbox', 'subjectivity' and 'communicative feedback'. Their critical answer to the question – what is new about humanity's present condition of unfreedom as interactive users? - is always formulated in terms of the silent (un)truth of presentism: 'the human being *must* be-interactive'. What remains hidden to the genealogists is the meaning of the Event of Enframing that present/'interactive' media technology *is* (misunderstood as): the (un)truth of Interactivity. The last sentence had no choice but to be cryptic, for it put into words the paradox of vicious circularity that (mis)guides the genealogists' (mis)thinking.

On one hand, the genealogists (mis)understand the essence of technology as the *same* atemporal (un)truth/Truth that has recurred throughout *different* stages of technological development. And yet, the genealogists have inherited this silent (un)truth from the *same* technology of their present world, whose meaning escapes their thinking even though it has always already inspired it. Hence the paradoxical/vicious circle that (mis)informs their historical (mis)thinking about 'interactive' media technology, including its revolutionary future. Hence the necessity of gaining a historical understanding or critical genealogy of 'interactive' media technology (Gane and Beer, 2008). By the end of Chapter 9, the thesis has already gained this understanding, precisely via genealogical destruction of the genealogists' (mis)thinking about media technology as 'interactive'.

10.3. The final doubt about the 'interactional' present of Enframing.

For the critique of the genealogists' arguments to be *reasonably* extended to the present world and present critical thinking, the doubt does not rely on the number of genealogists that have been taken in consideration. Instead, the doubt is reasonable because of the circular premises of its (being-historical)thinking: the meaning of human thinking cannot be separated from the world that the thinker is thinking about. In other words, what justifies the doubt about the 'interactional' present is the (genealogical destruction of the) same (vicious) circularity that drives the genealogists' (mis)thinking about *their* present world in 'interactional' terms (Section 10.1). Alternatively, the argument whereby the meaning of the present world is Enframing is the silent claim of the genealogists', not mine. This is insofar as - *in their own terms* - the meaning of their present (mis)thinking about *their* 'interactional'/present

world is the same (un)truth that their present world *is* (misunderstood as): Interactivity as the (un)truth of Enframing. This is the (un)truth that silently orders humanity to challenge the being of beings as humanly controllable resource, Standing Reserve or, *in terms of present (mis)thinking*, as Interface.

The final doubt about the 'interactional' present is indeed a doubt, as it refers to thinkers that are yet to be subjected to (the benefit of the) doubt. As Section 10.3 sketches an agenda *for* future work of genealogical destruction, priority is given to two accusations that undermine the Heideggerian-informed project of research: Heidegger's philosophy is guilty of metaphysics of presence (Jacques Derrida) and "ontological Anti-Semitism" (Donatella Di Cesare). Due to lack of space, the thesis cannot join the debates, but it can, must, and will raise a *reasonable* doubt about both accusations (Section 10.2). In fact, this doubt will be one more reason to proceed and raise the doubt about the 'interactional' present: a *Heideggerian-inspired* doubt about the vicious circularity that seems to bring together present (mis)thinking about technology in 'interactional' terms and the present/'interactional' world of technology.

Terms such as '(mis)thinking', '(mis)understanding' and '(un)truths' do not mean that present thinkers are *incorrect*, but that their thinking – like everything else – is *ambiguous*. On one hand, humanity recurrently believes – more or less silently - that the correctness of its truths bespeaks of a *necessary* Truth: either as atemporal/transhistorical Truth that has *always* applied to human history or as the culmination of a process of development that *inevitably* escorted humanity to its present truths. Either way, humanity (mis)thinks that its present truths were *always* meant to be (presentism). And yet, paradoxically, humanity has inherited (the correctness of) its truths from the same present world that it fails to understand: a circular (mis)understanding of (the history of) being in terms of the present. In this sense, *because of* their circular correctness, human truths are always already (un)true and human thinking – including 'critical' thinking - is always already (mis)thinking.

Genealogical 'destruction' does not mean to bring critical thinking to a halt but to pursue the "productive dialogue" that Heidegger had already contemplated (Section 7.8). The meaning of 'destruction' is the *creative* Event of freedom: reappropriation of a traditional language, thinking and world that one has inherited not of their own accord. These remarks might seem meaningless to the reader. Understandably so, for only after Chapter 7 has grasped the meaning of 'critical' thinking, may these remarks become meaningful. Presently, I can only invoke the benefit of your doubt, as I ask you to join me in several circles of doubt about the history of interactive media technology.

Chapter 1. Critical genealogies of interactive media technology: on exploited subjectivities, blackboxed users and invisible hammers

1.1. Neo-Marxist genealogies: the corrupt interactivity of present media technology

According to Lev Manovich's iconic genealogy of new media, calling present media technology "interactive" is a shallow argument (Manovich, 2001: 70-74). This is because media have *always* been interactive: a Greek statue invited its audience to inspect it from different angles, a Modern novel required readers to fill-in missing information and so, the Human-Computer Interface is interactive by definition as it allows users to modify content in real time (2001: 70-71). Critical students should focus on the *form* of interactivity contained in the design of so-called "new" media (2001: 72). Whereas "open interactivity" enables the user to take up an active role, "closed branch interactivity" forces the user to choose between predetermined courses of actions (2001: 59). Mostly, present/commercial media technology provides us with the latter form of interactivity (2001: 74). Virtual Reality interfaces are the culmination of the present trend towards predetermined interactivity: although users can modify a virtual world through their bodies, this is an *illusion* of control imposed by a corporate designer through the Foucauldian mechanism of disciplinisation (2001: 154).

Andrew Barry also draws from Michel Foucault but develops a broader critique of interactivity as "power diagram" (Barry, 2001). Presently, interactivity enables Capital to control society at large, including our education system, marketing culture, design of public spaces and media technology (2001: 148-151). The interactive model of subjectification distinguishes itself from the disciplinarian paradigm that Foucault had critiqued in the 1970s/80s (2001: 148-149). Behind the seemingly soft disciplinisation of present interactive media technology, lies a brutal system of individual governmentability; differently from the visible paradigm of Fordist exploitation, the present mechanisms of interactivity are invisible and therefore more effective (2001: 148-149). Similarly to Manovich, the capitalist owners of present media technology provide end users with the mere *illusion* of free actions, hence exploiting them as subjugated subjects or subjectivities (Foucault).

In this respect, Roger Silverstone has provided one of the most bitter critiques of the interactive promises of freedom of choice and action:

> "[Interactivity] is hailed to undo a century of one-to-many broadcasting and the progressive infantilization of an increasingly passive audience. It is an expression of a new millennialism. These are the utopian thoughts of

> the new age in which power is believed to have been given to, at last, to the people: to the people, that is, who have access to, and can control, the mouse and the keyboard" (Silverstone, 1999: 95).

Here Silverstone highlights the same paradox of the "interpassive subjectivity" first noticed by Robert Pfaller (2003) and further critiqued by Slavoj Zizek's analysis of cyberspace (Zizek, 1998). Like Barry and Manovich, the corporate designer of interactive media technology provides users with the illusion of free actions: present inter-activity is in fact inter-*passivity*.

Tanjev Schultz aligns himself with Manovich: the interactivity that present media technology provides us with is not real but an illusion of interactivity itself (Schultz, 2000: 209). In its pre-commercialised form, interactive media technology had presented us with the opportunity to overcome the repressive paradigm of the Cultural Industries; decentralise media content production; open spaces for active citizenship; make up for the *lack of interactivity* of former mass media (2000: 206-208). Schultz uses the example of interactive journalism to demonstrate that these promises of user control, freedom and interactivity itself, have been crushed by digital Capitalism (2000: 208-209). Drawing from Sheizaf Rafaeli's definition of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), Schultz contends that the communication enabled by present media is "reactive", rather than "interactive" (e.g. online newspaper comment sections) (2000: 210-211).

Paul Jones and David Holmes critique interactive media in the same terms. Presently, interactivity is a buzzword that does not threaten the capitalist owners of communications technology (Jones and Holmes, 2011: 125). Elsewhere, Holmes tells us that *proper* interactivity must satisfy certain technical criteria, which he derives from the work on CMC by Sarah McMillan, John B. Thompson and, once again, Rafaeli (Holmes, 2007: 26-8). Interactive communication demands that messages be modifiable by both communicators, with the medium changing along with the interactive exchange of information (2007: 27). Presently, this does not occur in most of our communication outlets, which contain a "reactive" form of communication (2007: 27).

Similarly, Darin Barney argues that present media technology fails to provide us with "robust interactivity"; all we get as interactive users is "network transactivity" (Barney, 2000: 165). Rather than being able to modify the information shared across digital networks and achieve democratic communication, we merely obtain a facilitated exchange of commodities (2000: 97). Once again: interactive media technology, *as per its present form or design*, is a power device in the hands of capital (2000: 199).

These arguments, whereby interactivity– in its *present form* – is a missed opportunity, belongs to a widespread genealogical account: present digital interfaces are born out of Capital's corruption of (potentially) revolutionary practices of Human-Computer Interaction design (HCI design). This criticism builds on a broader genealogy of our present economic system of post-Fordism, which has been popularised in similar terms by Michael Hardt and Toni Negri (2000) and Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello (2007).

1.2. Neo-Marxist genealogies of corrupt/recuperated interactivity: the interactive user as exploited subjectivity

Central to Hardt and Negri's genealogy of Empire, is the Foucauldian-redefined concept of class struggle (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 242-256). The main contention of Autonomist Neo-Marxism is that the history of capitalism is "reactive" (2000: 268): in 1968, Fordist Capital had to react to a season of civil disobedience that threatened the survival of its economic system (2000: 264-268). Its initial reaction of violent repression proved ineffective; eventually, Capital co-opted or *recuperated* the revolutionary practices and subjectivities of the movements in a new system of production, which would give life to the present post-Fordist system of Empire (2000: 268).

Presently, there are no longer rigid boundaries between productive and unproductive life, nor the standardised subjects of Fordism but "hybrid subjectivities" (2000: 33). Capitalism has left the physical boundaries of the Fordist factory to monetise spheres of the *bios* that seemed incorruptible in former times (2000: 332). This is Capital's real subsumption of society as "social factory": post-Fordism is more and more oriented toward the "immaterial" extraction of value from our emotions, sociality, and corporeality (2000: 27-30). Interactive media technology is the very embodiment of the present power regime: the interactive machine spreads the networks of the social factory and its biopolitical strategy of value extraction/"immaterial labour" throughout society (2000: 291).

As seen below, Hardt and Negri's genealogy of interactive media technology has inspired a wide range of critical thinkers, who have adopted it to undermine the optimist histories of "prosumption", a concept that was first popularised by Alvin Toffler (Bruns, 2006: 1). With the transition from an industrial system of production based on mass standardisation into a model of customised services and commodities, Toffler's prosumer is a consumer/producer who has taken up an (inter)active role in the production process (Comor, 2010: 310). The concept would be appropriated by Bruns to describe the user-generated content (UGC) paradigm of interactive media technology (Bird 2011: 506). Bruns' sites of produsage promote unprecedented forms of audience engagement that democratise the terms of intellectual property and the hierarchies of the digital economy (Bruns, 2006: 2). Further encouraged by

Jenkins' concept of "participatory culture" (Jenkins, 2008), prosumption is understood as a "revolution" in the history of media: the "era of collective intelligence" (Jenkins, 2008: 4), "New Information Society" (Benkler, 2006: 61), or "Wikinomics" (Tapscott and Williams, 2007). Differently from traditional media such as broadcast TV, prosumers give up the role of passive audience and interact with the process of content production.

Critical political economists such as Christian Fuchs and Eran Fisher have problematised these positions. Their critique of interactive media technology such as social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) combines the Autonomist concept of immaterial labour (i.e. Hardt and Negri) with Dallas Smythe's critique of audience exploitation (Fisher 2014; Fuchs 2015). Smythe claimed that traditional mass media such as Television have the function of producing audience commodity (Smythe, 1977). The audience is commodified upon being sold by media owners to advertisers; at the same time, it performs free labour upon delegating its attention to broadcasting content (1977: 14). Critical analyses *a la* Fuchs and Fisher combine Smythe and Autonomist Neo-Marxism to undermine the optimistic/acritical reading of the participatory paradigm, as well as its genealogical account of the digital *revolution*. Not only do new media such as Facebook continue exploiting us, but they hide pre-digital mechanisms of exploitation: only insofar as present media technologies have *intensified* user exploitation, may one argue that they are new (Fisher, 2015: 125).

A wide array of Neo-Marxist thinkers have followed Hardt and Negri and borrowed Foucault's concept of subjectification to critique the interactive mechanisms of delegated attention. In fact, already operative in the Smythean concept of audience commodity is a proto-Foucauldian approach to power: upon delegating attention to the medium of communication, the interactive prosumer is subjugated into a docile body. According to Tiziana Terranova's iconic concept of "attention economy", the interactive user is exploited as its mentalist functions are monetised by the interactive machine:

> " […] attention is the process by which value is produced as inseparable from the technological production of subjectivity " (Terranova, 2012: 13).

The same concept of cognitivist subjectification has inspired the Autonomist critiques of Franco Berardi's "cognitarian subjectification" (Berardi, 2010), Paolo Virno's "subsumption of the general intellect" (Virno, 2004), and Maurizio Lazzarato's "subjective economy" (Lazzarato, 2014). A much wider fringe of critical thinkers have adopted the Foucauldian concept of subjectification to critique interactive media technology: Jonathan Crary's history of capital's

“management of attention” (Crary, 1999), Katherine Hayles’ technologically-induced “distraction” (Hayles, 2012), Bernard Stiegler’s “proletarianisation” of the nervous system (Stiegler, 2010), Nigel Thrift’s “Cognitive Capitalism” (Thrift, 2005). Other genealogists have moved beyond a cognitivist critique of new media, arguing that the interactive subjectivity experiences a much deeper exploitation of the senses.

For instance, Jonathan Beller interprets interactive media technology as a “socio-biopolitical interface” that extracts value from a broader and broader sphere of the human senses (Beller, 2012: 5-6). This technology extends to our present the paradigm of traditional media such as Cinema, whereby “to look is to labour” (Beller, 1994: 2). Similarly, Jan Jagodzinski understands new media technology as a continuation of the Tayloristic paradigm of corporeal exploitation (Jagodzinski, 2010). Today’s micro-level techniques of bodily “exploration” can capture human attention through the invisible mapping of our psycho-physiological functions (2010: 17).

Other Foucauldian concepts have informed the critical debate, such as the technology of the self (e.g. Cranny-Francis, 2013: 61) and surveillance, under the stimulus of Poster’s iconic theory of Super-Panopticon (Poster, 1995). Another effective critique of digital surveillance is David Berry’s work on “computationality” (Berry, 2011; 2014). Computationality predetermines our actions and thinking toward monetisable lifestyles (2011: 123). The design of so-called “compactants” hides a normalising layer of codes and algorithms aimed at the surveillance of our activity for purposes of monetisation (Berry, 2014: 63-69). Computationality is the present paradigm of Foucauldian subjectification (2014: 69): the process whereby we are “dehumanised” into monetisable subjects (2014: 75). Similar concerns about surveillance have been raised by students of ubiquitous computing such as Mark Andrejevic, who critiques the commercial promise of spatio-temporal customisation as a mere “illusion” (Andrejevic, 2003: 141). Once again, the *illusion* of spatio-temporal customisation remains the present paradigm of “productive subjectification” (2003: 134).

Via Foucault, one returns to the same argument about corrupt interactivity from the first section: the problem with present interactive media technology is that *its present form or design* does not make us free but provides us with the illusion of freedom of choice. As present interactivity is a resource of power that subjectifies the user, we must reconfigure its interactivity and achieve user freedom via alternative subjectivities or, as per the next sections, via processes of user-reconfiguration.

1.3. Neo-Marxist genealogies of corrupt/recuperated interactivity: the interactive user as blackboxed configuration

Boltanski and Chiapello's genealogy of the New Spirit of Capitalism comes close to Hardt and Negri's analysis of post-Fordism/Empire (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Starting in 1968, the social movements had developed two different critiques of Fordism: the artistic and social critiques (2007: 38). Whereas the latter advocated a communist revolution, the artistic critique, which belonged to the bourgeois and artistic intelligentsia, called for more authentic lifestyles. Whereas the social critique would have delivered a death blow to Fordism, the artistic critique could be, and in fact was, recuperated (2007: 201). Similarly to Hardt and Negri, the present neo-liberal system is born out of capital's *recuperation* of (potentially) revolutionary discourses (2007: 201). In fact, Capital's present emphasis on interactivity bespeaks of this event of recuperation:

> "At the level of organizing production, the stress in neo-management on interaction, on authentic human relations (in contrast to bureaucratic formalism), represents a response to critiques that condemned alienation in work and the mechanization of human relations?" (2007: 98).

Critical students of new media such as Eran Fisher and Wendy Chun have transposed Boltanski and Chiapello's argument to the genealogy of interactive media technology. Fisher critiques the enthusiastic discourses about the digital economy among the sustainers of prosumption (Fisher, 2010). This rhetoric of individual empowerment bespeaks of Capital's recuperation of the artistic critique moved against Fordism, of which the Web 1.0 business model had been a residual expression (Fisher, 2010: 4). Digital media have been pivotal for the recuperation of the artistic critique and the extension of capitalist exploitation to new spheres of the human being (2010: 4). The same principles of creativity and empowerment that the '68 movements had deployed to *critique* Fordism, have been co-opted by digital capitalism and become central for its survival. As summarized by Fuchs: "creativity is not outside or alongside exploitation […] it is its very foundation" (Fuchs, 2014: 62).

Wendy Chun has written a similar genealogy of interactive media, with special attention given to the discipline of HCI design (Chun, 2011). Chun addresses two design principles: direct manipulation and interface invisibility (2011: 59-95). The HCI designer promises users freedom to control the interface upon being able to modify its content in real time (direct manipulation). The interface is so usable or user-friendly that it becomes invisible, hence

enabling the interactive user to focus on their tasks, rather than on the technology itself. For instance, the digital folder of the Graphical User Interface (GUI) opens only upon our clicking on it. The folder is immediately recognisable as something that affords opening, hence inviting our brain to click on it as if it was invisible. According to the HCI designers of commercial interfaces, the interactive user is placed on the driver seat.

Like Fisher, Chun argues that these principles of user-friendly design result from capital's recuperation of the artistic critique (2011: 63). The "user-friendly" interface is in fact an "ideological" machine that belongs to the New Spirit of Capitalism (2011: 66-68). Users know that the digital interface is not real and that they are not responsible for the action of opening it up. Instead, the true actor is the corporate designer or at least the hidden layer of codes triggered by one's mouse click. And yet, users act as if they were *in control* of the digital folder (2011: 67). Similarly to the critiques from the previous sections, this invisible stratum of exploitation reveals the ideology of new media. Once again, the promises of user-friendliness of commercial HCI design are ideological or illusionary (2011: 67). The interactive user is promised unlimited freedom of choice and total control over the Human-Computer interface. However, hidden underneath the user-friendly surface of design is a "blackboxed" layer of exploitation (2011: 45; 60; 140; 141).[2]

This critique of blackboxed interactivity is shared by Lori Emerson, who studies the transformation undergone by HCI practices of user modelling since the 1960s/70s until our present time (Emerson, 2014: 19). Early pioneers of HCI design such as Douglas Engelbart understood the Human-Computer Interface as a tool that would enable the user to undergo a process of intellectual self-augmentation; user-friendliness - a term that did not exist yet - required an open-software interface that could be modified by users according to their learning needs (2014: 51-52). This notion of transparency underwent a dramatic change following Xerox Parc's commercial recuperation of HCI research in the late 1970s and, eventually, with the launch of the Apple Macintosh in 1984 (2014: 64-85). This is when the interface is transformed into a "black-boxed" commodity that the user cannot modify: the designer represents the

[2] The arguments of Chun and Fisher resonate with Nigel Thrift's critique of the new culture of digital capitalism (Thrift, 2005). Thrift notices the emergence of a "hip" class of young "bourgeois bohemians", whose entrepreneurial culture is quite distinct from its Fordist counterpart (2005: 128-129). These software designers display a culture of "human concern" for the user (2005: 180). Nevertheless, for Thrift this is an ideological concern: capital doing business as usual, albeit under the spell of a seemingly user-friendly ethic.

user as a commodity consumer (2014: 34). This is the ideology of user-friendliness that has survived up to our present time (2014: 49; 85): the user-friendly Human-Computer interface as a blackboxed commodity that is so easy to use that it becomes invisible, hence bypassing our thoughts and actions (2014: 79).

Emerson confirms the concerns of the other critical genealogists: presently, these exploitative principles of HCI design - which are referred to by designers as *anticipatory* or *predictive* design - still inspire the production of gestural and ubicomp interfaces (2014: 49; 85). Despite Apple's ideological claims of user-friendliness (2014: 77), its paradigm of Human-Computer Interaction no longer represents the end user as intelligent individual (Engelbart), but predetermines/blackboxes the thoughts and actions of the mass-standardised user-consumer (2014: 83-4). At this point, let us highlight the one premise that brings together all the critical genealogies seen so far:

> *presently, interactive media technology contains an illusionary, exploitative, corrupted, predetermined, or* blackboxed *subjectivity, representation, user model. The interactive user is provided with the illusion of choice and freedom, upon being forced to follow predetermined or* blackboxed *courses of actions inscribed in the interface by a corporate designer. The solution lies in fixing blackboxed interactivity via design of* truly user-friendly/free/de-blackboxed *subjectivities, representations, user models.*

A similar critique belongs to the discipline that has coined the concept of 'blackbox': the social constructivist branch of Science and Technology Studies (STS). This field has generated an incredibly detailed genealogy of recuperated/blackboxed interactivity: Thierry Bardini's history of the Macintosh GUI (Bardini, 2000). Like the Neo-Marxist arguments of the other genealogists, Bardini believes that the corrupt/blackboxed form of present interactivity can be traced back to the recuperation of pre-commercial and (potentially) liberatory practices of HCI design. Like Emerson and Chun, Bardini traces the turning point back to the launch of the Macintosh in 1984. Before engaging with this genealogy, the next section provides an overview of the STS concept of user modelling/blackboxing.

1.4. Science and Technology Studies and user blackboxing: an overview

Since the late 1980s, social constructivism has played a major influence among students of new media and communication technologies, and in the 2000s it established itself in the STS field as one of the dominant paradigms

(Boczkowski and Lievrouw, 2008: 954). Within one of its schools, the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT), one encounters the principle of interpretative flexibility (Hughes and Pinch, 2012: xviii): interactive media technology is analysed discursively via the concepts of meaning encoding and decoding (Lievrouw, 2014: 24). Pivotal for the field has been the work on user inscription/modelling of Madeleine Akrich, Keith Grint, Steve Woolgar and Thierry Bardini (Boczkowski and Lievrouw, 2008: 960).

Following the social constructivist approach of Actor Network Theory (ANT), Akrich argues that designers inscribe in technology scripts or prescriptions (Akrich, 1992: 208). Users are confronted with predetermined functions that they remain free not to follow, in which case the artifact remains an unfulfilled potentiality (1992: 208). Description frames the object of critical analysis as the process of script negotiation between designers and users, with the political nature of technology lying in meaning negotiation itself (1992: 222). Only once negotiation has terminated, and the user has conformed to the script, is a "stabilised" technology "blackboxed" (1992: 222).

In an ethnographic study of microchip computers development, Grint and Woolgar study a company's attempts at "configuring the user" over usability trials (Grint and Woolgar, 1997: 74). The authors adopt the metaphor of technology as text: the artifact is studied as the meeting point between designers' writings and users' readings (Grint and Woolgar, 1997: 70). Inscribed in the design of technology are representations of the user that prescribe certain behaviours (Grint and Woolgar, 1997: 73). No causal relationship exists between writings and readings: user configuration is a constant struggle in which alternative readings are always possible (Grint and Woolgar, 1997: 93).

Both Akrich and Grint and Woolgar understand user freedom in terms of a process of meaning negotiation between designer and user. Albeit not understood as exploited subjectivity, the user is nevertheless a configurable script that the designer attempts to control or *blackbox* via inscription of models in technical design. The same argument is embraced by Bardini's social constructivist genealogy of the Apple Macintosh (Bardini, 2000). Similarly to the genealogies from the previous sections, Bardini argues that Apple's practices of user modelling bespeak of commercial recuperation/corruption, which must be solved via alternative reconfigurations.

1.5. Thierry Bardini's genealogy of blackboxed interactivity: user reconfiguration via Martin Heidegger's hammer

Thierry Bardini provides a detailed account of the development of the first commercially-sound Human-Computer interfaces (Bardini, 2000). The history starts from Douglas Engelbart's experiments at the ARB laboratory in the

1960s and ends with the commercialisation of the Apple Macintosh in 1984. The author adopts the SCOT principle that designers "socially construct" or "blackbox" the user in the Human-Computer interface upon inscribing representation of the user in technical design (Bardini, 2000: 109).

The original interface developed by Engelbart treated the user as an IT expert or "knowledge worker" (2000: 107). This choice reflected his philosophy of bootstrapping, which did not theorise usability as ease of use but as a process of human-machine co-evolution that would enable the user to undergo a learning experience (2000: 112). Engelbart's disregard towards ease of use co-existed with the business-free environment of the ARB Lab where he carried out his research (2000: 119). However, as the mismatch between Engelbart's learning-driven user and real-life users had become apparent to his team, some of his co-workers left the ARC Lab to join the research and *product development* Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) (2000: 144-149). The rearrangement of Engelbart's research in a corporation led to the production of the first commercially distributed personal computers: the Xerox Alto and Star (2000: 143-81). At Xerox Parc the mission for designers became to be "more real": to design a technology tailored around real people's needs (2000: 157). Hence the birth of the principle of usability as user-friendliness or ease of use (2000: 158). Eventually, the Star completed the reorganisation of the interface around the user as neoliberal worker-consumer via the real object-based GUI made of desktop, folders, bin, windows, etc. (2000: 158).

Contemporaneous to the rejection of Engelbart's philosophy was the redefinition of his design methodology after a new "science of the user" (2000: 161-181). The designer goes out in the world to observe real users in their environment (i.e. neoliberal office) and understand their needs. At this point, the designer abstracts user activity in a schematic diagram, which is inscribed in technical design via ergonomics, human factor disciplines and cognitive psychology. Over usability trials in the laboratory, designers test their "abstract user model" by observing user interaction with the tentative interface, fix the model accordingly, re-test it and so forth, until the Human-Computer interface has met the objectives of task efficiency optimisation (2000: 175-181). Engelbart's philosophy of intellectual augmentation is officially abandoned: the designer wants to *anticipate* the user's physical and mental reactions.

The same principles would be implemented in the Apple Macintosh in 1984 (2000: 71).The Macintosh GUI was an affordable and easy to use computer that deployed the same real-object-metaphor that had originated from Alan Kay's redefinition of Engelbart's heritage at Xerox (2000: 169). Apple had rejected - once and for all - Engelbart's philosophy, as the Macintosh came to represent the user as somewhat "naïve" (2000: 169): a commodity

consumer who has no time or interest in undergoing a learning experience (2000: 153-54). The principle of usability/user-friendliness as ease of use had taken over HCI design for good (2000: 155).

Bardini's lesson is that the outcome of computing development was given by the contingent convergence of "dispersed powers" (2000: xiv). Bardini has adopted the SCOT principle of interpretive flexibility from the previous section: there was nothing "inherent" or "inevitable" in the final form taken by the GUI, but a complex process of social construction of the user (2000: 215-216). We are always in time to rediscover and implement the good stuff that time has left behind, namely Engelbart's philosophy of user modelling (2000: 215-216). The user representations contained in the interface can be *improved* via reconciliation of ease of use and ease of learning (2000: 226-27).

Bardini tells us that commercial GUIs abstract the user as asocial individual, hence hindering human-machine and human-to-human interaction (2000: 178-179). Even when Xerox Parc implemented the principle of being more real, HCI designers would abstract real people's activities after models drawn from the cognitive sciences (2000: 180-81). Despite their concerns for the human component, the designers imposed their own representation of the user, albeit in the objectivist terms of cognitive science (2000: 180-81). Even though Engelbart had made the same mistake - as he had represented the user reflexively as IT expert (2000: 116-118; 215-218) - his model of Huma-Computer Interaction had an overarching merit: it was aimed at "improving the 'model of the human'" (2000: 213).

Engelbart had understood that technology is a prosthetic interface that enables the individual to *augment* its capabilities (2000: 218-219). Human-Computer Interaction is not a mono-directional channel but works via "feedback loop": Human and Technology co-evolve upon shaping each other (2000: 222). In this respect, the paradigm of the GUI's real-object metaphor cannot but present inherent limitations: the desktop restricts feedback to the visual, hence failing to realise the kinesthetic fullness of the sensorial feedback required by proper interactivity (2000: 223-224). Bardini encourages designers to abandon the theories and practices of user modelling that have dominated HCI design since 1984 and return to Engelbart's vision of personalised interaction (2000: 230). The personalisation of computing will occur only insofar as the designer stops treating the user as an abstract model and enables them to be a "person" (2000: 230-232). The HCI designer must stop predeterming what the user wants (2000: 225).

Albeit not formulated in Neo-Marxist terms, Bardini's critique of mainstream/commercial HCI design is aligned with the critical standpoint of the genealogists from the previous sections. Presently, the interactive user is provided with the illusion of freedom, given that a corporate designer has predetermined/blackboxed their actions and

thoughts (2000: 226). Similarly to the other critical genealogists, Bardini calls for a different form of interactivity (i.e. Engelbart's), to be founded on an egalitarian relation of power between designer and user:

> " […] it seems clear that this shift requires acknowledging the necessity of an open dialogue between the users and the designers of the technology based on a mutual human engagement. The computer will become a *transparent* medium, *disappearing into the interaction* it enables […]" (2000: 232, italics my emphasis).

Contra the mainstream/commercial form of blackboxed interactivity that invisibly *anticipates* our activity, the interface should disappear upon merging with our everyday interactions, as demanded by our personal needs:

> "It is clear enough that trying to communicate with others via "desktop" constantly invokes breakdowns by calling attention to the computer as a tool present at hand, rather than ready at hand" (2000: 224).

Here Bardini is using Martin Heidegger's concept of the "ready-to-hand" or "invisible" hammer as a desirable example of authentic interfacial invisibility. Bardini draws from Heidegger to criticize Alan Kay's real-object metaphor, which works by magically eliminating the false residual that exists in the user's mind between the fictitious icon-folder and the folder of real life (2000: 105-106). The cognitive requirement to suspend one's disbelief is precisely what causes machinic breakdowns or, in Heideggerian terms, "presence-at-hand" (2000: 224). Even the principle of direct manipulation initiated by Ben Schneiderman and operationalised by the Apple Macintosh failed to realise proper interface invisibility (2000: 225-226). The issue comes down to a form of Human-Computer Interaction that abstracts from the interactive fullness of feedback loop.

Albeit in Heideggerian terms, Bardini is criticizing the same corrupt/recuperated/blackboxed form of present interactivity that has come under the radar of the Neo-Marxist genealogies from the previous sections. As explained below, these critical requests for an alternative/uncorrupted form of Human-Computer Interaction have been embraced by an alternative school of HCI designers. Similarly to the Neo-Marxist genealogists and Bardini, these designers have challenged mainstream/commercial theorisations of interactivity and user-friendliness. Like Bardini, they have adopted Heidegger's ready-to-hand/invisible hammer to theorise a different/liberatory/user-friendly form of interaction between Human and Computer.

1.6. The alternative HCI designers: the uncorrupted interactivity of Martin Heidegger's hammer

Before engaging with the alternative HCI designers, a few clarifications are needed. Upon referring to these theorists of HCI design as the alternative school, one should not underestimate the heterogeneity of their theories. And yet, although their thinking is informed by a diverse range of philosophies, two aspects bring them together. First, one encounters dissatisfaction towards the present design of interactive media technology. This is the same recuperated/corrupted interactivity of the Macintosh GUI (Bardini, 2000; Chun, 2011; Emerson, 2014), which survives in the design of our present Human-Computer interfaces (Chun, 2011; Emerson, 2014). In other words, the alternative designers are reacting against the same form of interactivity that the genealogists from the previous sections have critiqued as recuperated/corrupt (i.e. blackboxed, ideological, disciplinarian, etc.). Similarly to the critical genealogists (i.e. Neo-Marxists; STS/Bardini), the alternative designers wish to overcome the corrupt form of interactivity pursued by mainstream/commercial designers. Secondly, like Bardini, Chun and Emerson, the alternative designers critique the mainstream theorisation of interface invisibility as suspension of disbelief, anticipatory design, pre-reflectivity, etc. Despite the theoretical differences that do set apart these designers, they all embrace the same theory in order to think about an alternative form of invisibility. Like Bardini, this is Heidegger's theory of the ready-to-hand or invisible hammer from Section 15 of BT. It is important to understand that the objective here is not to provide a complete guide to the alternative school of HCI design, which would fill several library shelves. [3] As clarified at the end of the discussion, what is interrogated here is the critical efficacy or meaning of their alternative conceptualisation of uncorrupted interactivity as Heideggerian readiness-to-hand/invisibility.

According to Lucy Suchman, mainstream HCI design starts from the false premise that the Human and Technology are separate entities with autonomous being (Suchman, 2007: 213-214). For the mainstream designer, the objective is to *make* two entities interact: given that Human and Computer are separate to begin with, designing their interactivity becomes a matter of making the computer human-like. These are indeed the premises of the mainstream principles of anticipatory design seen so far: the computer must *invisibly* anticipate our thoughts, emotions and movements *as if* it was human.

Similarly to Modern scientists, who wish to erase or make *invisible* the human element concealed behind their claims of objectivity, mainstream HCI designers refuse to accept that that subject and object are not objectively

[3] For an extensive overview of the alternative school of HCI design, see Shaleph O'Neill's *Interactive Media* (O'Neill, 2008).

separate from each other but co-shape each other via interaction (2007: 213-214). For Suchman, we do not need human-like artifacts in order to interact with them because we *already* are interactional. The mission of the alternative designer is to (re)configure this interaction, namely, to (re)model the interaction that the abstract representations of mainstream user modelling inevitably bypass.

The main problem with the interactivity of mainstream interfaces is that it "limits the scope of interaction between people and machines" (2007: 179). Its mentalist bias disempowers the user for it abstracts from "moment-by-moment interactions" (2007: 177). Suchman draws from a plethora of postmodern social scientists and linguists and calls for an approach to design that acknowledges the situatedness of (inter)action: meaningful action arises at the meeting point of interaction between abstract plans or representations of actions and contingent situations (Suchman, 2007: 64-84). Suchman's theorisation of "human-machine reconfigurations" will enable the designer to "maximize sensitivity to particular participants on particular occasions of interaction" (2007: 178). One of these reconfigurations is theorised as "real-time user modelling": interactivity that is always responsive to present situations (2007: 180-82). Similarly to Engelbart, Suchman theorizes an interface that no longer abstracts user activity and in fact *overlaps with* the situated interaction that it enables moment-by-moment. At this point, Suchman uses Heidegger's early philosophy of equipment to further theorise this alternative/liberatory form of interface invisibility (2007: 73-4).

Suchman contends that when our situated interactions are running without disturbances, our activity is unproblematised or "transparent", like for the Heideggerian Dasein (i.e. human being) who is immersed in the practical experience of hammering with the ready-to-hand or *invisible* hammer (2007: 73). Only when disturbances occur, do we problematise or formalise our activity in terms of abstract rules and plans. The same occurs with Heidegger's broken-down or "unready-to-hand" hammer, which has become an explicit concern for the Dasein whose activity of hammering was disturbed. Suchman's argument is that breakdowns are contingent on the situated interaction and cannot be predefined in terms of objective plans (2007: 73-4). As these disturbances cannot be avoided, the designer must at least provide the user with the "resources" to return to immersive/undisturbed readiness-to-hand (2007: 86).

Suchman's work has been highly influential among the school of alternative designers (Thrift, 2005: 165). Among those who have drawn from her theory of situated interaction is Paul Dourish, the founder of the embodied turn in HCI design. Like Suchman and Bardini, Dourish critiques the outdated philosophical tradition that has dominated mainstream design, which is misinformed by the Cartesian dualisms of subject and object, mind and body, representation and reality (Dourish, 2001: vii). Due to its cognitivist bias, mainstream design decontextualizes user

activity in the meaningless/artificial terms of usability evaluations (2001: 62). Once formalised as work process, the reality of everyday practices is abstracted (2001: 62). Dourish proposes an alternative model of interactivity, which theorizes interfaces that successfully *merge with* the user's everyday interactions (2001: 3).

Dourish invites the designer to adopt alternative research methodologies such as ethnomethodology and phenomenology; the objective, as per Suchman and Bardini, is the theorisation of user models that can satisfy situated needs (2001: 55-97). *Contra* the cognitivist abstraction of user activity qua plan and task execution, Dourish embraces the concept of "embodied interaction" (2001: 4). Meaningful activity does not follow predetermined plans but arises over the course of "moment-to-moment interaction" (2001: 77). Differently from the premises of mainstream designers, who want to predict and anticipate user reactions, meaning is constructed by the user during improvised interactions (2001: 171). Users must be provided with the "resources" or models to incorporate the artifact meaningfully in their everyday activity (2001: 173). Similarly to Suchman's concept of situated interaction, the interface must adapt itself to the contingent needs of the user; as per Bardini, the interface must create "*feedback loop*" in order to provide the user with "control" over "effective communication" with the system (2001: 166) .

Dourish's conceptualisation of feedback loop relies on three concepts: embodied intentionality (Dennett; Merleau-Ponty), structural coupling (Maturana and Valera), and readiness-to-hand (Heidegger). Whereas intentionality describes the relationship between action and meaning, coupling is the process whereby meaningful intentions can be maintained during interaction (2001: 138). Similarly to Suchman's concept of situated interaction, coupling is the "resource" provided by the designer, whereby the user can pursue meaningful interaction *through* and *with* the interface (2001: 173). At this point, Heidegger's invisible or ready to-hand hammer makes its scene as the resource *through which* intentional coupling or feedback loop between Human and Computer is maintained:

> " […] the way in which the hammer moves from being ready-to-hand to present-at-hand; that is, from being employed within the action of hammering as an almost "invisible" extension of my arm to become more immediately present and visible as an object of focus and attention […] When the hammer is present-at-hand, it is separate from me, while in the ready-to-hand case, my arm and the hammer feature as a single unit in my activity; they are coupled […] the existence of both modes is critical to effective use of technologies […] we need ways of being able to move between them" (2001: 138-39).

Dourish interprets the passage about the hammer like Suchman and Bardini. Readiness-to-hand, i.e. the discovery of the invisible hammer in absorbed hammering, corresponds to the state of coupling or meaningful feedback loop *through* the invisible artifact. Instead, breakdowns/presence-at-hand are interruptions or disturbances of our flow of practical interactions, which force us to encounter the tool as present-at-hand via bodily detachment. Similarly to Suchman, Dourish interprets both invisibility/readiness-to-hand and breakdowns/presence-at-hand as "resources" to be implemented in design. The user must be able to control both states to interact with the Computer meaningfully.

Although Dourish and Suchman acknowledge the importance of both states, their interpretation easily leads to privileging readiness-to-hand over presence-at-hand. This is already the case for Bardini, who blames commercial interfaces for fostering presence-at-hand/breakdowns at the expense of ready-to-hand/invisible interaction between Human and Computer. The same interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy informs Gui Bonsiepe's design theory:

> "The interface is the central domain on which the designer focuses attention […] It makes objects into products […] to use Heidegger's terminology it makes ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*) as opposed to present-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*)" (Bonsiepe, 1999: 29).

The fascination with readiness-to-hand – and suspicion towards presence-at-hand - can be traced back to one of the earliest texts of the alternative literature of HCI design: Terry Winograd and Fernando Flores' *Understanding Computers and Cognition*. Like Dourish, Suchman, and Bardini, their mission is to challenge the rationalistic tradition of mainstream design (Winograd and Flores, 1987: 7-8). According to Winograd and Flores, the mainstream designer subscribes to an outdated philosophy of cognition, which misunderstands the user as a Cartesian subject driven by objective plans of actions (1987: 8; 77). *Contra* this misunderstanding, their ontology of user-friendliness combines Maturana's concept of autopoiesis and Heidegger's theory of the ready-to-hand hammer (1987: 72).

According to Maturana, human cognition is a biological process that representational theories of knowledge fail to understand (1987: 47). The separate subject and object of Descartes are replaced with interactive organisms that participate in autopoiesis: the process of interaction between organisms as demanded by the autopoietic medium due to structural disturbances. Similarly to the concept of feedback loop (Dourish; Bardini) and interactive situation (Suchman), autopoiesis requires a medium that constantly adapts itself to or (co-)evolves along with systematic interactions between organisms. The mainstream misunderstanding of knowledge qua subject-activated representation

is replaced with the constant interplay of structural coupling between interactive organisms. Eventually, this interplay must achieve a state of equilibrium or "consensual domain":

> "A cognitive system is a system whose organization defines a domain of interactions in which it can act with relevance to the maintenance of itself" (Maturana, 1970: 13 in Winograd and Flores, 1987: 47).

Like Dourish, Suchman and Bardini, Winograd and Flores draw from Heidegger's passage about the hammer to further develop their alternative theorisation of autopoietic interactivity (1987: 72). The achievement of readiness-to-hand overlaps with the autopoietic equilibrium of structural coupling, whereas presence-at-hand defines the state of disturbance undergone by the system (1987: 72). The mainstream concern for user-friendly usability is not to be abandoned; however, as it does misunderstand the human condition in abstract terms, it must be redefined via alternative concepts such as autopoiesis and readiness-to-hand (1987: 164).

For Winograd and Flores, the production of truly/really user-friendly devices coincides with the implementation of readiness-to-hand/transparency and the "anticipation" of breakdowns/presence-at-hand (1987: 78; 163-164). Presence-at-hand or autopoietic disturbances/breakdowns are an inevitable reality and not necessarily a bad one (1987: 97). However, as they do impose a certain "blindness", the designer must make sure that the interactive user can overcome these disturbances (1987: 97). Once again, the success of an interface depends on the achievement of ready-to-hand coupling between Human and Computer (1987: 165): a ready-to-hand interface enables the user to be in control of the Computer and engage in "more effective communication" with the system (1987: 77). The user of ready-to-hand interfaces is freed from the interruption of activity that characterizes present-at-hand breakdowns, understood in Heideggerian terms as disruptions of "habitual, standard, comfortable 'being-in-the-world'" (1987: 77). The ready-to-hand interface provides a friendly experience, as opposed to the disturbances of the present-at-hand tool that has broken down (1987: 77-78). Until now, the thesis has found it reasonable to give these critical thinkers the *benefit* of the doubt. And yet, as per the next section, the time has come to turn this benefit into a reasonable doubt.

1.7. Opening the first circle of doubt: the present reading of Heidegger as a theorist of uncorrupted interactivity

At this point, it seems that the job of critique is done. Since the heyday of the first GUI, a group of alternative/critical theorists of HCI design have raised their voices against the exploitative paradigm of mainstream/commercial

interfaces, which – *according to the genealogists from the previous sections* - has survived until today (Chun, 2011; Emerson, 2014; Fisher, 2010). Despite their theoretical differences, Heidegger's ready-to-hand hammer has brought together their desire for an alternative form of interactivity. Although expressed in Heideggerian terms, their critique of present media technology is not too dissimilar from the critical genealogists' (Neo-Marxism; Bardini/STS): the interactive user is unfree because the interactivity of present media technology is corrupt/recuperated/blackboxed. Hence, the only solution is to restore interactivity to an uncorrupted or liberatory state via processes of user reconfiguration. According to the alternative designers and Bardini, this liberation can be theorised via the Heideggerian concept of readiness-to-hand/invisibility.

And yet, it is finally time to raise the first doubt of the thesis: can critical thinkers think about an alternative to the oppressive interactivity of present media technology? In this case, can the alternative designers (and Bardini) theorise an alternative form of interactivity via the Heideggerian concept of readiness-to-hand?

> *What is interrogated is* the critical efficacy *of the theorisation of uncorrupted/pre-recuperated/liberatory/ de-blackboxed interactivity as Heideggerian readiness-to-hand/invisibility: the* meaning *of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' or 'interactive readiness-to-hand'.*

Presently, the thesis is lacking a method to interpret meaning. For this reason, the only reasonable way to test the doubt is circular. The alternative designers' (and Bardini's) arguments must be interpreted *in their own terms*, namely *in terms of the same philosophy they draw from*: the passage about the hammer from Section 15 of Heidegger's BT. And so, it is reasonable to raise the circular doubt in the first place because Heidegger himself *seems* to contradict the present reading of readiness-to-hand as a practical experience of liberatory interactivity. In 1929, only two years after the publication of BT, this is how he commented the dominant (mis)reading of his early philosophy of technology:

> "The existential analytic of existence does not have as an objective a description of how we manage a knife and fork. It is intended to show how all commerce with essents - even when it seems to concern only the latter - presupposes the transcendence of Dasein, namely, being-in-the-world. With this transcendence is achieved the projection, hidden and, for the most part, indeterminate, of the Being of the essent in general. By means of this projection, the Being of the essent becomes manifest and intelligible, although, at first and ordinarily, only

> in a confused way. In this mode of comprehension the difference between Being and the essent remains concealed, and man himself is presented as an essent among other essents" (KM, 243).

Although Heidegger's arguments are presently unintelligible, its incipit is accessible. Heidegger is telling his readers that "the existential analytic of existence" of BT - which contains the passage about the hammer - did *not mean* to describe "how we manage a knife and fork", namely how we *practically use* technical artifacts (KM, 243). And so, in Heideggerian terms, which are the *designers' (and Bardini's) own terms*:

> *the Heideggerian concept of readiness-to-hand is not meant to describe* practical *interactivity between Human and Technology.*

And yet, half a century later, this is exactly how the alternative HCI designers (and Bardini) would interpret the meaning of the passage about the invisible hammer: as the theorisation of *practical* interactivity between Human and Technology (i.e. Computer). Besides clearly rejecting practical readings, Heidegger's obscure language describes the experience of hammering as a somewhat ambiguous event ("confused"), which leads to the *concealment* of a mysterious "difference" (KM, 243). At this point, the doubt becomes more and more reasonable:

> *is the concept of readiness-to-hand meant to describe a* liberatory *form of* ~~*practical*~~ *interactivity between Human and Technology?*

In Heideggerian terms, i.e. in the designers' own terms, the critical efficacy or meaning of the concept of ready-to-hand/invisible interactivity seems *doubtful*. As the thesis lacks a method of meaning interpretation, the doubt *must* be tested circularly: in terms of the *Heideggerian meaning* of the passage about the ready-to-hand/invisible hammer. In light of Heidegger's obscure comments about the ready-to-hand hammer, the next chapter *must* contextualize the concept of readiness-to-hand/invisibility in the broader ontological project of BT. At the cost of repeating myself: the next chapter engages with Heidegger's philosophy to investigate a doubt about a critical theorisation of uncorrupted/liberatory/de-blackboxed interactivity: the Heideggerian-informed concept of 'ready-to-hand/invisible interactivity' (alternative HCI designers; Bardini).

PART 2. DOUBTING THE DOUBTFUL READING OF HEIDEGGER AS A THEORIST OF INTERACTIVITY

Chapter 2. A circular reading of the ready-to-hand hammer: testing Heidegger's early philosophy of technology against its present readings

2.1. The ontological question of *Being and Time*

As per the opening remarks of BT, Heidegger's philosophy is driven by one question:

> "Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word 'being' ['seiend']? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of being* ['Sein']" (BT, XXIX).

Heidegger is asking about the meaning of the being (*Sein*) of beings (*Seiende*) or alternatively, "that which determines beings *as* beings" (BT, 5) [6]. The "distinction" between being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiendes*) is the *ontological difference* (BT, 56) [56] that the metaphysical tradition has forgotten (BT, 19-25) [19-27]. Starting with the Ancient Greeks, passing through Medieval Scholasticism, and culminating in late Modernity with Nietzsche, the question about the meaning of being has remained "obscure and without direction" (BT, 3) [4]. The philosophers have recurrently misunderstood being (*Sein*) *as if* it was a being, entity or deity (*Seiendes*): *arche* and *eidos* (Ancient Greek metaphysics); *ens creatum* (Scholastic metaphysics); representable objectivity and will to power (Modern metaphysics) (BT, 3) [4].

Yet, being (*Sein*) should not be mistaken for *a* being (Seiendes); what is at stake is precisely the meaning of the mysterious condition whereby beings (*Seiende*) can be present to the human being *as* beings. The concept of "presence*"* ("*Anwesenheit*") is how the being of beings has been interpreted by the metaphysical tradition that precedes Heidegger: "with regard to a definite mode of time, the "present" ["*Gegenwart"*]" (BT, 24) [25]. Upon forgetting "the fundamental ontological function of time", i.e. temporality itself (BT, 25) [26], the metaphysical philosophers of history have theorised the being of beings in the temporal terms of the present(-at-hand) [*Vorhandenheit*] (BT, 24) [25-26]: as if being (*Sein*) was *a* being (*Seiendes*).

The discovery of being (*Sein*) as presence-at-hand or its "making present" (BT, 24) [25-26] has defined *all* metaphysical theories of presence: *the misunderstanding of being in terms of the present(at-hand)* [*Vorhandenheit*].

Upon studying the existential structures that enable Dasein (not) to raise the question about the meaning of being, BT pursues an answer to the question itself (BT, 13) [14-15]. The answer to the question concerning the meaning of being (*Sein*) must be searched for in the being (*Sein*) of the only being (*Seiendes*) that can raise (and forget) the question in the first place: the human being (*Seiendes*) (BT, 6-7) [7]. Heidegger calls the human being (*Seiendes*) Dasein (BT, 7) [7], whose being (*Sein*) is Da-sein or there-being (BT, 129) [132].

2.2. Dasein's authentic and inauthentic modes of existence

What makes Dasein different from other beings is its being-ontological: its having an understanding of being (BT, 10-13) [11-15]. Upon making of the meaning of being a question, Dasein can relate to the being of beings *as* beings; even when this understanding is not expressed theoretically (i.e. ontological understanding), everyday Dasein always already has a pre-ontological understanding of being (BT, 11) [12]. Dasein is the only being (*Seiendes*) that, in its very being, is concerned about being (*Sein*) (BT, 11) [12]. The being (*Sein*) toward which Dasein relates itself understandingly is not something present-at-hand (*Vorhanden*) but a possibility, potentiality-of-being, or *existence*: the undefinable essence of Dasein's *own* being (*Sein*) or Da-Sein (BT, 11) [12]. In the there (*Da*-) of Da-sein lies Dasein's disclosure to *(its)* being (*Sein*) through its self-understanding in terms of/self-projection into everyday possibilities (BT, 129) [132-33]. Dasein is not present to itself but is "its disclosedness" or "transcendental ek-sistence*"* (i.e. Da-sein) (BT, 129) [133].

Here are the workings of care, which is always care for Dasein's self (BT, 186) [193]. Dasein can grasp something like the being of beings precisely upon taking a stance toward (its) being, namely upon taking care of/understanding itself in terms of potentialities-of-being (i.e. *ek-sistence*). However, because of its thrown facticity (i.e. being-in-the-world), "initially and for the most part", human existence is inauthentic (BT, 352-54) [370-72]. Inauthenticity is not a state of alienation from a pristine condition of sorts (BT, 169; 173) [176; 179-80] but the very opposite condition: Dasein's attempt to stabilize its (non)nature (BT, 171) [178]. Inauthenticity is the existential possibility of Falling Prey as a structural component of Dasein's care: the Fall that occurs in the entangled there of attuned (mis)understanding (BT, 135) [139]. Instead of appropriating factical possibilities for its ownmost potentiality-of-being (i.e. authenticity or *perfectio*), Dasein falls prey to the tranquillising temptation of its world: Dasein pre-ontologically misunderstands (the meaning of) its being as a potentiality-of-being *in terms of* the levelled-down possibilities of everyday existence (BT, 171) [178].

Inauthentic Dasein is not its own self but the They-self or, alternatively, has fled from its *perfectio* (BT, 122-26) [126-30]. Falling Prey is Dasein's flight from its ownmost potentiality-of-being (i.e. not-being-at-home) via a fall into the reassuring tranquillisation of the They-world (i.e. being-at-home) (BT, 124) [127-28]. Instead, the call of conscience enables Dasein to be authentic through anxiety (BT, 257-288) [267-301]. In the resolution that answers the call of conscience, anxious Dasein can appropriate factical possibilities for its ownmost potentiality-of-being (BT, 292-297) [305-310]. As per the next section, the fulfillment of Dasein's *perfectio* depends on the silent realisation that its essence or care is *nothing but* project into factical possibilities (BT, 221-288) [231-301].

2.3. The ambiguous nullity of Dasein's care

Nothing but self-projection into factical possibilities, Dasein's self is a non-self: differently from the Cartesian ego, Dasein is not (objectively) present to its being but is always already "being-possible*"* (BT, 139) [143]. Dasein's incompleteness is due to the self-aheadness of its being (*Sein*) as care, project, or ek-sistence (BT, 227-228) [236-237]. Alternatively, Dasein always already is its "not-yet" (BT, 273) [284-85]. The nullity that permeates Dasein should not be mistaken for something present-at-hand, i.e. as a negative *not-being* of sorts. Dasein is not like a jigsaw puzzle that can be completed by a missing piece. Instead, this nullity or not-yet defines the lack of wholeness that Dasein always already *is* or projects itself into: the imminence of death (BT, 240) [250]. Death is not Dasein's present termination (i.e. the completion of the jigsaw puzzle), but the upon-whichs (i.e. meaning) of Dasein's everyday projections of being as *being-toward*-the-end (BT, 240-242) [250-252]. Death is the ownmost possibility of Dasein: the (im)possibility of (not-)being-in-the-world that Dasein always already *is* since its birth (BT, 241) [250]. The *perfectio* fled from in everydayness is a tranquillising flight from death: the self-aheadness or nullity that Dasein always already *is* as care, project, ek-sistence, being-possible, or being-toward-the-end (BT, 242-245) [252-255].

The call of conscience silently talks to Dasein about its ek-static being-toward: in resolute authenticity, Dasein no longer flees death but becomes free for it (BT, 249-255) [260-267]. Anxiety summons Dasein before the nullity of its condition (individuation), namely to the realisation that its being is *nothing but* a project into everyday possibilities: care, project, ek-sistence, being-possible, being-toward-the-end, or *choice* (BT, 258) [268]. Authenticity is the condition whereby Dasein makes up for not-choosing to be free. Freedom is not the possibility of choosing between presently available courses of action but Dasein's resolute acknowledgment of (the meaning of) its ek-sistential condition as choice.

At this point a question begs to be asked: does the discovery of readiness-to-hand play a role in Dasein's condition of everyday unfreedom (i.e. Falling Prey)? Heidegger describes the discovery of *Zuhandenheit* (i.e. readiness-to-hand) as Dasein's absorption in invisible hammering (BT, 71) [71]. As seen in the previous chapter, the HCI designers have interpreted this experience as liberatory/'user-friendly'. Yet, Section 69a of BT describes Dasein's absorption in equipmental artifactuality as a matter of *self-forgetfulness* (BT, 337) [354]. Similarly, Section 38 refers to Falling Prey as *absorption in inauthentic* being-with (i.e. sociality) (BT, 169) [175-76]. A reading of readiness-to-hand that stops at Division I, or even worse at Section 15, seems to overlook the meaning of Dasein's immersion in invisible hammering. Two elements must be included in the analysis of readiness-to-hand, starting from a reading of Section 42 of BT: the existential and temporal dimensions of the analytic.

Section 42 seems a mere interlude to the more important discussion of truth as *aletheia*. The temptation to skip through becomes stronger upon encountering the transposition of an ancient fable about Care (BT, 190-191) [197-198]. However, Heidegger describes the fable as a *"*pre-ontological document"; something primordial about Dasein's condition is expressed here (BT, 191) [198]:

> "The *perfectio* of human being-becoming what one can be in being free for one's ownmost possibilities (project)-is an "accomplishment" of "care." But, equiprimordially, care determines the fundamental mode of this being according to which it is delivered over (thrownness) to the world taken care of. The "ambiguity" of "care" refers to a single basic constitution in its essentially twofold structure of thrown project" (BT, 192) [199].

Through a genealogical reading of the Latin term '*cura',* Heidegger can grasp the "twofold structure" or "ambiguity" of Dasein's care: the possibilities of authentic and inauthentic existence or Dasein's equiprimordial being-in truth and untruth. This is the condition whereby, in taking care of the world, Dasein is equiprimordially *taken in* by it ("held fast and dominated*"*) (BT, 191) [198], hence distancing itself from its *perfectio*.

In the discussion preceding Section 42, Heidegger has demonstrated that care defines the structural totality of Dasein's disclosedness to the openness of its there (Da-Sein). In the remaining part of Division I, Heidegger refers to Dasein's disclosedness of (its) being as *aletheia*, i.e. truth (BT, 212) [220]. Truth lies in the ek-static disclosedness of the *Da*- of Da-sein's care, which is the primordial truth of Dasein's ability to discover beings *as* beings ("*with* and *through* it is discoveredness") (BT, 212) [220]. Via the fable, time can make its appearance in BT as the ground or

meaning of care: the most primordial truth lies in Dasein's disclosedness of (its) being qua care, which meaning (i.e. upon-which) is time (BT, 191) [198-199]. Therefore, Dasein's equiprimordial being-in truth and untruth (i.e. care's ambiguity) is due, first and foremost, to the temporalization of time. The fable enables Heidegger to think of *aletheia* in the first place: his concept of truth as disclosedness of Da-sein would have not freed itself from the modern metaphysics of correspondence without the realisation that care and therefore being itself are the gifts of time. Hence the necessity to repeat the existential analytic in Division II and free it for its temporality. For this reason, the treatment of authenticity must be suspended until time has finally made its appearance at the end of Division I.

Authenticity requires that Dasein resolutely embrace its non-nature qua temporal project, i.e. the not-yet that Dasein always already *is* (i.e. care's self-aheadness or death) (BT, 249-55) [260-67]. Inauthentic existence is indeed due the levelling-down of possibilities exerted by the They-self but, first and foremost, this levelling-down is a flight from self-aheadness, the ek-static disclosedness of care or *aletheia*, which is grounded in the temporalization of time: death. Heidegger tells us that being-in-the-world is care: the discovery of the being of beings unlike Dasein (e.g. the hammer) means *taking care of* them (BT, 186) [193]. Therefore, the ambiguity of care must *already* be operative in our dealings with, i.e. taking care of, the hammer (Section 15). Once again, a reading of readiness-to-hand that stops at Division I or, even worse, Section 15, seems unable to grasp the broader meaning of the invisible hammer in BT's ontological project.

2.4. The inauthentic care that discovers readiness-to-hand

What enables Dasein to take care of or discover handy beings as ready-to-hand is its disclosedness to the openness of (its) being qua project into factical possibilities (BT, 212) [221]. Upon dealing with handy beings (e.g. hammer), Dasein does not merely discover readiness-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*) but discloses to the openness of (its) being (BT, 143) [147]. Readiness-to-hand is discovered via a pre-ontological understanding of the worldliness ("for-the-sake-of-which") of the handy being contained in the relevance (which being is *reference*) of the handy being (BT, 81-87) [83-88]. There is no handy being in isolation from other beings unlike and like Dasein: upon discovering readiness-to-hand, Dasein also discovers Nature and other beings like and unlike itself (BT, 68-71) [69-71]. The human world and nature are *always already* pre-disclosed along with readiness-to-hand (BT, 72; 75; 81-82) [72; 76; 83].

Discovering a handy being such as the hammer means taking care of it: to let it *be* or "to let it presence in its truth" (unconcealment) (BT, 83) [85]. In the circumspect (i.e. pre-thematic) taking care of beings, Dasein has always

already understood its being - and therefore being itself - in terms of the being at hand (BT, 85) [86]. In the there (*Da-*) of taking care, Dasein transcends the handy being and discloses itself to (its) being upon ecstatically projecting into a what-for of possibilities (BT, 32-37; 346) [34-39; 363-364]. Upon discovering readiness-to-hand and pre-disclosing a world, Dasein understandingly takes a stance toward (its) being. Dasein always already has or, even better, *is* this understanding because it *always already* is being-in-the-world.

Precisely because Dasein *is* its world or a factical there, it can lose/misunderstand itself, hence falling prey to the They-world and losing touch with its ownmost potentiality-of-being. In the state of everyday inauthenticity, the being of handy beings (e.g. hammer) is *not* discovered as present-at-hand (as per the HCI designers) but in one's "absorption" in the world:

> "As the they-self, Dasein is dispersed in the they and must first find itself. This dispersion characterizes the "subject" of the kind of being which we know as *heedful absorption* in the world encountered as closest" (BT, 125, italics my emphasis) [129].

Inauthentic Dasein does not project or choose the possibilities opened by equipment (e.g. hammer) authentically, i.e. for its ownmost potentiality-of-being. In a forgetful Fall, Dasein flees from the very *possibility of choice* opened by the handy being's *what-for* (e.g. hammer's in-order-to) (BT, 181) [187]. This is the meaning of Heidegger's maxim whereby inauthentic Dasein flees from being-in-the-world itself (BT, 181) [187]. Inauthentic Dasein flees from the burdensome realisation that the being taken care of (e.g. the hammer) *is* only for the sake of the potentiality-of-being of the being (*Seiendes*) that has taken care of the handy being in the first place, i.e. Dasein (BT, 323) [337]. Instead of projecting its being for its ownmost potentiality-for-being, Dasein pre-ontologically misunderstands itself in terms of the immediate possibilities (i.e. its "success or failure") opened by the handy being (e.g. hammer's in-order-to) (BT, 323) [337].

What Dasein derives from worldly beings is a pre-ontological *(mis)understanding*: in each pre-ontological understanding of being a misunderstanding takes place at the same time (care's ambiguity). This is the same condition whereby inauthentic Dasein pre-ontologically (mis)understands (its) being in terms of the beings closest to itself: *in terms of the present* (beings). Upon taking care of its world, Dasein is *taken in* by it. Once again, this loss of freedom

occurs, first and foremost, via Dasein's *absorption* in dealings with handy beings (not via presence-at-hand, as per the HCI designers*)*:

> "Taking care of things always already occurs on the basis of a familiarity with the world. *In this familiarity Dasein can lose itself* in what it encounters within the world and be numbed by it" (BT, 75 my italics) [76].

> *Upon dealing with the invisible hammer, immersed Dasein (mis)understands its being, and therefore being itself, in terms of the hammer's in-order-to: in terms of the present artefacts closest to itself, namely in terms of its present world.*

At this point, Heidegger makes a crucial move as he tells us that Dasein's everyday absorption in its present world is the pre-ontological ground for the *theoretical* discovery of being as present-at-hand (metaphysics of presence):

> "Everyday Dasein derives the pre-ontological interpretation of its being from the closest kind of being of the they. The ontological interpretation initially follows this tendency of interpretation, it understands Dasein in terms of the world and finds it there as an innerworldly being […] But since the phenomenon of world itself is passed over in this absorption in the world, it is replaced by objective presence in the world, by things" (BT, 126) [130].

Dasein's everyday (mis)understanding is the pre-ontological ground for the metaphysics of presence: the theoretical (mis)understanding of being in the temporal terms of the present(-at-hand). As per its *pre*-ontological lostness in its present world, Dasein can also *ontologically* (mis)understand (its) being upon theorising (its) being in terms of the present(-at-hand) (BT, 126) [130]. As further discussed in the next sections:

> *theory is a* continuation *of everyday Dasein's (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present beings/world: the ontological (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present(at-hand).*

Contra the HCI designers, Heidegger never claims that Falling Prey/unfreedom leads to an *everyday* discovery of beings such as the hammer as present-at-hand. Once again, it is precisely *through* the inauthentic taking care of

Dasein's absorption in invisible hammering that, initially and for the most part, Dasein has forgotten or (mis)understood (its) being. The discovery of readiness-to-hand via the hammer's withdrawal is the very first vehicle of *unfreedom* for everyday Dasein. In order to understand the meaning of the hammer-induced unfreedom, and continue exploring its theoretical *continuation*, first it is necessary to address the temporal dimension of Dasein's immersed/absorbed taking care.

2.5. Dasein's flight from Primordial Time

Heidegger describes the structural wholeness of care as "being-ahead-of-oneself-already-being-in-a-world as being-together-with-innerworldy-beings- encountered" (BT, 185) [192]. This is the structural wholeness of Dasein's there, which Division I examined in each existential component. However, Division I did not account for the possibility of Dasein's *perfectio*, as it restricted its subject to the inauthentic or indifferent modes of existence. The first three chapters of Division II cover this gap, as they investigate the meaning of care: time. By meaning, Heidegger intends what projective care possible or its 'uponwhich' (BT, 309-310) [323-325]. The central component of care is Dasein's self-aheadness qua project (BT, 185) [191-192]. As seen before, care is permeated by the *nullity* of a *not*-yet (self-aheadness); let us proceed examining the '-yet' of this nullity, namely the temporality of the not-*yet.*

As mentioned before, the nothingness of the *not*-yet is not something present-at-hand. Similarly, the not-*yet* should not be mistaken for a *not-yet-present* future. Dasein is not, in fact *cannot* be, in a present now which comes before a not-yet-present not-now: the not-yet is not an objective future that is yet-to-come. In this not-yet is expressed the nullity of Dasein's projections of being: the lack of *present* wholeness in which terms Dasein has *always already* (mis)understood its ekstatic being (i.e. imminence of death).

Resolute Dasein, who has accepted the nullity that permeates its being, becomes free for its not-yet. Heidegger refers to this event of authenticity/freedom as resolute anticipation, in which lies the authentic future (BT, 311) [325]. The future must be understood as an ek-static horizon toward which Dasein projects itself understandingly (BT, 312-313) [327-328]: Dasein's ek-static coming-toward-itself in its ownmost potentiality-of-being (BT, 310-311) [325]. To the authentic future of resolution are equiprimordially the ecstasies of the authentic past (having-been) and authentic present (moment) (BT, 311) [325-326]. Upon coming back to itself futurally, resolute Dasein returns to "how it always already was": to a factical there in which it is always already thrown (BT, 311) [325-26]. In futurally having-been, resolute Dasein can *be* in the present Situation of the moment and authentically discover the being of the

beings encountered in its factical world (i.e. for its ownmost potentiality-of-being or death). In the equiprimordial temporalization of the three ecstasies lies primordial or authentic time (BT, 314) [329]: the meaning of authentic care (BT, 311) [326]. As the ground or meaning of authentic care is primordial time, Dasein's inauthenticity or Fall must be a flight from primordial time itself.

Because of the time that, existentially, temporalizes itself as self-aheadness, the condition of Dasein is unsettling: permeated by the not-yet of choice. Inauthentic Dasein flees its nullity through a tranquillising and forgetful *making present* (BT, 330-333) [346-349]. Falling Prey temporalizes itself out of the *present*: instead of anticipating the future, Dasein awaitingly makes it present (BT, 331) [347]. Although Dasein is still understanding itself in terms of futural possibilities, these are not projected for its ownmost potentiality-of-being (authentic future): Dasein is alienated from its *perfectio* as it has (mis)understood its being – and therefore being itself - in terms of the *present* (BT, 332) [348]. The Fall is a flight from Dasein's ek-static disclosedness and therefore from *aletheia* (BT, 332) [348]. This is the meaning of the maxim whereby Dasein is equiprimordially in truth and untruth or, alternatively in (un)truth (BT, 210-217) [219-226].

As primordial truth consists in Dasein's disclosedness to (its) being, truth can *be* only insofar as an understanding of being *is*: without Dasein's existence there would be no truth (BT, 220) [230]. This does not mean that truth is dependent on or *created* by Dasein but that only insofar as there is a being that can make of (its) being a question, there may be a being that can open itself to *aletheia*. In this sense, the most primordial phenomenon of truth lies in *authentic* disclosedness, i.e. Dasein's projections of being for its ownmost potentiality-of-being. This is the authentic being-toward-death (*resolute anticipation*) of primordial temporality itself (BT, 284) [297]. And yet, being-toward-death or Dasein's self-aheadness - the condition that makes possible Dasein's authenticity (resolute anticipation qua *authentic future*) - contemporaneously makes possible everyday inauthenticity. Dasein is existentially fallen or equiprimordially in-(un)truth because of its condition as a finite being thrown in a factical there. The (non)ground of Dasein's authenticity, i.e. the existential temporalization of time, is contemporaneously responsible for Dasein's inauthenticity. This ambiguity always already occurs in the everyday there (*Da*-) of taking care, wherein Dasein disclosingly falls: *there* stands the stage of the ambiguous play of (un)truth or (in)authenticity.

The discovery of beings *as* beings depends on the truth of Dasein's disclosedness (BT, 212) [221], which is contained in Dasein's existential totality as care: its being attuned (mis)understanding, namely transcendental ek-sistence. As soon as Dasein has transcended beings via a discovery of their being and disclosed to (its) being, Dasein

contemporaneously closes off to (its) being. Terms such as 'as soon as' and 'contemporaneously' reveal the limits of everyday language to express the ambiguous phenomenon of truth/untruth or (un)truth. Ambiguity is not a matter of before and after but defines the unfolding of one and the same event: care's ambiguity or (in)authenticity. In the factical taking care of beings such as the hammer, Dasein disclosingly falls and, as per the next section, *awaitingly forgets*. In the everyday there of taking care, Dasein flees from its ek-static self-aheadness, choice, or not-yet. In the making present of the Fall, Dasein escapes from the not-yet of imminent death. In the *Da-* of taking care, Dasein (mis)understands (its) being in terms of its present world, hence escaping from the same primordial truth to which it is always already destined: its being *nothing* but temporal project.

Before proceeding with the analysis of the temporality of taking care, a clarification is necessary. BT is not *deriving* the being of beings from Dasein's projections into the temporal horizon. Dasein does *not* have the choice to be-toward death: since its birth, Dasein finds itself thrown into a world "*not* of its own accord" (BT, 272) [284]. The only choice or freedom that Dasein can uptake "of its own accord" (BT, 252) [263-264] is to be *free for* the ek-static being or choice that its existence always already is.[4] Due to its being-toward-the-end, Dasein is structurally forced to project into a temporal horizon. Alternatively, each projection of Dasein's being is always already pulled-in.

2.6. The absorbed taking care of the ready-to-hand hammer as pre-ontological making present of being

The everyday discovery of the readiness-to-hand of a handy being like the hammer occurs in the ek-static unity of an awaiting retention that *makes present*: Dasein's projection into the futural possibilities contained in the what-for of relevance (awaiting) and return (retention) to the being at hand (BT, 337) [353-354]. This is how a being at hand comes to *presence* before Dasein, as opposed to the objectively present being of modern metaphysics (BT, 339) [356].

Rather than *anticipating* its ownmost potentiality of being (authentic future), inauthentic Dasein limits itself to *awaiting* it (*inauthentic future*) in terms of the possibilities (i.e. in-order-to) opened by equipment (BT, 322) [337]. Everyday Dasein does not relate to its existence authentically but for the sake of the They-world, i.e. in terms of what it takes care of. This is the condition whereby Dasein (mis)understands (its) being in terms of its present world or the

[4] Even the Hamletian ordeal "to be or not to be" cannot escape Dasein's (im)possibility-of-(not)being, i.e. choice itself (Shakespeare, 1988: 64). To die by suicide is no triumph of not-being over being but, instead, the prerogative of the only being that can make of (its) being(-alive) a question in the first place.

present beings closest to itself. Alternatively, Dasein pre-ontologically (mis)understands (its) being *in terms of the present.*

Only because of an awaiting that *forgets* (its ownmost potentiality-of-being), can Dasein retain or be in the presence of beings unlike itself (BT, 324) [339]. This is how, first and foremost, everyday Dasein may lose itself, pre-ontologically (mis)understanding (its) being in terms of the beings closest to itself (i.e. in terms of the present hammer) (BT, 324) [339]. It is because of a *forgetful* taking care of handy beings that absorbed Dasein has lost itself. Once again, Dasein escapes from the nullity of its not-yet upon projecting itself into the possibilities of handy equipment (i.e. hammer's in-order-to). It is finally clear why Heidegger describes the immersive experience of dealings with invisible equipment as *self-forgetful*:

> "A specific kind of *forgetting* is essential for the temporality that constitutes being in relevance. In order to be able to "really" get to work, "lost" in the world of tools and to handle them, the self must forget itself […] The making present that awaits and retains constitutes the familiarity in accordance with which Dasein "knows" its way around as being-with-one-another in the public surrounding world" (BT, 337) [354].

Dasein's Fall defines the fate of a being that is always already torn apart by a search for *meaning* ("relevance"): to futurally project itself into (and return back from) the *in-order-to* whereby the hammer becomes pre-ontologically intelligible *as* hammer (*hermeneutic as*) (BT, 144-149) [148-153]. This is the familiarity of the They-world: the result of projections of Dasein into possibilities appropriated *not* for one's ownmost potentiality of being (inauthentic future): Dasein's pre-ontological (mis)understanding of (its) being in terms of the present. The tranquillizing nature of the plunge into the They-world lies in a *disburdenment of responsibility* or choice, whereby Dasein flees away from the unsettledness of its ownmost futural possibility (not-yet) into an everyday world where possibilities are *always already* comfortably at hand (BT, 124) [127-128]. The *unfreedom* of the Fall is tempting as it makes Dasein's ek-static condition more bearable through a self-forgetful making present . The discovery of the readiness-to-hand passed over by the They-world is reassuring as it provides Dasein with the illusion of control over its uncontrollable being-possible:

> "Being out for something possible and taking care of it has the tendency of *annihilating the possibility* of the possible by making it available" (BT, 250) [261].

The tranquillizing nature of the Fall is illusionary because the actualization of equipmental possibilities can never be complete but is always already dismissed beyond itself into further in-order-tos (BT, 250) [261]. As tranquillisation is never presently secured, the being at hand - upon presencing itself - *cannot be* fully present to Dasein. This is why the hammer can be present to Dasein only through its withdrawal/invisibility. In fact, as seen in the next section, even with the discovery of the being of beings as present-at-hand, theoretical Dasein does not gain access to an objectively present thing (e.g. Descartes). Here is the core argument of this section:

> *the discovery of readiness-to-hand via immersion in invisible beings belongs to the fallen Dasein who has pre-ontologically (mis)understood (its) being in terms of the present (worldy beings).*

What the readiness-to-hand enthusiasts glorify as masterful dealings with invisible tools is the very opposite of mastery: *existentially*, this is the possibility of technical Dasein's unfreedom. As per the next section, between this everyday condition and the discovery of presence-at-hand there unfolds no practical gap but an existential continuum.

2.7. From readiness-to-hand to presence-at-hand: the theoretical making present of being

For a handy being to remain handy, the world need not announce itself (BT, 75) [75]. Unhandiness occurs as something *goes wrong*: the reference contained in the readiness-to-hand of the handy being (in-order-to) comes to the fore (disruption); the handy hammer is discovered explicitly *as* something *for* hammering (BT, 72-75) [72-76]. What the readiness-to-hand enthusiasts refer to as the *breakdown* (i.e. unhandiness) of the hammer, is nothing but its temporary and - most importantly - *temporal* loss of meaning. Everyday Dasein fails to project itself futurally as the in-order-to of the unhandy being has come to the fore: its worldliness has announced itself (BT, 338) [354-355]. However, the so-called conspicuous, obtrusive, or obstinate being has not completely lost its readiness-to-hand: it does not present itself as present-at-hand (BT, 72-73) [73-74]. Through a "non retention that awaits and makes present", the readiness-to-hand of the unhandy being is restored, precisely by discovering the being at hand in its unsuitability (BT, 339) [356]. The unready-to-hand hammer comes to make sense *as* defected.

According to some of the readiness-to-hand enthusiasts (e.g. Dourish), the tool presents itself as present-at-hand when it *breaks down*. Not only is unhandiness grossly mistaken for presence-at-hand, but the discovery of the latter seems to transform Dasein into a Cartesian ego. Instead, what makes possible the discovery of presence-at-hand

is a unique existential/temporal possibility that defines the human condition: the theoretical enterprise (BT, 340-346) [357-364]. The discovery of presence-at-hand lies in the theoretical isolation of beings from Dasein's ek-sistential references: beings are no longer discovered in everyday circumspection, namely through temporal projections into futural *what-fors*, but as beings occurring in abstract time and space (BT, 344) [362].

What defines theory is the transformation of Dasein's (pre-ontological) understanding of being from everyday circumspection into thematization: an *ontological* pre-projection (i.e. ek-static understanding) of the being of beings in terms of the present(at-hand) (BT, 345) [362]. Given that the theoretical discovery of presence-at-hand is still grounded in ek-static *projections* of the being of beings, it does not enable the theorist to access a present being[5]. Rather, the discovery of being as present-at-hand is the *final stage* of forgetting grounded in the ek-sistential (i.e. *ek-static*) possibility of Dasein's pre-ontological (mis)understanding of being that defines absorbed taking care. Once again, theory is a *continuation* of everyday Dasein's pre-ontological (mis)understanding of being in terms of its present world: the thematisation of theory *continues* Dasein's everyday inclination towards the *presentification* of (its) being.

Between the temporality that defines everyday Dasein's absorption in the invisible hammer and the temporality of theory, the gap is not as wide as the dominant literature maintains. In temporal terms, the "mood of equanimity and wonder" of which the theoretician is capable (Dreyfus, 1991: 253), is not so dissimilar from everyday absorption in invisible beings. Both are grounded in the temporal horizon of an awaiting that *makes present*. There is however a difference between the everyday and theoretical making present (BT, 346) [363]. In the pre-ontological (mis)understanding of taking care, the making present of the Fall maintains a futural dimension, as it consists of a projection of Dasein's self into (inauthentic) possibilities. Instead, the theoretical making present that discovers presence-at-hand does not project into the futural what-for of everydayness: the being of beings is pre-projected by a (mis)understanding that temporalizes itself in the awaitness of the discoveredness of the *present* (theoretical thematisation as presentification).

Heidegger makes sure to clarify that both readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand are the gifts of care: theoretical Dasein is still taking care of the being of beings (BT, 187) [193]. However, *existentially*, the discovery of

[5] This remains the prerogative of a (non-eksisting) God. Dasein is always already forced to transcend beings, even when discovering their being as present-at-hand (BT, 346) [363-364].

presence-at-hand is the most extreme flight from the nullity of Dasein's being (not-yet): a *radicalisation* of Dasein's pre-ontological making present of (its) being. The (mis)understanding of being as presence-at-hand closes off to Dasein's ownmost potentiality-of-being: death as the temporalization of time or self-aheadness. This is Dasein's most radical attempt to be care-free, to stop taking a position toward itself and *not* take care of (its) being: the *continuation* of everyday Dasein's escape from the *not-yet* of existence.

2.8. Dasein's ambiguous being-in revolt

The theoretical discovery of presence-at-hand bespeaks of the radicalization of everyday Dasein's *wishing* of everyday possibilities: instead of authentically projecting its being for its ownmost possibility of being (*willing*), Dasein falls prey to the urge coming from its world (BT, 187-189)[194-196]. Instead of daring to be free for the possibility of choice opened by worldly possibilities, hence mastering its world, Dasein is lived by it (BT, 188) [195]. Once again, this is the theoretical *continuation* of the everyday condition whereby inauthentic Dasein (mis)understands its being, and therefore being itself, in terms of its present world.

The discovery of presence-at-hand is *not* a departure from everyday absorption in dealings with invisible beings, but the theoretical stage of Dasein's forgetful Fall. The discovery of presence-at-hand is the continuation of an "inclination" that belongs to the human condition (BT, 188) [195]. This is Dasein's search for existential tranquillisation, namely an attempt to interrupt its temporal projections into (and return from) the ek-static future: Dasein's pointless escape from its ex-static dwelling in the not-yet of care. Rather than being-in the authentic *moment*, Dasein desperately attempts to *be-in the unachievable Present*.

The theoretical pursuit of the Present defines the whole history of humankind (metaphysics of presence). The Modern discovery of Objectivity and the Medieval understanding of being as *ens creatum* do discover being (*Sein*) as if it was a (*different*) being (*Seiendes*). Yet, both forget the ontological difference upon (mis)understanding being in terms of the present(-at-hand): as if it was *a* being. Both are expressions of the *same* attempt to escape the (inescapable) instability of the human condition as the ever-recurring (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present:

> *Dasein is the only being that attempts to inhabit (i.e. pre-ontological making present) and think of (i.e. ontological making present) the uninhabitable and unthinkable Present.*

Dasein, as the only being that can make of its own being a question, is the only being that can *reject* (its) being. There is no need to await the (illuminating) insights of Albert Camus (1991) to realize that to be, i.e. to care, is always already an act of revolt. This revolt however can be authentic (henceforth, *rebellion*) or inauthentic (henceforth, *revolution*). The former defines the fate of a being that has dared to embrace its ek-static condition, hence being able to master it (rebellion). Not for nothing, Heidegger describes authentic being-toward-the-end as a matter of *willing* everyday possibilities (BT, 188) [194]. In willing, Dasein is freed from the burden of the They-self, namely from the *urge* coming from worldly possibilities whereby Dasein (mis)understands (its) being in terms of present beings (BT, 188-189) [194-196]. Upon willing possibilities, instead of wishing them, rebellious Dasein becomes free for the possibility of choice that it always already *is*. Dasein has not become a God, as resoluteness requires a return to factical possibilities. It is precisely upon embracing its finite condition as a potentiality-of-being that Dasein can *master* its null condition and be *free* for it (BT, 253) [264]. This is the highest dignity or rebellion available to Dasein:

> *upon refusing to understand (its) being in terms of a world in which it was thrown not of its own accord, rebellious Dasein embraces its ek-static condition, hence being able to master its everyday world and the nullity of its being. I propose to call this state of freedom or existential rebellion the individual moment of* existential nihilism.

Inauthentic existence is also in-revolt (revolution). However, in the attempt of *overcoming* its temporality through a forgetful *making present*, Dasein does not become master of (its) being. Dasein pre-ontologically escapes from its nullity, hence (mis)understanding (its) being in terms of possibilities appropriated for the sake of the They-self. Theoretical Dasein can partake in this inclination toward *impotence* upon imprisoning ek-sistence within the metaphysical boundaries of presentified definitions of *being*-human (theoretical (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present-at-hand). The (mis)understanding of being exposed by BT is an expression of Dasein's *inauthentic* revolt or impotence as a pointless attempt to gain *present control* over (its) uncontrollable being:

> *the only freedom available to Dasein requires acknowledging and embracing its (non)nature: its lack of present control over (its) being: the impossibility of controlling (its) being as if it was* a *present being.*

Only through a resolution that acknowledges the not-yet of existence (existential nihilism) can Dasein resist its historical, i.e. present, being-in-the-world and be free for it. In the light of these observations, it is possible to return to the HCI designers and problematise their (mis)understanding of the early analytic.

2.9. A circular answer to the doubt: the designers' (mis)understanding of the ambiguity of Dasein's being-technical

The reading of BT was inspired by a doubt:

> *is the Heideggerian concept of readiness-to-hand meant to describe a* liberatory *form of ~~practical~~ interactivity between Human and Technical?*

It is important to remember that the doubt was not raised to test Heidegger's philosophy *per se*. The doubt was raised to interpret – in its own Heideggerian terms - the *critical efficacy* or *meaning* of the designers' theorisation of 'ready-to-hand interactivity'. As seen before, this doubt seemed reasonable because it was indirectly raised by Heidegger himself (KM, 243). Rather than describing how Dasein *practically uses* technical artifacts, the existential analytic aims to show that a theoretical category such as *praxis* is inadequate to name the ek-static transcendence that enables Dasein to *be-technical*, i.e. to deal with the hammer:

> "It is intended to show how all commerce with essents--even when it seems to concern only the latter-presupposes the transcendence of Dasein, namely, being-in-the-world. With this transcendence is achieved the projection, hidden and, for the most part, indeterminate, of the Being of the essent in general" (KM, 243).

Both theory and praxis are, first and foremost, grounded in the ek-static transcendence or not-yet of Dasein's care (BT, 340-346) [356-365]. The discovery of the hammer's being occurs through Dasein's ek-static projection into (and return from) the hammer's in-order-to: Dasein's (mis)understanding of (its) being(-technical). This is the furthest human saying may go upon theorising Dasein's technical experience without resorting to

thematisations/presentifications, namely without (mis)understanding (Dasein's) being(-technical) in terms of the present-at-hand:

> *Practical readings of the passage about the hammer (mis)understand the ek-static transcendence that enables Dasein to be-technical, or alternatively, its being-technical.*

At this point, the second part of Heidegger's comment may be decoded:

> "By means of this projection, the Being of the essent becomes manifest and intelligible, although, at first and ordinarily, only in a confused way. In this mode of comprehension the difference between Being and the essent remains concealed, and man himself is presented as an essent among other essents" (KM, 243).

Heidegger is referring to the *ambiguous* taking care that discovers the ready-to-hand hammer. "The confused way" in which Dasein discovers the being of the hammer ("this projection") is the pre-ontological making present of being(-technical) that defines inauthentic existence for the most part ("at first and ordinarily") (KM, 243). In the making present or (mis)understanding of the hammer's being ("this mode of comprehension") lies the pre-ontological concealment of the ontological difference ("the difference between Being and the essent") (KM, 243). Upon dealing with the hammer, (Dasein's) being conceals itself: the most basic difference, i.e. the one that sets Dasein apart from other beings, namely its *being-technical*, is pre-ontologically forgotten (KM, 243). First and foremost, the ontological difference conceals itself through Dasein's immersion in the invisible hammer.

Dasein's being-technical is a gift of ek-static transcendence: only Dasein can be-technical as the only being that can stand in the openness of (its) being. So-called 'technology', i.e. equipment such as the hammer, is the prerogative of the only being that can make of (its own) being a question:

> *being-technical is the gift of Dasein's transcendental ek-sistence or a gift of the temporalization of time (not-yet): (spatio-)temporal projections of Dasein's there.*

And yet, because of its unsettling dwelling in the not-yet of care, Dasein deploys equipment to escape from the openness of (its) being(-technical). The hammer becomes the *instrument* for Dasein's pointless attempt to control, i.e. make present, its uncontrollable ek-static condition and be-in the unachievable Present:

> *the existential there (Da-) or* difference *that gives equipment, i.e. Dasein's ek-static disclosedness to (its) being(-technical), is contemporaneously the wherefrom of Dasein's existential escape from technical choice (i.e. imminence of death). What makes Dasein different from other beings, i.e. being-technical, is always already a weapon for Dasein's fight against (its) being-different. Upon pre-ontologically making present the hammer's being, Dasein (mis)understands (its) being in terms of equipmental possibilities, hence delegating responsibility or freedom (i.e. choice) to present equipment/technical artefacts. In the wherein/wherefrom of Dasein's technical there unfolds the fight for freedom: being-technical is a gift of Dasein's ambiguous being-in revolt.*

At this point, it is apparent that the alternative HCI designers have overlooked Heidegger's *existentialist* insights. These alternative thinkers of user-friendly design fail to understand that Dasein's freedom does not automatically reside in the mere discovery of readiness-to-hand. This is because they cannot grasp the *ambiguity* of Dasein's being-technical: as Section 15 is read in isolation from the rest of BT, the passage about the invisible hammer is emptied of its existentialist content. Inevitably, these readers of BT are oblivious to the *existential* continuum – rather than practical gap - between the discoveries of readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand: Dasein's inclination to make (its) being present. The designers overlook the ambiguity of Dasein's being-technical, hence separating the discoveries of readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand in terms of praxis. Whereas the former is elevated to the status of user-friendliness/freedom, presence-at-hand – even when not grossly mistaken for unhandiness (e.g. Dourish) - is always reduced to a problematic state of practical disturbance (Dourish; Winograd and Flores; Suchman). Instead, Heidegger's concept of presence-at-hand meant to describe the theoretical discovery of the hammer's being: the ek-static condition that enables Dasein to theorise its being-technical in terms of the present(at-hand). At this point, the original doubt has become:

is the Heideggerian concept of readiness-to-hand meant to describe a ~~liberatory~~ form of ~~practical~~ interactivity between Human and Technical?

Having determined that the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer was meant to describe the very *opposite* condition of 'user-friendly interactivity', what else can Heidegger tell us about the critical efficacy or meaning of the designers' concept of 'ready-to-hand/invisible interactivity'? Albeit unknowingly, the answer was already found upon discussing the continuum between the pre-ontological and ontological making present of being. In other words:

in order to interpret the critical efficacy or meaning of the designer's concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' in its own Heideggerian terms, *this concept must itself be interpreted as an instance of ontological (mis)understanding of being-technical.*

As seen before, theory is a continuation of everyday Dasein's (mis)understanding of being. Upon (mis)understanding (its) being in terms of equipmental possibilities (i.e. in terms of the present), everyday Dasein has posed the pre-ontological foundations for the *theoretical* (mis)understanding of (its) being(-technical) as present-at-hand. In the everyday making present of the hammer's being lies the pre-ontological concealment of the difference of being-technical (KM). As the difference conceals itself in Dasein's everyday there (i.e. immersion in invisible hammering), so does it conceal itself before the theoretician of equipment, who theoretically (mis)understands Dasein's being(-technical) *as if it was a being*: "man himself is presented as an essent among other essents" (KM, 243).

In Heideggerian terms/in the designers' own terms, the designers' (mis)understanding of Heidegger's philosophy of equipment is the theoretical continuation of the same (mis)understanding that accompanies Dasein's everyday dealings with the invisible hammer. This is the theoretical translation of everyday Dasein's inauthentic being-technical: the condition whereby Dasein delegates freedom to the present artefacts of its world, hence using equipment as an instrument for its fight against death/difference in the pointless attempt to be-in the Present. Paradoxically, the alternative designers partake in Dasein's inclination to make being(-technical) present:

in Heideggerian terms, which are the designers' own terms, the designers have (mis)understood the meaning of the ready-to-hand hammer in terms of the present(-at hand).

In Heideggerian terms, this is a (mis)reading that, paradoxically, gives voice to a forgetful (mis)understanding that the designers have inherited from the *present* technological world that they wish to change:

> *in the designers' own (Heideggerian) terms, the meaning of their (mis)understanding of readiness-to-hand as a practical form of liberatory interactivity is an ontological (mis)understanding of being-technical in terms of the (designers')* present*(-at-hand). Via their (mis)reading, they have (mis)understood being-technical in terms of the present artefacts/interactive media technology that they intend to change via alternative - e.g. Heideggerian - conceptualisations of interactivity.*

The work of critique *seems* to be over: *in their own Heideggerian terms*, the designers cannot think about an alternative to the corrupted interactivity of present media technology. Once assessed from its own Heideggerian viewpoint, their conceptualisation of interactivity as 'ready-to-hand' has lost its critical efficacy. Once again, this critique holds true only insofar as its circularity stands: insofar as the designers are proved wrong in their own Heideggerian terms. And so, as per the next section, here is the problem: this circular reading of BT does *not* stand once tested against the dominant literature of Heidegger Studies. According to prominent readers such as Hubert Dreyfus and Peter-Paul Verbeek, Heidegger's philosophy teaches that readiness-to-hand is indeed a *liberatory form of practical interactivity*, which does distinguish itself from the *corrupt* interactivity of their/our present technology. Once faced with this reading, the circular critique of the concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' seems to have turned into a vicious circle.

2.10. Hubert Dreyfus, Peter-Paul Verbeek and the invalidation of the circular critique: extending the circle of doubt to Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology

Heidegger inspired a multitude of philosophies of technology besides Dreyfus' hermeneutic realism and the school of post-phenomenology founded by Don Ihde and further developed by Verbeek. [6] The choice of restricting the analysis to Dreyfus and Verbeek is twofold. Following Winograd and Flores' lead (Winograd and Flores, 1987: 32), all the readers of Heidegger from Chapter 1 have inherited their reading of Section 15 from Dreyfus (Bardini, 2000: 44-45;

[6] For an overview of the existing interpretations of Heidegger's theory of equipment, see Golfo Maggini's summary (Maggini, 2014)

Dourish, 2001: 114; 191; Suchman, 2007: 73). Dreyfus is analysed in tandem with Verbeek because of the differences that distinguish their interpretation of the *Kehre*: the Turn in thinking that informs Heidegger's philosophy after BT. This is to show that even the most conflicting interpretations of the *Kehre* agree on one crucial point, which has not only contributed to the popularisation of BT among the alternative HCI designers but – indirectly – to the invalidation of the circular critique carried out in the previous section.

Throughout his career, Dreyfus deployed Heidegger's analytic of equipment to undermine the enterprise of the Artificial Intelligence community, which had embarked in a pointless mission to reproduce the unreproducible: Dasein's being-in-the-world (Dreyfus, 1979). Dreyfus interprets the entirety of Heidegger's philosophy as a battle against the Cartesian subject-object dichotomy (Dreyfus, 1991: 3). Consequently, Dasein's *practical* interaction with ready-to-hand tools is set against mentalist theorisations of intentionality such as John Searle's (1991: 40-87). Similarly to the alternative designers, Dreyfus argues that the usage of abstract rules to model human behaviour fails to encapsulate the experience of being-in-the-world, i.e. the network of *practices* that Dasein discovers along with readiness-to-hand (Dreyfus, 1991: 118). Alternatively, Dreyfus describes Dasein's *practical* immersion in the invisible tool as a condition of "*freedom*" (Dreyfus, 1991: 65). According to Dreyfus, masterful/free interaction with handy tools (i.e. invisible hammer) is such a uniquely human experience that cannot be artificially reproduced. Therefore, the Dreyfus of *Commentary* understands readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand as ahistorical and transcendental categories: even the later Heidegger never dared to historicize these two modes of presencing (1991: 84-85; 192). However, when it comes to the analysis of equipment, there is more than one Dreyfus.

Whereas *Commentary* focuses on the First Division of BT, the other Dreyfus attempts to make sense of the early Heidegger's philosophy of equipment in relation to Heidegger's later history of being (Dreyfus, 1992). Now Dreyfus identifies a dilemma in Heidegger's early philosophy of equipment:

> "it is no longer clear whether such an analysis offers a critique of technology in the form of a transcendental account of the pre-technological everyday understanding of equipment, or whether, under the guise of a transcendental account of everyday activity, such an analysis reflects a transition in the history of the way equipment *is* which prepares the way for technology" (1992: 175).

As Dreyfus has lost his former confidence in the ahistorical and transcendental level of Heidegger's early analytic, his way out of this ordeal leads him to an incredible re-interpretation of the ready-to-hand hammer. Whereas in

Commentary Dreyfus argues that never did Heidegger historicize readiness-to-hand, now we are told that there are as many stages in the history of the way equipment *is* (i.e. history of technological development) as there are stages in the history of being (i.e. history of humanity) (1992: 175). Having brought together the early and later Heidegger by historicizing the former, Dreyfus proceeds to divide the history of equipmental being in three stages (1992: 175).

Dreyfus' history of technological development bespeaks of a progressive degeneration of the tool's being, which culminates in the world of Enframing that Heidegger sees emerging in the 1950s: a totalising system of technological "interrelatedness", whereby things *are* only insofar they can be exploited by technology as Standing Reserve (1992: 177). The ready-to-hand tool makes its appearance in a stage of technological development that precedes the world of *Enframing* (Dreyfus, 1992: 175-182). Readiness-to-hand belongs to an epoch wherein technical Dasein is still taking care of things that belong to localised nodes or "regions" of humanly controllable practices (1992: 181). The being of equipment as ready-to-hand belongs to a stage when technology is still responsive to human needs, rather than an oppressive system of interconnected practices that have spiraled out of human control (1992: 177-178).

Elsewhere, Dreyfus conflates the technological world of Enframing with the "postmodern" stage of technological development, namely with his own/our present: we, present/postmodern human beings are oppressed by a technological system of interactivity that follows no human order, but a self-referential and uncontrollable mechanism of ordering for ordering sake (Dreyfus, 2003). This is a crucial step: Dreyfus is telling us that his/our/the alternative HCI designers' present media technology belongs to the epoch of Enframing (Dreyfus, 2003). In other words,

> *in Dreyfus' terms, the interactivity of present media technology that the alternative HCI designers wish to change belongs to the corrupt interactivity of Enframing.*

Obviously, Dreyfus' reading invalidates the circular critique of the alternative designers from the previous section. According to the circular critique, the reading of readiness-to-hand as *a practical experience of liberatory interactivity* bespeaks of an ontological *(mis)understanding* rooted in the designer's present world of technology. However, *in Dreyfus' own terms*, the designers' present belongs to the epoch of Enframing, which is defined by a somewhat oppressive form of technological interactivity. *In Dreyfus' terms*, via the concept of ready-to-hand interactivity the designers *can* theorise a liberatory alternative to the oppressive interactivity of their/his/our present technology of

Enframing. And yet, according to the circular critique, the concept of ready-to-hand interactivity bespeaks of a theoretical (mis)understanding rooted in the designer's present world (of Enframing). *Once faced with Dreyfus' reading of Heidegger's philosophy*, the circularity of the critique has turned into a vicious circle of self-doubt.

However, there are reasons to shift this doubt to Dreyfus' reading of the *Kehre*. Ultimately, Dreyfus' historicization of equipmental being/readiness-to-hand relies entirely on one passage from OWA, where the later Heidegger explains his approach to the history of equipmental being (i.e. technological development):

> "Heidegger notes "the possibility that differences relating to the history of Being may also be present in the way equipment *is*." This immediately casts suspicion on the ahistorical transcendental priority given to equipment in *Being and Time*" (1992: 174-75).

Once again, this is the passage that justifies Dreyfus' historicisation of readiness-to-hand. However, OWA does not note the possibility that historical differences may also define equipmental being; instead, here the later Heidegger is *disregarding* this possibility. Dreyfus has misquoted Heidegger's passage, which reads precisely the opposite:

> "We are disregarding the possibility, however, that differences relating to the essential history of Being may yet also be present in the way equipment *is*" (OWA, 158, italics original).

Presently, the thesis is not ready to explain what Heidegger meant to say about the history of technological development, nor to explain *why* Dreyfus misquoted Heidegger, hence turning his argument upside down. However, this is enough to raise a *reasonable* doubt about Dreyfus' faith in the meaning of readiness-to-hand as a liberatory form of interactivity – either as transcendental/transhistorical or historical category - to be preferred to the oppressive interactivity of our present technology of Enframing.

In disagreement with Dreyfus' historicization of equipmental being, Verbeek's philosophy of design interprets Heidegger's early analytic of equipment as ahistorical (Verbeek, 2005: 81-83). Whereas Dreyfus attempts to save both early and later Heidegger by historicizing the former, Verbeek drops Heidegger's later philosophy of Enframing *tout court.* For Verbeek, the later concept of Enframing fails to critique the technology of *Verbeek's/*our present world: the later Heidegger has *mistheorised* technology as pre-given conditions of production outside of human control (2005: 92). Instead, Heidegger's early philosophy of equipment is celebrated for theorising technical

artifacts as nodes in meaningful webs of human practical interactions, with the tool-user being *free* to negotiate technical scripts (2005: 80). Verbeek's philosophy of design, which prescribes the production of *transparent* artifacts, relies on a reading of readiness-to-hand as a practical experience of free interactivity between Human and Technical. Similarly to Dreyfus, the alternative HCI designers and Bardini, the user should always be able to react to the disturbances undergone by an interactive system and return to transparent or ready-to-hand interaction (2005: 226).

Although Verbeek disagrees with Dreyfus regarding the nature of the *Kehre*, he agrees on one important matter: a theoretical gap divides the early and later philosophies of technology. According to both readings, the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer is *meant* to describe humanity's ability to interact with technical artefacts freely (either in transcendental or historical terms), *as opposed to* QCT's description of a totalitarian network of technologies that have escaped postmodern/present humanity's control. Once again, this contradicts the circular critique of the alternative designers from the previous section: Verbeek contends that readiness-to-hand is meant to describe a liberatory form of practical interactivity between Human and Technology. And yet, his reading of Section 15 present some gray areas too. Similarly to HCI designers such as Dourish, Verbeek grossly misunderstands unreadiness-to-hand/breakdowns as presence-at-hand:

> "When artifacts are used, they are ready-to-hand, as Heidegger says, for they make a practice possible without themselves becoming objects of experience or action […] When artifacts break down, they become present-at-hand" (2005: 226).

In summary, the circular reading of BT claimed that the early analytic did not mean to describe a *practical* experience of *free* interactivity between Human and Technology. In fact, in *Heidegger's own terms*, this reading is symptomatic of a theoretical (mis)understanding of readiness-to-hand in terms of the (designers') present(at-hand). *Were we to accept* Dreyfus and Verbeek's insights that the designers' present is the same world of Enframing critiqued by the later Heidegger, the designers would have (mis)understood Dasein's being-technical in terms of the same technological world of Enframing they wish to change. And yet, this assessment clashes against two of the most prominent readers of the *Kehre*, for whom the interactivity of readiness-to-hand is a desirable alternative to the oppressive interactivity of the postmodern/present technology of Enframing. However, both readings display gray areas, which shed doubts on their reading of the *Kehre*. Once again, the discussion seems stuck in a vicious circle.

Paradoxically, the only way out is via yet another circle. What must be interrogated is the dominant reading of readiness-to-hand (BT) and Enframing (QCT) as two *different* forms of interactivity. As the thesis is still missing a method of meaning interpretation, it is necessary to interpret the relationship between the early and the post-*Kehre* philosophies of technology *in terms of the Kehre itself*. The doubt about readiness-to-hand and Enframing as two *different* forms of interactivity is reasonable not only because of the gray areas displayed by Dreyfus and Verbeek. Fist and foremost, the doubt is reasonable because it is raised – indirectly - by the later Heidegger himself. As per BT's concept of readiness-to-hand, it seems that the later Heidegger continues interpreting Dasein's being-technical as not a straightforward an event as it is generally thought:

> "The essence of technology is in a lofty sense ambiguous. Such ambiguity points to the mystery of all revealing, i.e., of truth" (QCT, 33).

In fact, the dominant reading of readiness-to-hand and Enframing as two different forms of *interactivity* is doubtful in terms of BT as well. After all, nowhere does BT refer to Dasein's being-technical as "interactions" (Dreyfus; Verbeek) of "feedback loop" (Bardini; Dourish); "situated interaction" (Suchman); "embodied interaction" (Dourish); "autopoietic system" (Winograd and Flores). The circle of doubt must be reopened, extended to Heidegger's later philosophy of Enframing, and in fact, extended to the very concept of *Heideggerian* 'interactivity':

> *are the Heideggerian concepts of readiness-to-hand and Enframing meant to describe two* different *forms of* interactivity *between Human and Technology?*

The next two chapters explores this doubt via interpretation of Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology. Besides discussing the later history of the epochal sendings of being, Chapter 3 discusses the evolution of Heidegger's method of research: hermeneutic destruction via being-historical thinking. This discussion is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, because this is the same method that the later Heidegger adopts to raise (and answer) the famous question concerning (the meaning of) technology, including the technology of Enframing (QCT). Secondly, it is important to keep in mind that the thesis is assessing the dominant reading of the *Kehre* (Dreyfus; Verbeek) in its own terms: in terms of the *Kehre* itself. Therefore, the present reading of the *Kehre* must *itself* be assessed via Heidegger's

post-*Kehre* method of meaning interpretation: hermeneutic destruction of epochal thinkers' language via being-historical thinking. Upon investigating the meaning of hermeneutic destruction, Chapter 3 will have gained the instruments to interpret – *in its own terms* - the present reading of readiness-to-hand and Enframing as two *different* forms of *interactivity*. This occurs in Chapter 5, after Chapter 4 has addressed the Heideggerian question concerning (the meaning) of technology. At the cost of repeating myself, the thesis is testing the critical efficacy or meaning of an alternative theorisation of interactivity *in its own terms*: the meaning of the Heideggerian-informed concept of 'ready-to-hand/invisible interactivity' (Bardini; alternative HCI designers; Dreyfus; Verbeek) as a liberatory alternative to the oppressive interactivity of our present technology of Enframing (Dreyfus; Verbeek).

Chapter 3. A circular reading of Heidegger's Turn in (being-historical)thinking: how to close the doubt about the post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology via the post-*Kehre* method of hermeneutic destruction

3.1. The dominant interpretation of the *Kehre*

Much has been written about the *Kehre*, namely the Turn undergone by Heidegger's thinking after his failure to write Division III of BT. Its earliest systematisation can be found in CP, which sets aside the existential analytic of the *Da-* of Dasein and embraces the concept of *Ereignis* (CP, 58-60). *Ereignis* is the *Event* whereby the presencing of beings *as* beings *(Ereignis* as Appropriation or Enowning) always already conceals itself (*Enteignis* as Expropriation or Disenowning) (CP, 78; 84; 164). Heidegger also refers to the Event of being as the *giving* of the gift of presence: the condition whereby beings can be present *as* beings to a historical Dasein (TB, 8). *Ereignis* is not an objective occurrence but the unsayable Event that enables all historical occurrences to *be* (TB, 9). *Ereignis* is the mysterious condition whereby beings can come into presence *as* beings: the miracle whereby Dasein can be in the presence of beings and, contemporaneously, forget the truth of this condition.

According to James Risser, the Turn, rather than a break in Heidegger's thinking, is more of a "shift in emphasis" (Risser, 1999: 2): from the existential analytic of the *Da-* of Dasein to an historical investigation into the giving/denying of being occurring in Dasein's *Da-* (*Ereignis*). This interpretation can be traced back to William Richardson: "Heidegger I and Heidegger II, for all their difference, are one" (Richardson, 2003: 245). Despite identifying a continuity in Heidegger's thought, Richardson provides a very detailed analysis of the difference that informs the Turn. The shift is broken down to three points, which is mostly derived from a reading of ET (2003: 238-243):

1. "The essence of truth is the truth of essence" (2003: 239-240): differently from BT, being is no longer the *result* of an ek-static projection into a temporal horizon but an active *Event* (clearing), i.e. a coming-into-presence whereby beings can *be*. Truth (*aletheia*) no longer resides in Dasein's ek-static disclosedness (care). *Aletheia* is no longer understood existentially as truth of Dasein's being (existence), but as epochal clearing or presencing: the essence of truth is the truth of essence (*E-vent of being*). In this sense, CP redefines truth as "the clearing sheltering" (CP, 22);

2. “The full essence of truth contains within itself its own non-essence*”* (Richardson, 2003: 240): with being taking up an active role as Event, Heidegger moves the ground of untruth from Dasein’s finitude to the so-called “clearing” of being, which in giving the gift of presence (unconcealment as *Er-eignis*) contemporaneously denies the giving of this gift (self-concealment as *Ent-eignis*). The existential analytic is thus replaced with the so-called *Seinsgeschichtlich* method of research: an investigation into the historical self-denying of the giving of the gift of presence (CP, 3);

3. “The full (therefore negatived) essence of truth. Sc. truth of essence (being), possesses an ontological primacy over ek-sistent freedom” (Richardson, 2003: 241): Dasein’s ek-static freedom has lost its central and *active* role. As a consequence, the modes of (in)authenticity and (un)truth no longer reside in Dasein’s finitude but within the epochal clearing (*Er-eignis* and *Ent-eignis*).

For Richardson, the consequence of the Turn lies in moving the source of (un)truth from Dasein’s finitude to the clearing of being: Dasein is *taken in* by the Event of being, rather than *projecting into* a temporal horizon (2003: 244). As this move however is not a departure from BT but a redefinition of its arguments, despite all these differences, the early and later Heidegger are indeed one (2003: 244-245). At this point, it is worth looking more closely into one of Richardson’s core insights, whereby the Turn was prefigured in BT (2003: 243-245).

3.2. The prefiguring of the Turn in *Being and Time*

Something does change in Heidegger’s thinking starting in the early 1930s. Rather than providing an answer to the ontological question (‘what is the meaning of being?’), BT had explored the *existential* structures that enable Dasein to formulate and forget the question about the meaning of being. In BT the meaning of being is (what makes possible) Dasein’s ek-static disclosure to the openness of (its) being: temporality. In a note from Section 31, this is how Heidegger comments on his observation that in Dasein’s projective understanding lies the disclosedness of (its) being in general: “how does it "lie" there and what does beyng [Seyn] mean?” (BT, 143) [147]. Already in BT, Heidegger is asking about the source, namely the meaning, of the openness toward which Dasein discloses itself: temporality.

The later Heidegger is looking into the *same* openness of being that BT has studied *existentially* as Dasein’s disclosedness to its ek-static there. Not for nothing, the Event of being is also referred to as “clearing” (CP, 232), a

term already in use in BT to refer to Dasein's ek-static horizon (BT, 129) [133]. However, for the later Heidegger the point is no longer to study how Dasein discloses itself to the open (i.e. clearing) of (its) being through ekstatic *projections into* a temporal horizon. The point is to investigate the very meaning of the openness of the temporal horizon: the meaning of the historical *coming-into-presence* of beings *as* beings (*Ereignis*). In fact, at the end of BT, Heidegger has already foreseen the direction for future inquiry:

> "How is the mode of the temporalizing of temporality to be interpreted? Is there a way leading from primordial *time* to the meaning of *being*? Does *time* itself reveal itself as the horizon of *being*?" (BT, 415) [437].

The answer to the question of the meaning of being, i.e. the meaning of the openness of Dasein's *Da-*, must be searched for in the temporalization of time, which BT has studied existentially as ground of care (ek-static horizon). The question of the meaning of being cannot be answered by examining *how* Dasein (mis)understandingly relates to the openness of (its) being. The task ahead is to put into words the meaning of this openness, whereby beings can open up *as* beings for historical Dasein. The *Kehre* is not a repudiation of the existential analytic but instead, the continuation of a project that is already contemplated in the published parts of BT. *Via* the existential analytic, the early Heidegger has already set the ground for the "overcoming" of the standpoint of BT itself: the "turn" from time as the ek-sistential horizon of Dasein's (mis)understanding of being "back into" the meaning ("source") of this temporal horizon (BT, 37).

After BT, Heidegger spends the next three decades studying the so-called sendings or *epochs* of being that have defined the *destiny* of being: the ever-recurring giving of the gift of presence that has always already concealed itself in terms of the gift, i.e. in terms of the *present* (TB, 9). Several epochal sendings of being come under Heidegger's analysis, with the next chapter focusing on the epoch of World Picture (i.e. Modernity) and the epoch of Enframing (i.e. Heidegger's present world in the 1950s/60s). The Turn culminates in 1962 with TB, where Heidegger can finally put into words what had escaped his early philosophy: the meaning of the *same* Event that has repeated itself, albeit *differently*, in each epoch: the co-relationship of being and time in the Event of *time-space extending* (TB, 14). This is the final answer to the question that – over thirty years before - had *already* contemplated the possibility of time as "the horizon of being" (BT, 415) [437]). In order to further explore the *continuity* between the early and later

Heidegger, it is necessary to start from LH. Here Heidegger looks back at BT and confirms that the *Kehre* is the continuation of a prefigured turn in thinking (LH, 231-232).

3.3. The Event that pulls-in Dasein's projections

Richardson notes a shift in the later Heidegger: from the disclosedness of there-being to the clearing of being. And yet, already in BT the ek-static horizon appropriates Dasein's projections of being (Section 2.5). Upon projecting itself into an ek-static horizon, Dasein "is being transported" into a *whereto*; upon disclosing itself to the openness of beings, Dasein is "disclosed to itself" or "delivered over to itself" (BT, 347-348) [365]. As per LH, upon disclosing to the openness of (its) being (*Da*-), BT's Dasein was already *appropriated* by (its) being:

> "What throws in projection is not man but Being itself, which sends man into the ek-sistence of Da-sein that is his essence. This destiny appropriates as the clearing of Being—which it is. The clearing grants nearness to Being" (LH, 241).

In the *Da*- of taking care, Dasein is *forced* to project itself into (and return from) an ek-static horizon, hence disclosing itself - in fact being-disclosed - to the openness of its there. Dasein does not create the ek-static horizon but is appropriated by it:

> "So the point is that in the determination of the humanity of man as ek-sistence what is essential is not man but Being - as the dimension of the *ecstasis* of ek-sistence" (LH, 237).

Since its birth, Dasein is thrown in the world not of its own accord. Similarly, for the later Heidegger, Dasein "does not decide" to be in the presence of beings, i.e. to encounter beings *as* beings, but is appropriated by the epochal Event of their presencing (LH, 234):

> "Man is not the lord of beings. Man is the shepherd of Being. Man loses nothing in this "less"; rather, he gains in that he attains the truth of Being. He gains the essential poverty of the shepherd, whose dignity consists in being called by Being itself into the preservation of Being's truth" (LH, 245).

Dasein's projections are always already pulled-in by the being of beings. Richardson's argument, whereby being has now uptaken an active character of appropriation, is redundant. The Event of being has not taken priority over ek-static freedom, as the latter is, initially and for the most part, no freedom at all. Already in BT, the only *authentic* freedom or choice available to Dasein lies in resolutely accepting its condition of being-pulled-in by the clearing: to choose to be free for the choice (i.e. being-possible) that Dasein always already *is* (Section 2.8). The same notion of freedom is operative in LH. Here Dasein's resolute anticipation of death is rephrased as Dasein's condition as shepherd of being, i.e. answering the call coming from the clearing of being (LH, 245):

> "Man is the shepherd of Being. It is in this direction alone that Being and Time is thinking when ecstatic existence is experienced as "care" (LH, 234).

Dasein's acceptance of its condition as shepherd of being accounts for the same form of authentic revolt described in BT: the same being-toward-death that enables Dasein to master its worldly possibilities (*willing*), rather than being lived by them (*wishing*) (Section 2.8). The horizon of BT already possesses a much more active character than the dominant literature is willing to concede. Richardson's emphasis on the shift of untruth from Dasein's finitude to the anti-Event of *Ent-eignis* is also redundant.

When BT claims that only insofar as Dasein *is* there can *be* truth, *aletheia* is not determined/created by Dasein's existence: even in BT truth was always already appropriating Dasein (LH, 240). It is essential to remember that the meaning of Dasein's finitude *is* primordial temporality: "a characteristic of temporalizing itself" (BT, 315) [330]. Dasein's finite existence is due to the ek-sistential temporalization of time (i.e. not-yet) and so are the existential possibilities of authenticity/inauthenticity (Sections 2.5; 2.6) This is confirmed in LH, which returns to the meaning of BT's concept of Falling Prey (LH, 235-236):

> " [The Fall] designates an essential relationship of man to Being within Being's relation to the essence of man […] But this relation is as it is not by reason of ek-sistence; on the contrary, the essence of ek-sistence derives existentially-ecstatically from the essence of the truth of Being." (LH, 236)

The temporalization of time has always already appropriated Dasein's ek-sistence: Dasein's possibilities of authenticity and inauthenticity are due to the finitude of primordial temporality. The temporal horizon is not the *result*

of Dasein's projections but is pulling-them-in. And so, the later history of being is the history of the same inauthentic escape from Dasein's not-yet or from the temporalization of time (BT): what *gives the being of beings upon temporalising itself* (TB).

3.4. Time and being or being and time? The temporalization of time as Heidegger's core concept

The last sentence has jumped ahead of LH, where Heidegger is still haunted by the same question of BT:

> " […] *précisément nous sommes sur un plan où il y a principalement l'Être* [We are precisely in a situation where principally there is Being]. But where does *le plan* come from and what is it?" (LH, 237-38).

Heidegger looks back approvingly at BT, where the clearing of being was explained with the French formula: "*il y a l'Etre* [there is/ it gives Being]" (LH, 238). This phrase had the merit of not saying 'being *is*', which would have reduced being (*Sein*) to *a* being (*Seiendes*). Instead, being must be understood as epochal Event of presencing: the opening of the region whereby beings can *be* (LH, 238). In LH, the *it* that gives being is still the mysterious prerogative of a destiny of being, a question that can only be further investigated historically (LH, 238). Fifteen years will have to pass before Heidegger can think and write about the *it* that gives being. This occurs in TB, which looks back at the discussion of *le plan* in LH (TB, 8). The question remains the same as before: what is the meaning of being? What is the mysterious *it* that gives being (*il y a*)?

Although Heidegger contemplates the possibility of reducing the '*it*' to time itself, he resists this temptation (TB, 10). Interpreting time as *what* gives being would reduce time and being to presentified beings brought together by a causal relationship (TB, 18). The question remains unanswered:

> "Thus true time appears as the "It" of which we speak when we say: It gives Being […] Does this reference show time to be the "It" that gives Being? By no means" (TB, 17).

Paradoxically, these nerve-wrecking back-and-forths express the apex of Heidegger's philosophy. Heidegger has finally acknowledged that the answer to the question that has been haunting him for decades lies precisely in the *impossibility* of formulating an answer. Jon Stambaugh describes TB as an attempt to bypass the whole tradition of

Western philosophy (Stambaugh, 1972: viii-ix): the attempt to "think Being without beings" (TB, 2; 24). And so, Heidegger realizes that the predicative statements at his disposal will never liberate him completely from the metaphysical burden that inevitably accompanies the human language (TB, 18-19). Upon thinking about the meaning of the event of Appropriation, *Ereignis*, whereby beings can *be*, the inquirer will never obtain a final answer (TB, 24).

The inexhaustible task of the philosopher demands challenging the linguistic horizon of the subject-predicate relation for which the 'it' is a subject or a cause that determines an effect (TB, 18-9). The 'it' that gives being cannot be time *per se*: time is not the cause of being, nor is being the cause of time. One could say that being and time come together in the Event of presencing ("Appropriation"), without however collapsing into each other (TB, 3). In fact, Heidegger's views about time have not radically changed. As per the shift in Heidegger's thinking, temporality is no longer studied from the viewpoint of Dasein's existence qua ground of care (temporal horizon), but as the meaning of the epochal Event of being (*Ereignis*) that *appropriates* Dasein. Authentic temporality is once again opposed to the vulgar interpretation of infinity qua succession of present *nows* (TB, 10-1). What is levelled down by this view is the *four-dimensionality* of time: the unity of present, past, and future (TB, 15).

The fourth dimension of time, i.e. temporalization itself, is *Nearness* (TB, 15). This is the epochal *opening* or *extending* which grants (and denies) to a historical humanity the possibility of time-space[7] (TB, 14): the Event of time-space extending or Nearness as the epochal giving of the gift of presence, whereby beings can come-into-presence *as* beings (TB, 16-7). Once again, the extending of time cannot be understood as the '*it*' that gives being, as time itself is also the gift of the mysterious giving that gives the gift of presence (TB, 17).

What brings time and being together is *Ereignis*, which is also not reducible to a *it* qua subject (TB, 19). The Event of Appropriation is not to be confused with an objectively present occurrence: Heidegger is putting into words

[7] The concept of Nearness as openness of time-*space* rephrases the thematic of ek-static spatiality from BT (BT, 349-352) [367-369]. Dasein is spatial in its very being as *de-distancing* (BT, 102-107) [104-110]: space is discovered via ek-static projections of being into factical possibilities (BT, 350) [367-368] Dasein's being here-and-there is due to its lack of present wholeness: the not-yet of care or Dasein's *there*. In spatial terms, the inauthentic making present of the Fall flees from Dasein's spatial *there* (futural in-order-to), hence clinging to the spatial *here* of present beings (BT, 351) [369]. This is the pre-ontological foundation for the ontological forgetting of spatiality in terms of the present(-at-hand). In fact, Dasein's spatiality was already encountered in the very terminology of the being of equipment as readiness-to-*hand* (*Zuhandenheit*) (BT, 100) [102].

the (unsayable) *giving* of the gift of presence. Alternatively, the 'it' cannot be the gift itself. This is precisely how the traditional metaphysics of presence has recurrently (mis)understood the Event of being: rather than thinking about the giving of the gift of presence, Western metaphysics has (mis)understood the meaning of being in terms of the gift itself, namely in terms of the *present* (TB, 9). The appropriating Event, *giving*, *sending* of the gift of presence must not be mistaken for the gift of the 'it' (TB, 20). Appropriation is the "extending and sending which opens and preserves" (TB, 20): the historical unconcealment of beings *as* beings (Event) that always already withdraws in self-concealment (Anti-Event) (TB, 22). This is the furthest human saying can go to name the (Anti-)Event of being:

> "Appropriation neither *is*, nor *is* Appropriation *there* […] What remains to be said? Only this: Appropriation appropriates" (TB, 24).

Upon reaching the limits of the (un)sayable, Heidegger is putting into words the undefinable (non)truth of *aletheia* as ever-recurring Event of appropriation, whereby beings come into-presence *as* beings for a historical Dasein (TB, 24). Once again, all one *can* say is that Appropriation appropriates. The appropriated one cannot but be the only being that can stand before the epochal clearing of being/*aletheia*, i.e. Dasein (TB, 22). Without the human being, the only being that can be appropriated by the Event of being (i.e. the giving of the gift of presence whereby beings can *be*), there would be *no* beings and no truths (TB, 12). This is not to say that Dasein is the lord or creator of beings but that only insofar as there is a being that can make of (its own) being a question (BT) or only insofar as there is a being that *is appropriated* by the being of beings (TB), may something like *aletheia* reveal the being of beings *as* beings.

3.5. Heidegger's history of being: the epochal sendings as ek-static (mis)understandings of being

The subject of the later history of the epochal sendings of being is the ever-recurring (Anti-)Event of Appropriation: the destining of being whereby the giving of the gift of presence recurrently conceals itself in terms of a different – yet the same - gift of presence. For the Heidegger of TB, there would be no clearing of being without Dasein. This does not mean that Dasein is the creator of being, but precisely that the clearing is always already calling forth Dasein into *ek-static* projections:

> "Man stands ek-sistingly in the destiny of Being. The ek-sistence of man is historical as such, but not only or primarily because so much happens to man and to things human in the course of time. Because it must think the eksistence of Da-sein, the thinking of BT is essentially concerned that the historicity of Dasein be experienced" (LH, 239).

Always operative across the epochal sendings of being analysed by the later Heidegger are the same existential structures from BT. And so, the ek-sistential ambiguity of (in)authenticity survive in the later Heidegger as epochal (Anti-)Event of Appropriation (LH, 235-37):

> *the history of being, whereby the (*Anti-)Event *of being gives the gift of present whilst denying itself in self-concealment, is the history of Dasein's* (mis)understanding *of being (Falling Prey). In the self-concealment of the Event of being (Ent-eignis) is Dasein's ek-static flight from the imminence of death, i.e. a flight from the temporalization of time. Bringing together the different epochs of being, whereby the giving of the gift of presence denies itself, is Dasein's ever-recurring attempt to overcome its ek-static condition through a forgetful making present.*

The epochal sendings of being are not objective periods of time. Since BT, Heidegger distanced himself from the thematization/presentification of historiography, for which history can be represented as a series of past, i.e. no-longer-present, occurrences (BT, 373-377) [392-397]. Nevertheless, what prevents Heidegger's history from falling into traditional historiography? How can he identify/ think about the epochal sendings of being? The answer can be found across his entire philosophy*:* the later Heidegger identifies the epochal sendings of being from (hermeneutic destruction of) the language of the great philosophers of history.

As per the next sections, Heidegger's method does not bespeak of an elitist approach to history. Already in BT, Heidegger described his ontological project as "destruction" of traditional ontology, with Descartes and Kant being his favourite targets (BT, 19-25) [19-27]. In fact, as seen below, the later Heidegger has simply redefined the *existentialist hermeneutics/ hermeneutic existentialism* of BT after the being-historical thinking of the *Kehre*. In order to gain an answer to the question concerning the meaning of the *same* Event of being that has recurred in each epoch (TB), first Heidegger had to interpret (i.e. destroy) the *different*, i.e. epochal, meanings, of this Event. The next sections

explain the development of Heidegger's method of research from the viewpoint of his final answer (i.e. "Event of time-space extending", "Nearness", "Appropriation") (TB).

3.6. On Heidegger's method. Being-historical thinking: interpreting the meaning of being via hermeneutic destruction of the epochal Event of (mis)thinking

Being (*Sein*) should not be misunderstood for *a* being (*Seiendes*) that *changes* in time (TB, 9) What occurs in each epoch is a different yet the same[8] "beginning", intended as the same *coming-into-presence* of beings *as* beings: the Event of time-space extending that appropriates historical Dasein in a call of Nearness (TB, 8). This is the *same* epochal (Anti-)Event of being that, upon giving the gift of presence, always already denies itself in terms of a *different* epochal gift/present (*Ent-eignis*). *Existentially*, this is the history of Falling Prey: Dasein's equiprimordial being-in (un)truth or, alternatively, the history of Dasein's ever-recurring (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present.

In CP, Heidegger provides the first examination of his thinking about the epochal Event of being: being-historical thinking as the possibility of the "other beginning" (CP, 120-122). What enables this other beginning is a "leap into" the destining ("sway") of being (CP, 163-164). Heidegger is examining his own thinking as the possibility of playing forth another beginning, one which can think of (i.e. leap into) the meaning of being *as* Event. Being-historical thinking should not be confused with Hegel's self-introspective move, whereby the philosopher brings to fulfillment a *necessary* synthesis. Heidegger's history is not the logical unfolding of objectively present stages but, if anything, bespeaks of humanity's distanciation from the openness of (its) being, with its meaning becoming "more and more obscured in different ways" (TB, 9).

Being-historical thinking can play forth the other beginning: Heidegger is contemplating a philosophy that can finally think about being *as* Event of presencing rather than in terms of the present, i.e. as if it was *a* being (*Seiendes*). Being-historical thinking secures this understanding upon leaping into the historical giving/denying of being. Thinking, understood as human act of *creation*, allows the thinker to "enact" the Event of being in the same way in which the poet "founds being" (CP, 9).

[8] The concepts of difference and sameness are addressed in the next section.

The later Heidegger understands human thinking itself as epochal Event of being: the mysterious giving of the gift of thought that enables humanity to think about beings as *beings. Thinking is the return of the same epochal (Anti-)Event of presencing that conceals itself in terms of different thinkers' present thoughts.*

Heidegger claims that "metaphysics grounds an age" (AWP, 115). This does not mean that the metaphysical thinker creates a new epoch *ex novo* like a God. The theoretical (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present is not created by the thinker but in fact is appropriated by the epochal Event of being of the thinker's present (epoch):

> "Whenever this reservedness comes to word, what is said is always enowning (CP, 55)".[9]

The epochal thinker's language is the epochal Event of saying that, upon presenting the thinker with the gift of the said/words, conceals itself in terms of the thinker's present said/words.

It is important to understand that here Heidegger has redefined his earlier insights about the pre-ontological and ontological (mis)understanding of being. As seen in chapter 2, whereas the former defines Dasein's everyday existence, the latter is the prerogative of the metaphysical theorist. And yet, both the pre-ontological and ontological (mis)understandings are grounded in Dasein's ekstatic *pre-projection* of being in terms of the present. The theoretical discovery of presence-at-hand is a *continuation* of everyday Dasein's (mis)understanding of (its) being in terms of *worldy* possibilities. Similarly, the later Heidegger refuses to distinguish between the epochal (mis)understanding of the metaphysical thinker and everyday Dasein:

> "Thinking attends to the clearing of Being in that it puts its saying of Being into language as the home of ek-sistence. Thus thinking is a deed. But a deed that also surpasses all praxis" (LH, 262).

[9] Let us keep in mind that 'enowning' translates *Ereignis*.

Already in BT, praxis and theory were brought together as *different* expressions of the *same* gift of care, i.e. Dasein's ek-static temporality. As per the *Kehre*, both praxis and theory are *different* gifts of the *same* epochal Event of being that appropriates historical Dasein. Not for nothing, meta-physical is not just the philosopher, but Dasein itself as that being which is forced to have a relation to being upon transcending beings ("going beyond") (WM, 109).

For the later Heidegger, the epochal thinker has the privilege of thinking about the being of beings, albeit unknowingly. The great philosophers of history are thinkers who, through their *failure* to think about being as Event, have expressed into words the epochal self-concealment of being (Anti-Event), i.e. a (mis)understanding of being in terms of the (thinker's) *present* (epoch):

> "Being has already been dispatched to thinking. Being is as the destiny of thinking. But destiny is in itself historical. Its history has already come to language in the saying of thinkers" (LH, 264).

Hence the continuity between the ontological *(mis)*understanding of being (early Heidegger) and the epochal Event of (mis)thinking (later Heidegger):

> *once interpreted as ontological (mis)understanding or epochal Event of (mis)thinking, the epochal thinker's theory has put into words the (anti-)Event of being of their present epoch. More precisely, the meaning of the epochal thinker's language* is *the epochal Event of being that conceals itself in terms of the (thinker's) present (words).*

The epoch of being is the Event that occurs in (i.e. appropriates) the language of the metaphysical thinker. The playing forth of a new beginning can be enacted only by an alternative thinking, which interprets the philosopher's theory as epochal Event that conceals itself. Heidegger refers to this operation as an understanding that "leap(s) into" or "enact(s)" the "projecting open" (Event) of the thinker's hidden "saying" (CP, 55).

For instance, Heidegger identifies the Greek sending of being via the language of philosophers such as Plato. Greek philosophers had *no choice* but to have their thinking appropriated by the epochal call of their present epoch: Plato did not create ("bring about") the (mis)understanding of being as Idea but was appropriated by it (QCT, 18). Plato's thinking did not create the Greek epoch but was *claimed* by the (Anti-)Event of being of the Greek epoch. And

yet, like all other metaphysical thinkers, Plato was oblivious to the ambiguous Event that his own theory was. Once again, here is a redefinition of BT's lesson about the (non)difference between so called 'theory' (i.e. ontological understanding of being) and 'praxis' (i.e. pre-ontological understanding of being):

> *upon studying the language of epochal thinkers, Heidegger is* not *writing a history of so-called ideas. The hermeneutic destruction of metaphysics via being-historical thinking enables Heidegger to gain an answer to the question concerning the meaning of being(-human).*

In summary, Heidegger is after an ontological understanding or thinking that can put into words the epochal Event of being that the epochal thinker's saying silently talks about and in fact *is*. This is a thinking that has become aware of the very meaning, essence or truth of human thinking itself. This is not the truthness of the content of thoughts but *aletheia* as the Event that enables/appropriates human thinking in the first place (EP, 68).

First and foremost, the truth that metaphysical thinkers have forgotten (and yet put into words) is the truth or *meaning* of (their own) thinking: what makes their (mis)understanding of being possible. As per the next section, it is precisely from this failure, which always already transpires through human language, that Heidegger can interpret the meaning of an epochal sending of being. This is the paradox of metaphysics *par excellence*: the (un)thinkable concept of nothingness as not-being.

3.7. On Heidegger's method. The concealment of the ontological difference and the paradox of not-being

In PI and OCM,[10] Heidegger explains that the ontological difference between being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiende*) must be thought in terms of the epochal Event that appropriates the human being in a mutual call of Nearness. Heidegger's argument seems counter-intuitive: the *difference* between being and beings should be thought in terms of the *identity* of being and human being as their "belonging together" or "toward-each-other" (PI, 27; 33). It is necessary to stop thinking about difference and identity in the terms of traditional metaphysics as a relationship between two beings

[10] Both works date back to the second half of the 1950s.

("connexio", "nexus" or "interwining") (PI, 29; 32). The relationship between being and human being should be understood as their belonging together in the *same* Event of mutual Appropriation:

> "For us, the matter of thinking is the Same, and thus is Being - but Being with respect to its difference from beings" (OCM, 47).

In each epoch, being (*Sein*) has concealed itself as *a different* being (*Seiendes*): *arche* (Antiquity), God (Middle Ages), Objectivity (Modernity). However, the alternative thinking of Heidegger invites us to find sameness where traditional metaphysics discovers difference and *vice versa*:

> " […] essential thinkers always say the Same. But that does not mean the identical. Of course they say it only to one who undertakes to think back on them" (LH, 264).

Upon embracing being-historical thinking, one can hear transpiring through the words of the epochal thinker the silent sound of the *same* Event of being (Event of thinking). Despite the *different* (mis)understanding of each epoch, this is a (mis)understanding of the *same* giving of the gift of presence, which is *recurrently* (mis)understood in terms of the (thinker's) present (Anti-)Event of being:

> "Repetition here does not mean the stupid superficiality and impossibility of what merely comes to pass as the same for a second and a third time. For beginning can never be comprehended as the same, because it reaches ahead and thus each time reaches beyond what is begun through it and determines accordingly its own retrieval" (CP, 39).

> *Each epoch of the history of being is the return of the* same *Event of being that, albeit in* different *terms, is recurrently (mis)understood in terms of the thinker's present (self-concealment of being).*

The metaphysical thinker has always already failed to think about the mutual Event between being and human being (i.e. ontological difference) (OCM, 50). Instead of thinking about the giving of the gift of presence, whereby beings can come-into-presence *as* beings, the thinker has (mis)thought about being in terms of the epochal *gift*: in terms of

the (thinker's) *present* (self-concealment of being). Thus (un)thought, being (*Sein*) is (mis)understood and presentified as if it was *a* being (*Seiendes*): the ultimate "ground" of all beings or onto-*theologically* as a "deity" (OCM, 55-58). Paradoxically, metaphysical humanity fails to think about the same appropriating Event of being (i.e. ontological difference) that enables its (mis)understanding of being in the first place:

> "The difference between beings and Being is the area within which metaphysics, Western thinking in its entire nature, can be what it is" (OCM: 51).

Due to this (mis)understanding, the epochal thinker discovers the ontological difference (i.e. belonging together or identity of being and human being) as an insurmountable "abyss" (PI, 32). However, the abyss is encountered only insofar as one thinks about identity and difference as a relation between two beings: a *connexio*, *nexus* or intertwining that fills an empty in-between (PI, 29; 32). The way out of the abyss requires an alternative thinking that leaps out of traditional metaphysics ("spring and let go") (PI, 32). This is the being-historical thinking of the *Seinsgeschichtlich* approach (CP, 3).

The leap requires to think about being in terms of the epochal *giving* of the gift of presence, rather than in terms of the gift, i.e. in terms of the present. Upon thinking about being as epochal Event, one appreciates that the ontological relation of identity/difference is a belonging together of being (*Sein*) and human being (*Seiendes*). The traditional thinking of Western metaphysics, which presentifies the Event of being as if it was *a* being, and discovers the ontological difference as an abyss, has always *fought against* difference in the attempt to achieve the unachievable *identity* between two beings and *return of (a presentified) being to itself:*

> "Being is determined by an identity as a characteristic of that identity. Later on, however, identity as it is thought of in metaphysics is represented as a characteristic of Being" (PI, 28).

As per the reading of the *Kehre*, the theoretical fight of traditional metaphysics belongs to humanity's inclination to flee from death: the inauthentic revolt that escapes from Dasein's ek-static *nothingness* in the attempt to be-in the unachievable Present (i.e. ontological making present). The theoretician pursues control over or a present relation with beings and yet, the result is paradoxical. Having forgotten the presencing of beings, metaphysical humanity discovers the ontological difference as an abyss that separates itself, i.e. human being (*Seiendes*), from other beings (*Seiende*).

The abyssal difference of traditional metaphysics is an empty in-between that contains the *(un)thinkable par excellence*, namely nothingness as *not*-being:

> "But this abyss is neither empty nothingness nor murky confusion, but rather: the event of appropriation" (PI, 39).

Heidegger further discusses the ever-recurring metaphysical paradox of not-being in WM, which examines the modern scientist's (mis)thinking. Like any other metaphysical thinker, the scientist pursues only beings and does not think about the being of beings (forgetting of the ontological difference) (WM, 95). Modern science, which is concerned solely with beings, wishes to have nothing to do with nothingness; however, upon rejecting nothingness, science contemporaneously invokes it, albeit *negatively* as a "nullity" (WM, 96). Paradoxically, science silently accepts that nothingness *is* not (WM, 96).

This paradoxical mistake has recurred throughout the history of human thinking (WM, 107-108). Upon forgetting the belonging-together of being and beings, traditional metaphysics presentifies nothingness as *a* (non)being that *is* (not) (WM, 107-108). However, if thinking is always thinking about something, how can the metaphysicians deny that upon thinking that 'nothingness *is* not' they are thinking about nothingness *as something*? (WM, 96-97). Hence the ever-recurring paradox of the epochal Event of (mis)thinking: nothingness is *negated* and contemporaneously thought about as *a* being that *is* not (i.e. a nonbeing).

Similarly to PI, we are indeed facing an insurmountable abyss. When thought about in terms of traditional metaphysics, the question of nothingness remains "impossible" to resolve and "inherently absurd" (WM, 97). The traditional logic of metaphysical thinking is corrupt (WM, 107-108). However, this is only insofar as one remains within the domain of traditional thinking; a different thinking can lead us to a more "fundamental experience" of nothingness (WM, 97-99). Nothingness should not be mistaken for *a* (non)being that *is* (not). Instead, nothingness is contained in the nullity of Dasein's transcendental ek-sistence (WM, 102-106):

> "Being and the nothing do belong together […] because Being itself is essentially finite and reveals itself only in the transcendence of Dasein which is held out into the nothing" (WM, 108).

As per BT, Dasein's ek-static condition is defined by the nullity of a not-yet, which enables Dasein's disclosure to the openness of its there: Dasein's ability to take care of the being of beings or to ek-sist. As per the *Kehre*, nothingness belongs to the "unconcealedness of what is" or the mysterious Event whereby "beings come into the Open *as*": the presencing of beings *out of concealment* into unconcealment as beings (OWA, 71).

Upon forgetting the ontological difference and (not-)discovering an (un)thinkable abyss of not-being, metaphysics forgets the same nullity from which its (mis)understanding of nothingness as negation (not-being) originates:

> "The not does not originate through negation; rather, negation is grounded in the not that springs from the nihilation of the nothing […] the nothing is the origin of negation, not vice versa" (WM, 105).

Paradoxically, metaphysical humanity fails to think about the same Event of being that enables (i.e. appropriates) its theoretical (mis)understanding of the ontological difference as negative (not-being) in the first place. Metaphysics is concerned with beings only and so, paradoxically, the same nonbeing that it has rejected and yet (not)discovered ('nothingness *is* not') is unacceptable and therefore must be destroyed or *annihilated*. Using a spatial metaphor, the metaphysical thinker attempts to fill an empty gap - which is not - between a presentified being (*Sein* qua *Seiendes*) and beings (*Seiende*) through a *connexio*, *nexus* or intertwining of sorts. In other words:

> *upon negating nothingness as a nonbeing, the metaphysical thinker contemporaneously attempts to destroy it by imposing over it a presentified relation.*

However, the empty abyss to be *positively annihilated* or *negatively filled* by the metaphysical relation is undestroyable or unfillable because it *is-not*. More precisely:

> *the metaphysical abyss is a (non)being* that is*(-not) only for the sake of a theoretical pre-projection/(mis)understanding of being in terms of the thinker's present (self-concealment of being).*

This is the truth or meaning of the Event of (mis)thinking that the metaphysical thinkers have forgotten: *their own* thinking gives them no access to beings (*Seiende*) but *always already* projects the being (*Sein*) of beings *as* beings. In fact, the ontological (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present has always already *failed* to discover the being of beings as *a* being. In terms of BT, this is insofar as theory is always already a *pre-projection* of the being of beings *as* beings. This pre-projection is precisely what the *connexio*, *nexus* or intertwining of traditional metaphysics are: the thinker's own (mis)thinking about being, which attempts to annihilate the metaphysical difference between itself (i.e. presentification of thinking as ideal Form) and the epochal Event of being (i.e. presentification of Event of being as present Reality). Expressed here is the desire for a theory of the real that *is* one and the same with (the thinker's) present Reality. Once again, this is the ever-recurring theoretical (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present or the Event of (mis)thinking that fights against a difference that is-not in the pointless pursuit of metaphysical identity (e.g. Hegel's immediacy of Being as the absolute idea or self-thinking thinking):

> "In the merely identical, the difference disappears. In the same the difference appears […]" (OCM, 45).

As seen in the next chapters, among historians, the theoretical fight against the difference leads to so-called *presentism*. This is the theoretical (mis)understanding of the sameness and difference that inform the epochal Event of being. As the thinker has (mis)understood being in terms of the present, the history of being is pre-projected in terms of the (thinker's) present (self-concealment of being). Having pre-projected the history of being in terms of the present, the thinker's Present cannot but be utterly unique as the *necessary* completion of history. What occurs in the Present of the historian is the destruction of the *difference of not-being* between present Thought (i.e. presentification of historical thinking) and present Reality (i.e. presentification of Event of being of the thinker's present epoch): the *necessary* return of (*an unthinkable*) being to itself (i.e. metaphysical identity between thinking and being). As per Heidegger's critique of Hegel's (mis)thinking about the history of being:

> "The completion of this movement, the absolute Idea, is the totality developed within itself, the fullness of Being […] . The matter of thinking thus is for Hegel thinking thinking itself as Being revolving within itself. In an inversion which is not only legitimate but necessary, the speculative sentence concerning the beginning runs: "The result is the beginning." The beginning must really be made with the result, since the beginning results from that result." (OCM, 53)

As opposed to the ever-recurring presentism of epochal thinkers/historians, Heidegger's being-*historical* thinking refuses to (mis)understand history in terms of (Heidegger's) own present. At this point, let us summarise the key findings of this section.

The abyss of traditional metaphysics cannot be filled by any presentified relationships because the empty abyss is-not to begin with. This abyss is unfillable because difference is no empty gap between beings but an unsayable *belonging together* of being (*Sein*) and human being (*Seiendes*). The mistake of metaphysics is insurmountable because the *not-* of the abyssal difference is (un)thinkable: it *is(-not)* only for the sake of a forgetful (mis)understanding of being (*Sein*) in terms of the present. The metaphysical abyss is merely the paradoxical result of traditional metaphysical thinking, which escapes the only logical principle worth accepting: thinking is always thinking about *something*. And yet, having (not)discovered the abyssal gap of negation or not-being, theoretical Dasein pointlessly attempts to annihilate it in order to give voice to the same epochal (un)truth that has (not)discovered the empty abyss in the first place (i.e. pursuit of identity between two beings and return of *a* being to itself). This pointless enterprise is humanity's ever-recurring fight against a difference of its own invention:[11]

> *the metaphysical abyss of not-being is(-not) opened by the same theoretical (mis)understanding of being that (fails to) discover(s) the ontological difference as connexio, nexus or intertwining in the first place. Here is the paradox of metaphysics: a dog that chases a tail that* is(-not) *only insofar as the dog keeps running. If the run was to stop, the thinker would have to face the unresolvable paradox of not-being wherein their thinking has always already fallen.*

Heidegger always runs against the thinker's language a test aimed at assessing the thinker's (in)ability to think about the *conditions of possibility* of (their own) thinking. This is not the test of traditional logic, which Heidegger has already established to be corrupt. Heidegger, who interprets human thinking as epochal Event that appropriates the

[11] This remark can be misleading. The epochal thinker does not *create* the abyssal difference of its own accord. Instead, the (mis)understanding of the ontological difference as an abyss is the the epochal Event/anti-Event of being that the epochal thinker's thinking *is* (appropriated by).

thinker's (mis)thinking, is pursuing what makes the thinker's thinking possible or its *meaning*. The thinker does not create this meaning but "is owned up to" to or appropriated by it (CP, 55). The meaning of what is said by the thinker and yet conceals itself as "reticence in silencing" (CP, 55) is *aletheia,* i.e., the same epochal Event that appropriates the thinker's thinking and yet has always already concealed itself in terms of the (thinker's) present (thoughts):

> *Heidegger's test digs into the epochal thinkers' thinking about (their own) thinking until it has encountered the (un)resolvable, i.e. (un)thinkable, abyss of not-being. Expressed in the thinker's own words is their failure to think about the same Event of being that their (mis)thinking* is *in the first place. Here is the epochal* meaning *of the philosophers' saying: the (Anti-)Event of the thinker's present epoch that, upon giving the gift of thoughts/words, conceals itself in terms of the thinker's present thoughts/words.*

The metaphysical thinker (mis)understands the nothingness that permeates Dasein's ek-static condition as a nonbeing of sorts, hence (mis)thinking about the difference between being and beings as empty abyss of not-being to be destroyed. This is due to the epochal thinker's failure to think about the same epochal Event that enables their own thinking, which is thus forgotten or (mis)understood in terms of the (thinker's) present (self-concealment of being). In each epoch, theoretical Dasein seems to be fighting against a *different* abyss of not-being. However, this is the ever-recurring fight against a metaphysical difference that reveals the *same (*un)resolvable paradox of not-being: the epochal return of the same (mis)understanding of the giving of the gift of presence in terms of the present.

> *Even for the later Heidegger, theory is a continuation of Dasein's everyday fight against the not-yet of ek-sistence: a pointless fight against the temporalisation of time (i.e. death) in the pursuit of the unachievable Present.*

Traditional metaphysical thinking has been compared to the movement of a dog that endlessly chases a tail of its own imagination and so, as per the next session, traditional metaphysics moves in a *vicious circle*. Its interpretation enables Heidegger to study the epochal meaning of being(-human).

3.8. On Heidegger's method. The circle in thinking

OWA tells us that humans believe to exist in the middle of the "immediate circle of beings" (OWA, 52). However, what encircles the human being are not beings but the "open place" or "open center" whereby beings can be present *as* beings: the Event of being (OWA, 51). The epochal Event of Appropriation is the *circular* Event of truth (*aletheia*), whereby beings can come *out of* concealment *into* unconcealment (i.e. come-into-presence *as* beings) (OWA, 53).The "circle" is another term to name the (un)namable epochal Event of *mutual* appropriation between being (*Sein*) and human being (*Seiendes*) (OCM, 69).

The circle concept is the furthest Heidegger's saying can go to name the ontological difference: the mutual belonging together of being and beings. Like in a circle, it is impossible to distinguish between a beginning and an end or present "closure" (EP, 67-68). It has been established that Heidegger's being-historical thinking leaps-into the historical giving of being. OWA rephrases this theoretical operation as a matter of entering and following the circle that, according to "ordinary understanding", is to be avoided insofar as it "violates logics"(OWA, 18). Heidegger's circular enterprise does violate logic, but only the traditional logic of the metaphysical thinking that has preceded his philosophy (OWA, 18). In CP, Heidegger tells us that human questioning is encircled by a mysterious "circle", which remains "seldom experienced" by the questioner (CP, 8). In other words, metaphysical thinkers have recurrently failed to think about the circularity that defines (their own) thinking:

> *the epochal thinker fails to understand that circularity belongs to the epochal Event of being, including the Event of* their own *thinking.*

Heidegger's being-historical thinking accepts the circularity of (*his own*) thinking, hence overcoming the faultiness or viciousness that traditional logic attributes to circular reasoning. Faulty or vicious is precisely the (mis)thinking of those thinkers who have forgotten the circularity of (their own) thinking. And yet, upon forgetting this circularity, they are inevitably appropriated by it:

> *like a dog chasing an unreachable tail (i.e. metaphysical Present), the thinker's thinking runs in the vicious circle of the metaphysical fight against the ontological difference, which attempts to bring*

present closure to (i.e. making present of) the unclosable (i.e. circular) difference between being and beings (i.e. pursuit of metaphysical identity).

The epochal thinker fights a pointless fight against the abyss of not-being, which continues everyday Dasein's inauthentic attempt to be-in the Present. This is an impossible attempt to jump out of the circle, in opposition to Heidegger's leap-in. As the Event of being (i.e. encircling center) is (mis)understood as if it was *a* present being (i.e. an unthinkable point outside of the circle), the circular belonging-together of being and human being is presentified as an empty difference between abstract points to be annihilated in the pointless attempt to achieve their unity. Once again, the solution for Heidegger is to stop thinking about being metaphysically as a present being and leap into its circularity. This theoretical effort was already operative in BT:

> " […]. our attempt must aim at leaping into this "circle" primordially and completely, so that even at the beginning of our analysis of Dasein we make sure that we have a complete view of the circular being of Dasein" (BT, 301- 302) [315].

As per the next sessions, the method of being-historical thinking - which will enable TB to gain an understanding of the of meaning of being(-human) – has re-adopted the same existentialist hermeneutics or hermeneutic existentialism of BT.

3.9. On Heidegger's method. The existentialism of destruction: being-historical thinking as Event of freedom

BT is driven by the realisation that philosophers have always failed to formulate the question about the meaning of being. First and foremost, BT is a theoretical effort to formulate or understand the question that the great philosophers of history have forgotten. In order to formulate an answer to the question about the meaning of being (i.e. time), Heidegger studies the being (*Sein*) of the only being (*Seiendes*) that can raise the question about being (*Sein*): Dasein. Heidegger can come to a theoretical understanding of the meaning of being (i.e. temporal horizon) upon defining the "grounds" that enable Dasein's "relatedness" to (i.e. questioning about) being (BT, 7) [8]. Questioning is precisely a mode of being for the only being that can make of (its) being a question, including Heidegger (BT, 7) [8]. First and

foremost, BT is a theoretical attempt to understand the very circularity that inevitably defines Heidegger's *own* enterprise (BT, 222) [231-232].

The existential analytic is an interpretation that interprets what makes possible any ontological interpretation, starting from itself: an Interpretation that interprets what makes possible the interpretation of the question about the meaning of being. Upon interpreting the existential structures that enable Dasein's (mis)understanding of being, Heidegger is looking into his own theoretical understanding of the being question in a circular way:

> "What is decisive is not to get out of the circle, but to get in it in the right way" (BT, 148) [153].

This circular Interpretation is the *destructive* enterprise of the hermeneutic method, which is *existentialist* hermeneutics:

> " […] hermeneutics, as the interpretation of the being of Dasein, receives the third specific and, philosophically understood, *primary* meaning of an analysis of the existentiality of existence" (BT, 35 italics original) [38].

Dasein's method of destruction is existentialist hermeneutics because it is grounded in (i.e. made possible by) a more primordial hermeneutic, the one that defines Dasein's very existence ("the existential fore-structure of Dasein itself") (BT, 148) [153]):

> "Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology, taking its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein" (BT, 36) [38].

First and foremost, the circle in understanding that Heidegger's analytic leaps into is the circularity of Dasein's everyday ek-sistence: the "circular being of Dasein" (BT, 302) [315]. Given that Dasein *always already* understands itself in terms of its worldy existence (i.e. being-possible), circularity inherently belongs to meaning:

> "The "circle" in understanding belongs to the structure of meaning, and this phenomenon is rooted in the existential constitution of Dasein, that is, in interpretive understanding. Beings which, as being-in-the-world, are concerned about their being itself, have an ontological structure of the circle" (BT, 148-149) [153].

> *First and foremost, circular or hermeneutic is the ek-static being of Dasein as that being that, to be in the presence of beings, must project itself into a futural what-for and return to how it always already was. Dasein has no access to such thing as present meaning. Circularity belongs to Dasein's very existence as a pre-projection of the being of beings* as *beings (hermeneutic 'as')*.

As per the *Kehre*, the later Heidegger treats the history of being as *different returns of the same (circular) Event of being*. Existentially, this corresponds to the return of the same circular being-in-the-world that Dasein's ek-static present always already is (either authentically or inauthentically). Not for nothing, BT defines Dasein's ek-sistential occurrence (i.e. life) as a being-stretched-along-between birth-and-death (BT, 357) [374]. 'Each' present of this stretch is the *return* of the same being-toward death as a *circular being-stretched-into-itself*.[12] Dasein's *perfectio* lies in appropriating the circle of meaning authentically: meaningful existence as existing for one's ownmost potentiality-of-being (i.e. death). Death is not the *present* closure of the circle but its *ek-static* closure (being-toward): authentic projection into the same repetitive circle that Dasein's existence always already is. Inauthentic Dasein's making present of everyday possibilities is an attempt to interrupt its ek-static circling-into-itself and achieve stabilisation: a flight from its unsettling circularity and be-in the unachievable Present.

Heidegger's existentialist hermeneutics pre-projects Dasein's understanding of being for its ownmost potentiality of being, hence being able to "put into words" the meaning of this projection as temporal horizon (BT, 301) [314]. *Theoretically*, Heidegger's existentialist analytic is the authentic counterpart to the ontological (mis)understanding of the metaphysical theoretician. Alternatively, the Hermeneutic Situation of Heidegger's existential analytic, which has jumped into the circularity of (its own) meaning, is the theoretical continuation of the authentic present (i.e. moment) in which everyday Dasein has embraced its ek-static, i.e. circular, being. Not for nothing, the authentic present is also referred to as the *Situation* of the moment. In turn, the metaphysical thinker

[12] What makes of lightness the heaviest of burdens is not the *impossibility* of (eternal) return (Kundera, 1984: 3-5). Ironically, being is unbearably light *because* of the *ever-recurring* circularity of Dasein's ek-static present: human existence as different repetitions of the same ek-static circle.

continues Dasein's everyday inclination to escape from the circle (inauthentic making present), hence (mis)understanding the circularity of its own thinking in terms of the present(-at-hand) (BT, 301) [315].

The later Heidegger has simply redefined his existentialist hermeneutics after the thinking of the *Kehre*. In BT the hermeneutic method of destruction served the existential analytic to define the existential structures that enable the theoretical questioning about the meaning of being. The later Heidegger deploys the same method for the sake of a being-historical thinking that can think about the possibilities of its own thinking as *epochal Event of thinking* about the Event of being. Applied to the language of the epochal thinkers, hermeneutic destruction runs a test aimed at assessing the thinker's (in)ability to think about the conditions of (their own) thinking. Inevitably, Heidegger's hermeneutics encounters the vicious circle of not-being, which lays bare the theoreticians' failure of thinking about the circular meaning (i.e. aletheia) of (their own) thinking. The meaning of this vicious circle *is* the (Anti-)Event of being of the thinker's present epoch. In summary:

> *via hermeneutic interpretation/destruction of the vicious circularity of the epochal thinker's thinking, Heidegger gains a historical understanding of the* different *epochal meanings of being (e.g. Scholastic ens creatum; Modern Picture; Standing Reserve of Enframing), which will allow him put into words the (un)sayable meaning of the* same *ever-recurring epochal Event of being (i.e. Ereignis as mutual Event of Nearness, Appropriation, or time-space extending) (TB).*

Traditional metaphysics is the continuation of a pointless attempt to resist the unsettling condition of Dasein's ek-static condition: humanity's ever-recurring escape from the unsettling circularity of (its) being in the attempt to reach the unreachable Present. This is a matter of impotence, unfreedom or wishing of everyday possibilities: an escape from the unsettling freedom of choice. In summary:

> *understood as existentialist hermeneutics, being-historical thinking is the theoretical continuation of everyday Dasein's possibility of being-free: the hermeneutic* destruction *of the epochal thinker's (mis)thinking is the theoretical translation of the moment of existential* nihilism. *This is theoretical Dasein's (i.e. Heidegger's) refusal to ontologically (mis)understand (its) being in terms of its present world, hence being able to think differently or freely. Alternatively, hermeneutic destruction*

is the epochal Event of free/different thinking or the Event of being-different that appropriates the free thinker: destruction as creative *reappropriation or* repotentialisation of *a traditional heritage*[13] *of language and thinking that Heidegger has inherited not of his own accord.*

In order to complete the assessment of the hermeneutic method, it is necessary to prove what so far has been taken for granted: the circularity of meaning as the object of destruction for being-historical thinking.

3.10. On Heidegger's method. The circularity of linguistic meaning as object of hermeneutic destruction and the etymological destruction of words as object of being-historical thinking

Sections 33, 34 and 35 of BT treat language as "the articulation of the intelligibility of the there" of Dasein (BT, 155) [161]. In section 33, Heidegger demonstrates the founded mode of the statement, i.e. the unit of modern linguistics that encapsulates its objectivist (mis)understanding of the essence of language (BT, 149-55) [153-60]. Between the everyday statement "the hammer is too heavy" and the theoretical statement "the hammer is heavy X kilos", is the transformation of the existential-hermeneutical *'as'* into the theoretical apophantic *'as'* (BT, 152-55) [158-60]. Whereas the former expresses into words the discovery of the being of the hammer in heedful circumspection, the latter is grounded in a transformation of Dasein's forehaving, which interprets the being of the hammer as present-at-hand (BT, 152-53) [158].

Having identified the existentials of Dasein's disclosedness (being-in) in understanding and attunement, Heidegger tells us that equiprimordial to them is discourse: the articulation of the intelligibility of Dasein's there (BT, 155) [161]. Language is an expression of Dasein's being-toward the being that is talked about (*Da-*), with discourse defined as existential language (BT, 155-157) [160-162]. For Heidegger, discourse is the ek-static dimension of the process of so-called semiosis that modern linguistics has (mis)understood through objectifications of sorts (BT, 157; 160) [163; 165]. For instance, one can find this (mis)understanding in the (mis)thinking of the two fathers of modern linguistics, i.e. Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Albeit in different terms, both presentify the ek-static circularity of meaning via a system of objective relations or *differences*:

[13] The concept of "traditional heritage" (BT, 365-66) [383-84] - as well as its creative destruction via being-historical thinking - is further discussed in Section 7.9, which explains its 'critical' meaning.

- The signifier-signified relation, which is grounded in the socio-culturally determined *difference* between signs (de Saussure, 1959: 65-70; 117).
- Logical inferences between neo-Platonic forms: ideas objectively present to human consciousness; referents defined by properties or 'brute reactions' that are objectively representable by the object of thought; 'necessitants' as the objective content of universal atemporal laws (Peirce, 1998: 477-483).

Both approaches bespeak of an objectivist metaphysics of meaning:

- Objective differences define the synchronic workings of Saussurean signification: syntagmatic relations that are '*in praesentia*', namely *objectively* present to the scientist's thinking (de Saussure, 1959: 123). Coupled with this metaphysics of presence is a (mis)understanding of being-human as modern *ego*: a self-sufficient *subject* objectively present to itself and to its contents of thought. Under the force of the associative relation, the subject can make present again (*represent*) past, i.e. objectively *absent*, mental contents (associative relations are '*in absentia*').

- Peirce reduces communication to the passing along of an objectively present *form* that, being objectively present to an individual consciousness, can be made present again (i.e. externalised or *re-presented*) to another subject (1998: 477). The form is nothing but the *object* of the sign, with Peirce distinguishing between *two* sides of the object. Corresponding to the 'mediate' or 'dynamical' object outside of the sign (referent) is an 'immediate' object: the *form* of the referent (*idea*) as the content of human thoughts ('interpretants') (1988: 477). Truth is reduced to abstract relations that are true because of their empirical repeatability: *aletheia* is presentified as an objective and atemporal 'habit' that can be validated, i.e. *re-presented*, by the scientist-linguist (Peirce, 1998: 479).

The truth of so-called semiosis does not lie in the modern *adequatio* or objective correspondence (i.e. difference of not-being) between an abstract signified and signifier (de Saussure) or sign and real-world referent (Peirce). This is

an objective gap of not-being that the modern thinker of communication desperately attempts to close via a representational connexio, nexus or interwining between objective points in time and space. [14]

What modern linguistics overlooks is the *disclosedness* of the *Da-* of Dasein that is articulated by discourse and expressed in language" (BT, 157) [163]. The *truth* of the statement is to be found in the circular forehaving of interpretation: the disclosedness of Dasein's being (ek-sistence) (BT, 149) [154]. Discourse articulates the circular being-toward of Dasein or its projective disclosedness: the circularity of truth as *aletheia* rather than objective correspondence (BT, 204-220) [212-230].[15] Discourse articulates the intelligibility of Dasein's ek-static disclosedness, namely the attuned *being-in* of Dasein that is always already a *being-with* (BT, 156-157) [161-162]. What is articulated in discourse and shared in language through words is *meaning* (BT, 151-153) [156-158]. So-called signification cannot be reduced to an empty relation or difference, either between a mental content and an objective being existing out there in a pre-linguistic world (BT, 157) [163]. Neither is meaning *created* by the structural difference between signs/signifiers[16]. Instead, as already seen, the undefinable essence of meaning lies in its ek-static circularity:

> *meaning is the intelligibility of Dasein's there: the ek-static projection into/return from the upon-whichs of Dasein's circular understanding of beings* as *beings (existential-hermeneutic 'as').*

[14] Chapter 4 further discusses Heidegger's critique of modern metaphysics and its fight against the objective different of not being. Similarly, Chapter 9 returns to the modern Event of (mis)thinking about the communicative difference and briefly analyse its *turn* among the thinkers of *our own* present.

[15] The treatment of the statement enables Heidegger to critique the correspondence theory of truth that has informed the (mis)understanding of the *logos* as *adequatio* between judgement and object (BT, 206-210) [214-219].

[16] The reader may have noticed the silent criticism of the (post)structuralist development of post-Saussurean linguistics. This occurred following the impetus of Jacques Derrida's theory of *différance*, which was born out of direct confrontation with the Heideggerian philosophy of hermeneutic destruction (Derrida, 1982; 1997) As discussed in the conclusion, a separate project of research is needed to interpret Derrida's famous criticism of Heidegger.

Upon communicating, Dasein brings the Other to participate in shared disclosure toward the being-said (BT, 162) [168]. Communication brings the being-said into presence despite its objective absence. Language, like all communication, is about the sharing of meaning: *the sharing of Dasein's being-toward the being that is talked about*, or *the sharing of Dasein's circular disclosedness/truth* (BT, 156-157) [162-163].

Upon establishing that the essence of meaning is *aletheia as disclosive being-toward* (circularity of truth rather than correspondence/empty difference), one comes across the possibility of inauthentic communication as *idle talk* (BT 161-164) [167-170]. Discourse, which articulates shared being-toward, contains *average* intelligibility: being-in-the-world (disclosedness) as defined by the levelled-down possibilities of the They-self (BT, 162-164) [168-170]. In idle talk, Dasein does not get to the primary relation to the being talked about but takes for granted the levelled-down meaning that is passed over by the They's *gossip* (BT, 162-163) [168]. Instead of engaging in a "struggle" for authentic appropriation of shared meaning, the idle talker comfortably knows everything (BT, 163) [169]. In this sense, inauthentic Dasein *talks like They talk*.

The idle talker, instead of projecting the meaning of words for its ownmost potentiality-of-being, (mis)understands it in terms of the "obviousness and self-assurance" contained in the average interpretation of the They-self (BT, 164) [170]. The meaning of words (i.e. truth as circularity of Dasein's disclosedness) is comfortably at hand: Dasein has disburdened itself of the possibility of choice opened by language. Instead of appropriating words authentically, inauthentic Dasein is *heeding* the present word (BT, 162) [168]. Everyday Dasein (mis)understands meaning *in terms of present words* or, alternatively, pre-ontologically (mis)understand meaning in terms of the present (BT, 333) [349]. First and foremost, it is due to Dasein's *immersion* in everyday language - which contains average/levelled-down meaning - that Dasein has fallen into the inauthenticity of idle talk:

> *inauthentic language expresses Dasein's pre-ontological (mis)understanding of meaning in terms of the present (worldly words).*

The idle talker is lived by the language in which it was thrown not of its own accord: instead of *willing* the truth or *meaning* of words, Dasein comfortably *wishes* it (*impotence*). The thematization/presentification of the being of the hammer via the theoretical statement "the hammer is X kilos heavy" is the *continuation* of the idle talker's inclination

to make meaning present, i.e. to be lived by its language. One cannot fail to notice that language is an expression of Dasein's being-in revolt:

> *language is the gift of the only being that - being capable of making of (its) being a question - can communicate something like meaning. What makes Dasein different from other beings is its* being-linguistic *or* being-communicative. *Dasein is the only being that can transcend spatial and temporal barriers upon bringing other Daseins into shared disclosedness towards absent beings.*

Dasein does not have a choice over its ek-static being. Language, which is made possible by Dasein's lack of present wholeness (i.e. not yet of care), cannot but contain the possibility of inauthenticity. This is Dasein's attempt to be-in the present, to interrupt its self-aheadness in a pointless attempt to escape death. Like in circumspect taking care, the idle talker (mis)understand (its) being in terms of a language that it has appropriated inauthentically. The idle talker forgets the *being-toward* shared in communication, hence pointlessly clinging to the present (words). This is the pre-ontological source for the theoretical (mis)understanding of the truth of language as metaphysical correspondence (e.g. modern linguistics).

> *Dasein does not have a choice over its being-linguistic. The wherein of linguistic meaning (*aletheia*) is contemporaneously the wherefrom of Dasein's escape from its ek-static disclosedness: an escape from the inescapable circularity of meaning that prevents Dasein from accessing present meaning.*

The linguistic meaning that is pre-ontologically made present by the idle talker is *theorised* by the theoretician as present-at-hand. In Modern linguistics (e.g. se Saussure; Peirce) an objectified Dasein (*subject*) is objectively present to mental contents that can be *represented* (made present again) through mnemonic mechanisms or through externalisation. This is the theoretical forgetting of the communicative difference, which in modern linguistics conceals itself as on objective spatio-temporal gap or empty *medium* between communicators.[17] As seen below, for the later Heidegger, this is the Event of being-linguistic that conceals itself.

[17]Once again, the human fight against the communicative difference is the subject of Section 9.1

In Heidegger's later philosophy, language undergoes the same fate of the *Kehre* that has been seen so far. Rather than focusing on Dasein's projections of being (i.e. language as shared expression of the intelligibility of Dasein's there), Heidegger shifts toward the appropriating Event of time-space extending occurring in the linguistic there of the word. The later Heidegger argues that the essence of language does not lie in being a human activity but in the Event of being that appropriates the speaker's speech: "language speaks" (DS, 188). Upon naming beings, the word brings them into presence *as* beings, or out of concealment into unconcealment.

OWA refers to the Event of being-linguistic as the '*naming power*' of the word (OWA, 45). In DS, Heidegger tells us once again that modern linguistics has been (mis)informed by a metaphysics of truth as objective correspondence (DS, 190-191). Even for the later Heidegger, signification is not about a presentified relation between beings (abyss of not-being): meaning is circular. For the later Heidegger of the Turn, what linguistics has forgotten is the naming power of the word or its "presencing element" (DS, 192). In order to study this mysterious Event, Heidegger introduces a *poem* about a snowy winter evening (DS, 192).

Upon naming the snow-thing, the poem does not make present again an external object, nor does it externalize an internal state of the poet (DS, 194-195). The poem's naming of the 'snow' does not re-present the snow-thing but rather calls it into *nearness* (DS, 196). Through the poem's calling, the snow-thing is not made physically present in the objective here of the lecture hall where the poem is read out (DS, 196; 197). Nevertheless, in its absent presence, the named snow-thing is called into nearness by the word, which naming power lies in "calling forth" the snow-thing in its "thinging":

> "The things that were named, thus called, gather to themselves sky and earth, mortals and divinities. The things let the fourfold of the four stay with them. This gathering, assembling, letting-stay is the thinging of things. The unitary fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities, which is stayed in the thinging of things, we call—the world. In the naming, the things named are called into their thinging" (DS, 197).

The concepts of 'thinging", "fourfould" and 'world' are further discussed in DD. Here Heidegger investigates the essence of the thing, which does not lie in the present properties of metaphysics but in its being a concern for Dasein (DD, 171-172): the epochal Event of *thinging* as a call into nearness that appropriates the human being (DD, 175). Heidegger refers to the thinging of the thing as the unity of the fourfold: earth, sky, mortals and divinities (DD, 175). This is another way to name the coming-into-presence, i.e. the Event of thinging, that occurs in the thing's there

(*Ereignis*). 'World' names the presencing of the fourfold in their unity, the coming-into-presence of the thing: the thinging of the thing that "things the world" as epochal Event of the thing's presencing (DD 177-178).

The unity of the fourfold is not the result of an external force that encompasses four entities like a hoop (DD, 178). Instead, the unity of the four is the circular Event that appropriates the human being: "the round dance of appropriating" or "ringing" (DD, 178). Unsurprisingly, DS refers to the relationship between thing (*Seiendes*) and world (*Sein* or unity of the fourfold in the Event of thinging) as "dif-ference" (DD, 199-200). The poet's language brings the snow-thing into nearness or alternatively "bids" or "invites" it to come into the nearness of its thinging (DS, 197): the word brings the snow-thing into nearness as *it bids the thing to come forth in its essence*. The essence of language lies in naming the Event of appropriation that the named being *is*. In the case of the poem about the snow, the word names the circular belonging together of world (*Sein*) and thing (*Seiendes*) (DS, 199). First and foremost, what speaks or bids in language is the difference between being and beings (DD, 204). This is the circular Event of linguistic appropriation whereby beings can come-into-presence *as* beings: *aletheia*. Heidegger is bringing to the limits of the (un)sayable the mysterious difference that enables so-called semiosis. This is not an objective difference that precedes language (abyss of not-being), with the human word re-presenting it *post factum* (DS, 200).

Language speaks upon bidding the spoken, i.e. the difference, to come "from out" of itself (back) "into" itself (DS, 203). What makes language possible, i.e. its essence or *meaning*, is the circular Event of appropriation that enables beings to *be* beings: language as "the appropriative taking place of the diff-erence" (DS, 205). There is no such thing as an empty difference between saying and said, but only a circular belonging together of speaking and spoken, bidding and bidden, whereby the mutual Event of appropriation shines forth in the there of the word.

The later Heidegger does not deny that the Event of being-linguistic appropriates only Dasein (DS, 205-207). However, first and foremost it is language that speaks. Upon naming beings, the word brings Dasein before the presence (nearness) of beings, hence *claiming* its "mortal speech" (DS, 205). Dasein is *appropriated* by the Event of being-linguistic or, as per BT, Dasein does have choice over its being-linguistic. Upon speaking, Dasein is in fact "hearing" or "responding" to the epochal Event that its own speech *is* (DS, 206). Upon acknowledging its lack of present control over language, the human being can have an "authentic" relationship toward the Event of being-linguistic (DS, 207). This is an obvious redefinition of the discussion of language from BT: the Dasein that responds to the "command of the difference" coming from language, is "anticipating while holding back" (DS, 207). This is the

authentic Dasein that has accepted or leaped into the circularity of meaning: the Event of time-space extending whereby beings can be present *as* beings despite their absence in the here and now. In summary:

> *the meaning of language is the circular Event of being-linguistic that allows beings to come from out of concealment into unconcealment* as *beings.*

In OWA, Heidegger delivers a brief but illuminating assessment of the essence of language (OWA, 70-75). Like the *poiesis* of the artwork, which brings forth a work *for the first time* (i.e. out of concealment into unconcealment or *nearness*), so does language bring the being of the named beings into the world for the first time (OWA, 71). Like the artwork, language is a setting-into-work (*Gestell*) of truth: the naming power of the word that brings beings into presence or *nearness* (OWA, 72). In this sense can Heidegger claim that the essence of art is poetry (OWA, 70): not an elevated form of language but the revealing essence of language (OWA, 72). At this point, Heidegger takes a big step forward. The happening of truth occurring in the there of artistic creation (which is poetry) is described as the "ground-laying grounding" of the historical giving of being (OWA, 73):

> "Actual language at any given moment is the happening of this saying, in which a people's world historically arises for it and the earth is preserved as that which remains closed. Projective saying is saying which, in preparing the sayable, simultaneously brings the unsayable as such into a world. In such saying, the concepts of a historical people's nature, i.e., of its belonging to world history, are formed for that folk, before it" (OWA, 71).

It is now clear why Heidegger refers to language as the "house of Being" (LH, 217):

> *upon recurrently bringing beings into presence or nearness, the essence of language is the epochal Event of being that, upon giving the gift of presence of the being-said, denies itself in terms of the (speaker's) present (said/words). The meaning of language* is *the circular Event of being, whereby a historical humanity can put into words its (mis)understanding of being in terms of (its) present.*

Finally, it can be explained why Heidegger's being-historical thinking studies the history of being(-human) via etymological destruction of words (DD, 172-173). For instance, DD derives the meaning or essence of the thing (i.e. Event of thinging), from an etymological investigation into the words that the epochal thinker has used to name the thing: '*res*' (Roman epoch), '*ens*' (Medieval epoch), and 'object' (Modern epoch) (DD, 172-175).

In each epoch, the word used to call the thing has a *different* epochal meaning: the meaning of the word changes along with the epochal thinking of metaphysics (i.e. "the interpretation of that which is") (DD, 174). From the Roman '*res*' as something that pertains or concerns the human being, via the Scholastic '*ens*' that *is* only insofar as it is created by God, into the Modern 'object' that *is* only insofar as it is represented by the human ego's consciousness. However, the ever-recurring Event or essential meaning of the thing (e.g. a jug) is none of the above (DD, 175).

In each epoch, the epochal thinker has failed to name the Event of thinging whereby the thing can be present to the human being as *thing*. Yet, the philosopher's saying has always already been appropriated by the (Anti-)Event of their epoch: a different word has (mis)named the *same* Event whereby the thing can *be present* to the human being *as* 'thing' (DD, 174). All the words for thing have (differently) "denoted by implication" the (same) epochal Event of thinging that enables the thing to *be* a thing (Event of thinging), and at the same to conceal itself in terms of the present 'thing' (Anti-Event of thinging): the Roman '*res*' to *be* a concern for humanity, the Medieval '*ens*' to *be* created by God, the Modern 'object' to *be* represented by human thought (DS, 173). In every epoch, upon naming the essence of the thing as a different 'thing', language denotes by implication the return of the same circular Event of thinging. The meaning of words *is* the circular (Anti-)Event of being of the speaker's present (epoch). This is the epochal Event that appropriates the epochal thinkers' language, and yet conceals itself in terms of the thinker's present (words) *as* 'thing'. Finally, it is clear not only why the circularity of linguistic meaning must be the object of hermeneutic destruction but why, contemporaneously, the hermeneutic destruction of etymology must be the object of being-historical thinking:

> *the etymological destruction of words presents Heidegger's being-historical thinking with the gift of the* different *epochal meanings of being(-human). Etymology is the object of study for a being-historical thinking that pursues the meaning of the* same *ever-recurring Event of being(-human).*

Having defined the meaning of the *Kehre*, the next section establishes how to answer the circular doubt about the present reading of Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology.

3.11. For a circular answer to the doubt: (being-historical) thinking about the present reading of Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology

As seen in the previous chapter, according to the doubtful reading of Dreyfus and Verbeek, the later concept of Enframing describes - *contra* BT's readiness-to-hand - a liberatory form of 'interactivity'. Due to lack of a research method, it has been established that the doubt must be answered circularly. In other words, the meaning of the dominant reading of the *post-Kehre* philosophy of technology must be interpreted in its own terms: in term of the *Kehre* itself. And so, as seen in the next chapter, the later Heidegger studies the history of so-called technological development via being-historical thinking: via hermeneutic destruction of the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about the essence of technology. As per the previous section: hidden in the language of the thinkers of technology is the epochal meaning of the (Anti-)Event of technology of the thinker's own present.

Therefore, it is necessary to return to the present readers of Heidegger's philosophy of technology (Dreyfus; Verbeek; alternative HCI designers; Bardini) and interpret their reading of Heidegger's philosophy of technology *as* epochal Event of thinking about technology. Only then will it be possible to close the circle of doubt and interpret the meaning of present readings of Heidegger's philosophy *in their own terms*: through Heidegger's own method of meaning interpretation. Before proceeding with the analysis, it is necessary to understand what Heidegger had meant to say about the concept of Enframing, as well as the meaning of its relation to the early concept of readiness-at-hand (BT).

The next chapter focuses on the turn from the Modern epoch of the World Picture (AWP) to Enframing (QCT). Enframing is the epoch that Heidegger sees emerging in the 1950s as new theories of technology (e.g. atomic physics) silently talk to him of a Turn undergone by so-called technological development (e.g. atomic bomb). Via hermeneutic destruction, Heidegger comes to believe that the new technologies of his present are somewhat *different* from Modern ones. By the end of Chapter 4, the thesis will be ready to close its first circle of doubt and interpret the present reading of the post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology in its own terms: as *present* Event of (mis)thinking about technology, with its epochal meaning destroyed via hermeneutics.

Chapter 4. Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy of technology: the epochal Event of being-creative, its ever-recurring (mis)understanding and the double danger of Enframing

4.1. Reliability as the being of equipment: determining the fate of readiness-to-hand via the artwork

In the 1950s Heidegger looks back at OWA, a text from 1935, and tells us that here is one of his earliest treatments of the epochal Event of being (OWA, 85):

> "What matters is a first opening of our vision to the fact that what is workly in the work, equipmental in equipment, and thingly in the thing comes closer to us only when we think the Being of beings" (OWA, 38).

OWA is looking into the Event that appropriates technical Dasein in the there (*Da*-) of equipment. Heidegger calls the epochal giving of equipmental being - namely the *Event of being-technical* - reliability (*Verläßlichkeit*): the meaning, essence, truth (*aletheia*) of equipment or the "ground of usefulness" (OWA, 33-34). The route whereby Heidegger will discover reliability is a Van Gogh painting that depicts a pair of peasant shoes (OWA, 32). This is because the analysis of equipmental being serves Heidegger to study the workly being of the artwork: the essence, meaning or truth of art. Upon studying how the painting discloses the being of the shoes, Heidegger may uncover the workly being of the artwork *and* the equipmental being of equipment (OWA, 37).

Both equipment and artwork *set up* a human World, but the way in which they *set forth* the Earth is different (OWA, 44-45; 62). The English translation renders this distinction as *'readiness'* (equipment) and '*createdness'* (artwork) (OWA, 62). The doubt is twofold: this difference allows us to understand the meaning of the Event of being-technical (via its difference from the Event of being-artistic). Secondly, behind this difference lies a redefinition of the thematic of the ek-static present from BT. *Verläßlichkeit* (OWA) and *Zuhandenheit* (BT) do bespeak of two *different* approaches to the being of equipment, and yet, Heidegger does not seem to have not repudiated his early analytic of equipment, nor its existentialist spirit:

> "This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining *anxiety* as to the certainty of bread, the wordless *joy* of having once more withstood want, and trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of *death*. This equipment belongs to the earth, and it is protected in the world of the peasant woman" (OWA, 33, italics my emphasis).

Both artwork and equipment result from a process of human making, but their *creation* differs in one crucial respect (OWA, 56-58). The "createdness" of the artwork (OWA, 55) allows the material (e.g. the stone of the Greek temple) to come forth or into presence: upon using matter, the artwork allows it to come forth for the first time (OWA, 45). The essence of the artwork lies in its own createdness, namely in the fact "*that* it is": in its *being* rather than *not*-being (OWA, 63). The self-subsistence of the artwork lies in its very essence, in its being a coming-into-presence: the epochal Event of truth or *aletheia* (OWA, 35).

The essence of the painting lies in the *reproduction* of a being's essence, which is understood as a *bringing forth* or coming-into-presence: truth as *aletheia* rather than objective correspondence (OWA, 35-36). OWA tells us that, upon "preserving" the coming-into-presence of the artwork, artist and spectator are "transport[ed] out of the realm of the ordinary", hence dwelling in a mysterious "present" (OWA, 64). This seems like a redefinition of Dasein's authentic moment (Section 2.5), for OWA refers to the human preservation of the artwork as its "willing" (OWA, 65). Heidegger claims us that there would be no artwork, i.e. no happening of truth, without Dasein's preserving (OWA, 64).

> "Although it becomes actual only as the creative act is performed, and thus depends for its reality upon this act, the nature of creation is determined by the nature of the work" (OWA, 58).

This is not an anthropological understanding of the artwork's createdness. Dasein is always already appropriated by the epochal Event of being as shepherd. Dasein has no choice but to be appropriated by the Event of being that artistic creation *is*. In other words:

> *Dasein has no choice over its* being-creative, *i.e. over its being-appropriated by the epochal Event of (artistic) creation.*

And yet, if the artist is *appropriated* by the Event of being-creative, why is Heidegger referring to its preservation as 'willing'? In BT, the concept of willing defined the circular self-fulfillment of Dasein's finishedness or *perfectio*: authentic being-toward-the-end as existing for one's ownmost potentiality of being (death). The finishedness of the artwork contains a similar sense of circular fulfillment or *perfectio*. Existentially, the bringing forth or Event of artistic creation is also an authentic being-toward-the-end. The preservation of the artwork is no mastery, insofar as one

(mis)understands the meaning of mastery as humanity's *giving* of being (*Sein*) to the artwork. Instead, the artist masters (i.e. wills) the artwork upon being appropriated by the epochal call of artistic creation, whereby beings can be brought out of concealment into unconcealment:

> "Willing is the sober resolution of that existential self transcendence which exposes itself to the openness of beings as it is set into the work" (OWA, 65).

At this point, one may object: does not the artwork, upon being completed, exhaust its essence (i.e. bringing forth)? Like a dead Dasein that is-not, so would the artwork, upon completion, cease being too. Does not Heidegger refer to the artwork as the *fixing* of truth in figure (OWA, 62)? The artistic fixing of truth does not indicate the *present* termination of the artwork, but a "boundary" that frees into unconcealment (OWA, 82). "Setting into work"' must be understood in the Greek sense of *poiesis* or *thesis*: a placing that brings something out of concealment into unconcealment (OWA, 81). The essence of art is the giving of the gift of presence: the gift of *being* over *not*-being. In this sense, the end of the artwork, i.e. the Event of creation, is similar to Dasein's end. Death is not Dasein's present termination but its ek-static uponwhich(s): Dasein's being-toward-the-end as the (im)possibility-of-(not-)being. Similarly, in the apparently still painting hanging on the wall is the *perfectio* of a being-toward-the-possibility-of-being (preserving/willing):

> "The boundary that fixes and consolidates is in this repose—repose in the fullness of motion—all this holds of the work in the Greek sense of ergon; this work's "being" is energeia, which gathers infinitely more movement within itself than do the modern "energies"'" (OWA, 83).

The description of the work's being qua *energeia* is another way for Heidegger to define the self-subsistence of the artwork or *thrust*:

> "The thrust that the work as this work is, and the uninterruptedness of this plain thrust, constitute the steadfastness of the work's self-subsistence" (OWA, 62).

“Steadfastness” translates the German term “*beständigkeit*”: ‘constancy’, ‘permanentness’, ‘persistentness’, ‘durability’, or *presence.* Self-subsistence (*insichstehen*) is nothing but the “standing in itself” of the artwork’s being, i.e. its *coming-into*-presence. The essence of the artwork is the *temporalization of time* as the unity of present, past and future: the epochal Event of time-space extending or Nearness (TB). It is precisely toward the Event of truth, i.e. the temporalization of time, that the preserver’s willing is directed (projected):

> “For one thing, this "letting" is nothing passive but a doing in the highest degree in the sense of thesis, a "working" and "willing" which in the present essay—(p. 65) is characterized as the "existing human being's entrance into and compliance with the unconcealedness of Being" (OWA, 82-83).

The preservation of the artwork is Dasein’s most authentic projection in the horizon of the present (willing). The work’s thrust is the moment opened by the artwork: the authentic present of the Dasein that is in the Situation. This is the Dasein that has embraced the *imminence* of death as the Dasein that has made up for not-choosing to be free, hence mastering its world and being free for it. Existentially, the present opened by the artwork is (the Event of) being-toward-the-(im)possibility-of-(not)-being. In the same way in which BT defines Dasein’s existence as a circular *being-stretched-into-itself* (Section 3.9), so is the artwork stretched-in-itself (*energeia*) as the there or *thrust* of the Event of being-creative. Human thinking and language can only go so far as to describe the overwhelming beauty that appropriates humanity’s being-creative. This is the ever-recurring Event whereby artistic Dasein can evade the ordinariness of its present world (OWA, 64):

> *the artwork’s essence is the circular Event of being-creative, whereby being and human being come together in their belonging together (i.e. ontological difference).*

Art is a most perfect Event for it escorts its human preservers before the possibility of being-in-the-difference or, more simply, the possibility of *being-different*. Hence OWA’s description of art as epochal repetition of the first beginning/Turn (OWA, 70-72) (Section 3.10). At this point, the next section may address the question concerning the difference between the Event of artistic and technical creation.

4.2. The ambiguity of the Event of being-technical, the technological fight against difference, and the Event of (mis)thinking about 'technology'

Like the artwork, the Event of equipmental being that appropriates technical Dasein is reliability as the setting up of a human World and setting forth of the Earth (OWA, 43-44)[18]. Like the artwork, the essence of equipment is a bringing forth or epochal Event of truth; however, equipment is always *for* something: reliability, and along with it the Earth, are dismissed into the usefulness of a human World (OWA, 62). Differently from the artwork, the createdness or *"*readiness*"* of equipment (OWA, 62) uses up material *for* something beyond itself: "usefulness and serviceability" (OWA, 44-5). The truth of technical creation is threatened by its own essence, i.e. by its being-dismissed-beyond-itself as worldly usefulness. For this reason, the being of equipment is not the *direct* effect of the happening of truth: equipment is constantly threatened by a concealment of its being, i.e. reliability, as usefulness (OWA, 62). The doubt is that the same concept was already expressed in BT, albeit in ek-sistential terms as hammer's "in-order-to" (Section 2.6).

As per the *Kehre*, the source of untruth lies in a self-concealment inherent in the Event of being-technical (*Ent-eignis*): the grounding of usefulness in reliability. However, this closure of equipmental being, whereby the Earth is used up *by a human World*, seems to have an existential counterpart. This is how Heidegger describes the disappearing (i.e. epochal self-concealment) of equipmental being ("that it is") occurring in the there of technical creation (i.e. readiness):

> "But this "that" does not become prominent in the equipment; it disappears in usefulness. The more handy a piece of equipment is, the more inconspicuous it remains that, for example, such a hammer is and the more exclusively does the equipment keep itself in its equipmentality. In general, of everything present to us, we can note that it *is*; but this also, if it is noted at all, is noted only soon to fall into oblivion, as is the wont of everything commonplace" (OWA, 63).

This is an obvious redefinition of the passage about the invisible hammer from Section 15 of BT. *Existentially*, it is the hammer's function (in-order-to), that threatens the hammer's being (the "*that* it is" of reliability) to fall into

[18] As per the next sections, modern metaphysics (e.g. Sociology) has presentified World and Earth as Society and Nature respectively.

oblivion as usefulness*:* to *be (mis)understood* by the Dasein which projects itself into the hammer's in-order-to (Section 2.9). Hence the doubt: whereas "reliability" names the historical giving of the presence of equipment (i.e. Event of being-technical), the early concept of "readiness-to-hand" defined how Dasein *projectively (mis)understands* or *(mis)understandingly projects into* the Event of being-technical occurring in the there of equipment. The doubt between the *unity* of the early and later philosophies of 'technology' is getting stronger. Even more so, as Heidegger describes Modern Dasein's techno-scientific exploitation of the Earth as "impotence of will", as opposed to the artist's willing of the artwork (OWA, 46).

As per the previous section, the truth of the artwork is the setting up of a human World and setting forth of the Earth, which Heidegger also refers to as "*rift-design*" (OWA, 61). In the rift unfolds a conflict or strife between the setting up of a "self-disclosing" human World and the setting forth of a "self-secluding" Earth (OWA, 47). The Earth resists the setting up of an artwork that, in order to come forth, must set itself back into the Earth. In the wherein of a setting back that sets forth is the frame (*Gestalt*) wherein the strife is *fixed in place* (*Ge-stell*): artistic creation is "[truth] being fixed in place in the figure" (OWA, 61-62). The conflict that is fixed in place (*Gestell*) by the artwork's rift-design (*Gestalt*) bespeaks of the very unity of a self-disclosing World and self-secluding Earth: truth as *aletheia*, i.e. the epochal Event of being (OWA, 62). Upon setting up a World and setting forth the Earth, the artwork sets itself back into the Earth so that the latter may partake in a historical human World (OWA, 44-45). The Earth does maintain its self-secluding character as the wherein of resistance to the setting forth of the artwork that, upon using matter, needs to set itself back into the Earth. However, the artwork sets forth the Earth as "self-closing factor" (OWA, 62): the stone, upon resisting the setting up of the statue, always already allows the statue to come out of concealment into unconcealment. In the artistic *Gestalt*, Earth and World shine forth in their intimate "unity" (OWA, 61).

In the equipmental setting up of a World, the Earth is used up. Matter is not set forth as self-closing factor but is dismissed beyond itself into human usefulness (OWA, 62). Rather than letting World and Earth come forth in the unity of their striving, the Earth is taken in by a human World. The conflict that is (not) set in place by equipment bespeaks of the human World's ever-recurring inclination to *surmount* the Earth. Alternatively, Heidegger tells us that the making of equipment is not the direct effect of the Event of truth (OWA, 62). This means that equipment recurrently fails to enframe the strife (truth) into figure. The fixing (*Gestell*) of equipment fails to set in place, in the sense of bringing something forth *into fulfillment.* The essence of equipment is the epochal Event of being-technical

that, due to its lack of self-subsistence, conceals itself. As per the creation of the artwork, Dasein is also appropriated by the epochal Event of technical creation: the setting forth of the Earth and setting up of a World.

Heidegger tells us that World and Earth are "different" but not "separated" from each other, nor is their relation an "empty unity of opposites" (i.e. metaphysical identity) (OWA, 47). Alternatively, the rift is no abyssal "cleft" but an intimate belonging together (OWA, 61). Heidegger is using the same language of PI to problematize the traditional concepts of difference/separation and unity/identity. Heidegger thinks about the *difference* between World and Earth in terms of the Event of (artistic/technical) creation as *circular* belonging together. The rift is the circular difference between World and Earth that technical Dasein fails to set into place:

> *in the there of artistic creation (i.e. artistic* Gestalt*), the artist fixes into place the circular difference (i.e. rift) between World and Earth, hence ek-statically closing the circular Event of creation. Instead, the Event of technical creation (i.e. technical* Gestalt*) is like the unfolding of a chain of rings: at each joint (rift) the strife between World and Earth is not brought into circular fulfillment and dismissed into a new ring.*

Like the createdness of the artwork, technical creation is a being-toward-the-end, namely the circular Event whereby beings come into presence. However, the equipment's end is dismissed beyond itself into usefulness. The epochal Event of being-technical (i.e. reliability) is always already threatened *not* to come into circular fulfillment (*imperfectio*): its bringing-forth (coming-into-presence) is 'replaced' by another end, the one(s) defined by a human World of usefulness. The Earth is used up: not allowed to come forth.

It is finally clear why OWA refers to the technoscientific measuring of the Earth as a matter of impotence of will. The Earth may have been conquered as objective occurrence in time and space (i.e. inauthentic making present), but Dasein fails to master its existence and, paradoxically enough, its everyday world too. Dasein does not anticipate its ek-static not-yet but makes it present: *technical Dasein comfortably flees from death*. Still operative in the later philosophy of technology are the existential and temporal dimensions of BT. Always operative is an escape from Dasein's ek-static not-yet through a forgetful making present that has chosen comfort over freedom: the history of so-called 'technological development' is one and the same with the history of Dasein's Fall. This is not to say that

Heidegger is *deriving* the being of equipment from Dasein. Similarly, yet differently from the createdness of the artwork:

> *Dasein has no choice over its being-appropriated by the Event of being that occurs in the there of equipmental creation. Alternatively, Dasein has no choice over its being-technical.*

Even for the later Heidegger equipment is an expression of Dasein's ambiguous being-in revolt (Section 2.9). On one hand, equipment is indeed the miracle of being over not-being or technical creation: only Dasein can be-technical as the only being that can stand into the openness of (its) being(-technical). 'Technological development' is the prerogative of the only being that recurrently makes of (its) being a question. However, because of its ek-static dwelling in the not-yet of care, Dasein recurrently escapes from the openness of (its) being(-technical) in the attempt to *make present* or stabilise its uncontrollable condition. The existential there (-Da) that gives technics, i.e. Dasein's ek-static standing into the Open, is contemporaneously the wherefrom of Dasein's withdrawal from the openness of (its) being(-technical). As per the *Kehre*, inherent in the Event of technical creation (i.e. reliability) is the self-concealment of this Event as mere usefulness.

The *disappearance* of reliability into usefulness described in OWA and BT's ek-static (mis)understanding of equipmental being via the *invisible* hammer (discovery of *Zuhandenheit*) describe the same forgetful concealment of being that recurrently accompanies the history of so-called 'technological development' or, alternatively, the epochal self-concealment of the Event of being(-technical) (OWA, 59).

> *The epochal Event of being-technical, i.e. the giving of the gift of equipment, always already conceals itself as* instrument *of technical Dasein's ever-recurring escape from the temporalisation of time. This is Dasein's 'technological' fight against death: an inclination to make (its) being(-technical) present, in the attempt to comfortably inhabit the uninhabitable Present.*

In BT the ontological difference concealed itself in the inauthentic present of Dasein's discovery of the invisible hammer's being (making present). In the philosophy of the *Kehre*, this self-concealment belongs to the Event of time-

space extending (TB) that, upon giving the gift of equipment (ek-static projections of Dasein's there), denies itself in self-concealment. At the cost of repeating the same argument *ad nauseam*:

> *existentially, the epochal* self-concealment *of the Event of being-technical (reliability) as usefulness corresponds to the inauthentic present of the technical Dasein that (mis)understands (its) being in terms of the* invisible *hammer's in-order-to. The ever-recurring Event of being-technical is always at risk of concealing itself, with the circular belonging together of being(-technical)/human being and Earth/World (i.e. ontological difference) always threatened to fall into oblivion. Technical Dasein recurrently escapes from the possibility of technical choice. Via self-forgetful making present, technical Dasein does not will but merely wishes technical possibilities, hence comfortably delegating its freedom to present artefacts. Alternatively, Dasein uses equipment as an instrument for its fight against death/difference in a pointless attempt to be-in the Present (Section 2.9).*

As further discussed in the next sections, traditional theories of 'technology' recurrently (mis)understand the truth of the ever-recurring Event of being-technical - which has always already concealed itself due to equipment's lack of self-subsistence - in terms of the self-concealment/Anti-Event of being-technical of the thinker's present (epoch). Heidegger explains this in the first half of OWA, which begins with an exposition of the traditional theories of equipmental being (OWA, 22-30). As Heidegger is after the meaning of the artwork (and secondarily of equipment), he notices that epochal thinkers have (mis)understood the being of both via presentified definitions of the thingly being of the thing (i.e. Event of thinging).

Heidegger identifies three theoretical concepts that have recurred with every epochal theorisation of "technology", namely the thing *as*: bearer of abstract properties; sensorial unity; formed matter (OWA, 30). If one focuses on the theoretical (mis)understanding of the thing as formed matter, the essence of equipment is *recurrently* (mis)theorised as a form (Greek eidos; Godly plan; Modernity's mental representation) that the human creator transforms into matter (OWA, 29). These concepts are nothing but metaphysical presentifications of World ("form") and Earth ("matter"). The Event of being-technical is presentified as mere spatio-temporal *in-between* (*connexio*, *nexus*, or *intertwining*) or *instrumental causality* that fills the empty *difference* of not-being between form and matter (QCT, 6-9). This is the ever-recurring "instrumentalist" (mis)understanding of the truth of technical creation (QCT,

5-12): the theoretical forgetting of the difference between World and Earth (rift) that appropriates technical Dasein. As per the case of Modernity:

> "Modern subjectivism, to be sure, immediately misinterprets creation, taking it as the self-sovereign subject's performance of genius" (OWA, 73).

The metaphysical thinker of 'technology' fails to think about its ever-recurring truth (i.e. *aletheia*): the Event of being-technical that appropriates Dasein's setting up of the circular difference between World and Earth. The circular truth of the Event of being-technical is (mis)understood/presentified as instrumental causality or correspondence between two beings (e.g. 'form' and 'matter'; 'Society' and 'Nature') that *must* fill/destroy an empty gap of not-being (forgetting of the strife/difference):

> *the meaning of the Event of being-technical is recurrently (mis)theorised as a weapon in humanity's fight against the difference of not-being: a human instrument that* must *destroy the gap between human World and Earth.*

As per Chapter 3, the (mis)thinking of the epochal thinker of 'technology' is always already appropriated by the (Anti-)Event of being-technical of the thinker's present epoch. The epochal thinker is always already appropriated by the (Ant-)Event of being-technical *of their own present*, whereby the human World surmounts the Earth. However, upon failing to think about the meaning of this ever-recurring Event, the theoretician (mis)understands the epochal (Anti-)Event of being-technical *of their present* - whereby a human World surmounts the Earth – as presentified essence of Technology. In other words, the epochal thinker (mis)understands the meaning of the ever-recurring Event of being-technical *in terms of its present self-concealment* (i.e. Anti-Event of being). Hence the vicious circularity of the epochal Event of (mis)thinking about being-technical:

> *epochal thinkers have recurrently (mis)understood the essence/meaning/truth of 'technology' (i.e. ever-recurring Event of being-technical) in terms of the epochal (un)truth that the 'technology' of*

their own present is *(misunderstood as): in terms of the (thinker's) present self-concealment of the Event of being-technical, whereby a human World surmounts the Earth*.

The epochal theorist (mis)understands the meaning of the ever-recurring Event of being-technical in terms of *present* humanity's 'technological' fight against difference: an *instrument* under human control that, by its very essence, *must* destroy the difference of not-being between World and Earth. This is the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about the question concerning (the essence of) 'technology', with the next sections focusing on its modern occurrence. Before proceeding with the analysis, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the word 'technology'.

4.3. A clarification on the Event of 'being-creative', '*techne*', or 'technology'

For the early Heidegger, so-called art, equipment, language, thinking are *different* gifts of the *same* ek-static condition that defines Dasein, i.e. care. All of them are the prerogative of the only being that can make of (its) being a question. Similarly, the later Heidegger insists that the Event of creation (henceforth Event of 'being-creative') is not to be reduced only to the making of the crafts (i.e. equipment) and fine arts (OWA; 57; QCT, 9-14; BDT, 157). The essence of creation is *aletheia*: a poietic revealing of beings *as* beings or their bringing forth out of concealment into unconcealment. This is 'technology' or '*techne*' as the Event of being-creative, which belongs to so-called technical and artistic creation, as much as the creation of human thinking and speaking. In fact, the very distinction between *acts* of creation is misleading: the Event of being-creative should not be mistaken for presentified events or beings (*Seiende*). This is the furthest human language can go: so-called equipment, art, language, theory, etc. are all technological "mode[s] of *aletheuein*" (QCT, 13) or *different* gifts of the *same* epochal Event of being-creative. Alternatively, all of them belong to the *same difference*. In summary:

what makes Dasein different from other beings is its being-creative (early Heidegger):being appropriated by the Event of being-creative, techne, or technology (later Heidegger).

This is to avoid a temptation that both common parlance and theory have long succumbed to: the restriction of 'technology' (i.e. Event of being-creative or *techne*) to equipment (e.g. factory machinery).

4.4. The modern fight against the objective abyss of not-being

OWA provides a brief overview of the epochal sendings of being: the Greek, Medieval and Modern epochs (OWA, 74). The latter epoch is the subject of AWP, where Heidegger investigates the modern Event of being as World Picture. This is the modern giving of the gift of 'objective' presence, which conceals itself in metaphysical thinking in terms of the 'objective' present. Having identified experimental science as the Event that defines modern metaphysics (AWP, 117), Heidegger proceeds to investigate the scientific (mis)understanding of being qua *representation*. This is a redevelopment of BT's discussion of the theoretical discovery of presence-at-hand (BT, 345) [362]: the ground of the scientific (mis)understanding of being lies in the pre-projection of a set of rules that predetermine what can *be* visible *as* physical event (AWP, 119). This visibility is pre-guaranteed by a set of criteria that the event must satisfy in order to be objectively measurable or representable *as* a physical event (AWP, 120)**.** Modern physics is indeed exact or correct; however, its correctness is not to mistaken for truthness: physical nature is objectively correct because of the scientific pre-projection of the being of beings *as* objectively measurable (AWP, 120-121). In the scientific pre-projection of nature as *representable objectivity* lies the (mis)understanding of being that grounds the epoch of the World Picture, whereby objective correctness is mistaken for truthness.

At the time of Modernity, the epochal Event of truth (*aletheia*) as Picture is forgotten as the "certainty of the representation": the objective correspondence between statement and reality (representational truth) (AWP, 143). Paradoxically, the epoch of modern science, i.e. the champion of objectivity, is the most extreme instance of subjectivism (AWP, 128):

> "This objectifying of whatever is, is accomplished in a setting-before, a representing, that aims at bringing each particular being before it in such a way that man who calculates can be sure, and that means be certain, of that being" (AWP, 127).

Modern Dasein derives the conditions of being from its own objective position as subject*:* beings can *be* only via a "settting-before" (AWP, 127) that brings them to stand before the subject *as* 'representable objects' (*Gestell*) (AWP, 132). This is the *meaning* of modern metaphysics, namely the meaning of the Event of being *as* Picture (AWP, 131):

> *the meaning of modern metaphysics, i.e. the modern Event of (mis)thinking,* is *the (Anti-)Event of being as Picture: everything, in order to be, must be brought to stand before the subject as (its) Picture. Beings* are *(misunderstood to be) only insofar as a human 'subject' can 'represent' their 'objective' being: set the being of beings before itself as 'object'.*

The paradigm of the modern *Gestell* of representation is contained in the procedure of the scientific experiment, which pre-projects or anticipates the unfolding of a series of physical events *as* objective repeatability (AWP, 120-121). The anticipatory representing of modern science should not be mistaken for BT's authentic future (i.e. anticipation). Scientific objectivisation is indeed a mode of the temporalization of time: the modern Event of time-space extending. However, the temporalisation of time is levelled down by an objectifying *making present* for which past, present and future are 'objective' points, i.e. a succession of present *nows* in linear time. For instance, the past of the historical sciences is an objective point in time and space that the historian can set before itself or represent (i.e. modern *Gestell*) (AWP, 123).

Upon representing the being of beings as objects, modern Dasein *(mis)understands* being as an unthinkable present being (Objectivity) that can be made present again in the objective here and now of the human experiment. It is crucial to see how LH describes Modernity's subject-object relation:

> "Man is never first and foremost man on the hither side of the world, as a "subject," whether this is taken as "I" or "We." Nor is he ever simply a mere subject which always simultaneously is related to objects, so that his essence lies in the subject-object relation. Rather, before all this, man in his essence is ek-sistent into the openness of Being, into the open region that clears the "between" within which a "relation" of subject to object can "be"" (LH, 252).

Heidegger is saying that the subject-object relation is a metaphysical (mis)understanding of the ontological difference. Upon presentifying the being (*Sein*) of beings (*Seiende*) as representable Objectity (i.e. modern deity), the modern thinker (mis)understands the epochal togetherness of being (*Sein*) and modern human being (*Seiendes*) (i.e. the setting before of the Event of Picture) as empty abyss between subject and object. Hence the modern return of the ever-recurring paradox of not-being: the re- of re-presentation.

The modern representation is a most ambiguous Event: the "interplay between subjectivism and objectivism" (AWP, 128) that informs the "absurd" Event of modern (mis)thinking (AWP, 133). The modern representation is the Epochal Event of World Picture that, upon presenting the thinker with the gift of 'objective' presence, conceals itself in terms of the 'objective' present. Through the empirical experiment, the modern scientist claims to have discovered an 'objective' order of Nature, i.e. a being that *is* independently from Dasein: Objectivity. However, only through the human setting before of the scientific 'representation' can beings be brought into presence *as* 'objects' (metaphysical correspondence of representational truth). This absurdity bespeaks of the ever-recurring viciousness of traditional (mis) thinking, which fails to think about the ontological difference between human being (*Seiendes*) and being (*Sein*) as Event that *appropriates* Dasein.

Heidegger further describes this absurdity upon comparing the Medieval and Modern (mis)understandings of being (AWP, 147-153). Modern humanity believes to have freed itself from its bonds to Christian doctrine. Whereas in the Middle Ages everything *is* (misunderstood to be) only insofar it has been created by God (*ens creatum*), for the first time in history humanity derives the conditions of truth from itself (AWP, 148). This principle of certain knowledge is expressed in the Cartesian thinking about the "*ego cogito, ergo sum*": the objective "co-presence" of the subject to itself (AWP, 149). This metaphysical principle provides modern Dasein with the certainty of its representational truths, hence paving the way for the subjectification of the Earth as Picture of the human World (AWP, 139). However, this is not to say that Descartes created Modernity, like a God who has imposed its "ideology" over the rest of humanity (AWP, 152).

Heidegger interprets Descartes' thinking as modern Event of (mis)thinking, which conceals itself in the objectivist language of Cartesian philosophy. Heidegger runs his hermeneutic test against Descartes' language until he identifies Descartes's failure to think about the condition of his own thinking about the "*cogito ergo sum*" (AWP, 148-149). The latter principle is the "foundation" that must ensure that the "certainty" of truth (i.e. "the knowable") is "self-certainty" or "certain from out of itself" *as* Objectivity (i.e. objective self-presence of the ego) (AWP, 148-49). "And yet", this self-certain foundation must contemporaneously guarantee the certainty of *Descartes' own knowledge* about its self-certainty (AWP, 149). Contained in the vicious circularity of Descartes' (mis)thinking is the paradoxical meaning of Modern thinking as re-presentation:

upon requiring the truth of the 'cogito ergo sum' to be self-certain for the sake of the certainty of Descartes' thinking, the self-certainty of this truth has become untenable or unthinkable: Descartes' thinking moves into the vicious circularity of traditional (mis) thinking. Descartes has delegated free thinking to an unthinkable present being or deity: Objectivity as a deity that is(-not) only for the sake of Descartes' circular (mis)thinking.

The Cartesian '*cogito ergo sum*' is appropriated by, in fact *is*, the modern (Anti-)Event of Picture that, upon appropriating Descartes' thinking, conceals itself as '*ego cogito, ergo ego sum*'. Descartes' *setting before* of truth as Picture (i.e. Event of modern thinking) conceals itself from Descartes' own thinking as 'objective self-certainty' between thinking and thought (i.e. presentification/self-concealment of Event of modern thinking). This is therefore the (Anti-)Event of being or Event of (mis)thinking that defines the viciousness of Modern metaphysics:

> "The something certain is a principle that declares that, simultaneously (conjointly and lasting an equal length of time) with man's thinking, man himself is indubitably co-present, which means now is given to himself. Thinking is representing, setting before, is a representing relation to what is represented (idea as perceptio)" (AWP, 149).

Descartes fails to understand the possibility of his own thinking about the '*cogito ergo sum*': Descartes is oblivious to the epochal meaning of his own thinking, which he has inherited from the epochal (Anti-)Event of being of his own epochal world. Only through a pre-projection of the being of beings as 'objects', may Descartes (mis)understand *his own* thinking in objectivist terms as an operation of the *cogito* that, paradoxically, re-presents an objectively self-certain truth:

> "Such a thing could happen, however, only insofar as man decided, by himself and for himself, what, for him, should be "knowable" and what knowing and the making secure of the known, i.e., certainty, should mean" (AWP, 148).

The meaning of Descartes' (mis)thinking (about his own thinking) *is* the modern (Anti)Event of being as Picture that conceals itself in the objectivist terms of '*ego cogito, ergo ego sum'*. This is not to say that Descartes created

Modernity, but that Descartes failed to think about the meaning of the same (Anti)Event of Picture that, upon appropriating his thinking, enabled him to forget it and presentify it in objectivist terms:

> "That which is does not come into being at all through the fact that man first looks upon it, in the sense of a representing that has the character of subjective perception. Rather, man is the One who is looked upon by that which is; he is the one who is-in company with itself gathered toward presencing, by that which opens itself" (AWP, 131).

In the objective self-presence of the Cartesian subject Heidegger sees opening the metaphysical difference of Modernity. This is the unthinkable abyss between beings that the representational *cogito* desperately attempts to fill or destroy: the subject-object relation. Modern science makes the same mistake as Descartes', as it remains oblivious to its own essence (i.e. Event of World Picture), which has always already concealed itself in terms of the 'objective' present (SR, 156; 174-177). *In its own terms, i.e. in terms of modern (mis)thinking,* this forgetfulness leads to the unresolvable paradox of an objective order of Nature that *is* independently from the human being, and contemporaneously something that the representation of the scientific experiment brings into presence again. This paradox remains unaddressed by the modern scientist, who wishes to have *nothing* to do with nothingness (WM), hence confusing the pre-projected (vicious) correctness of their methodological for Truth (AWP, 119-126).

> *The meaning of modern (mis)thinking is the (Anti-)Event of Picture: 'representation' as the epochal giving of the gift of 'objective' presence (*Event of Picture*), which has always already concealed itself terms of the gift, i.e. in terms of the 'objective' present* (Anti-Event of Picture).

As being is (mis)understood as an unthinkable present being (*Seiende*) or deity (i.e. Objectivity), the ontological difference between being and beings is forgotten as empty gap between 'subject' and 'object'. As per the next section, this is the difference of the subject-object relation that the thinker of technology desperately fights against.

4.5. Modern technology and the instrumental fight against the abyss

At the time of Modernity, technology is theoretically (mis)understood as an application of the objective truth of science, namely as a representation of the scientific representation itself (AWP, 116). And yet, Heidegger warns us

that the essence of machine technology does not lie in the application of modern science to praxis (AWP, 116). Alternatively, "the essence of technology is by no means anything technological" (QCT, 4). As already discussed, the truth of technology is not reducible to equipment, but must be understood as epochal Event of being-creative or truth that conceals itself. As per the previous section, at the time of Modernity, the epochal event of being(-creative) conceals itself to metaphysical thinking in the representational terms of objectivity:

> "Machine technology remains up to now the most visible outgrowth of the essence of modern technology, which is identical with the essence of modern metaphysics" (AWP, 116).

The essence of machine technology is the essence of modern metaphysics: the meaning of modern 'practices' of technological production (i.e. factory machinery) and 'theories' of technology is the *same* (Anti-)Event of being-creative as Picture. The modern World exploits the Earth from which its technology originates as matter (*setting forth*) and in which it returns (*setting back*) as "objectivation of nature" (OWA, 46). As the belongingness of modern technology to the Earth conceals itself, the way is paved for the World's instrumental conquest of the Earth as objectified/subjectified Nature of modern physics. However, *existentially*, modern Dasein becomes master of nothing. Not for nothing Modernity's techno-scientific exploitation of nature is a matter of "impotence of will" (OWA, 46).

Modern technologies of transportation and communication (e.g. train, airplane, radio, cinema, TV, etc) serve Dasein to make spatio-temporal distances *disappear* ("annihilation of great distances") (AWP, 135). Yet, the "*distancelessness*" brought about by modern technologies results in no *authentic* nearness (DD, 163). The "dominance of distanceless" (DD, 179) brought about by modern technology partakes in the technoscientific measuring of Earth as Picture of the human World (DD, 164). This is the modern giving of the gift of Modern presence that contemporaneously denies itself: "the failure of nearness to materialize" (DD, 179).

The objective not-being that modern technology *seems* to be fighting against casts the "invisible shadow" of the "incalculable", which remains "denied to us", metaphysical human beings of Modernity (AWP, 135-136). In other words, Modern Dasein uses technology to escape from the nothingness (death) that pervades its existence (AWP, 154). This nothingness is incalculable, i.e. *not*-accessible, only insofar as one remains within the objectivist horizons of modern (mis)thinking, which (mis)understands the unsayable belongingness of World and Earth as a

quantifiable/objective difference. When thought about in terms of the Event of being, the *not*-calculable is the mysterious condition whereby beings can come out of *concealment* into *unconcealment* (*aletheia*):

> *to modern (mis)thinking, the essence of technology conceals itself as instrument for the fight against the objective abyss of not-being. This is a presentification of the (Anti-)Event of Picture, whereby the modern World surmounts the Earth: a (mis)understanding of the essence of technology in terms of the (modern thinker's) present (self-concealment of being-creative).*

Modern theorists of technology have merely put into words the modern (Anti-)Event of being(-creative), whereby the human Earth is exploited/surmounted/set before the human World as its Picture. The essence of technology is theorised as instrumentalist connection between objective points in time and space: the very relation between 'subject'/'society' (objectified world) and 'object'/'nature' (objectified Earth). Thus (mis)theorised as *objective* instrument, the theorists expect, in fact demand, that technology fills or destroy an abyssal difference between objectified beings: "the extended *emptiness* of the purely quantitative" (AWP, 135). The circular difference between modern World and Earth is forgotten and presentified as objective spatio-temporal gap (modern abyss of not-being) that the human being must annihilate or fill via technology.

As the modern Event of being-creative conceals itself *upon appropriating the objectivist language of the modern thinkers*, the essence of technology is (mis)theorised instrumentally as the subject-object relation itself. The ever-recurring truth of technology (*alethiea*/reliability/Event of Appropriation) is theorised in terms of its present self-concealment: the objective (un)truth of the subject-object relation itself. The theoretician (mis)understands the essence of technology as instrument in the human fight against not-being: the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about being in terms of the (thinker's) present (self-concealment of being).

> *The modern thinker (mis)understands the essence of technology in terms of the (un)truth of Picture that modern technology is (misunderstood as): Objectivity.*

This vicious circle is the theoretical continuation of technical Dasein's recurring desire for an artefact that ceases fixing into place the truth (*aletheia*) of the strife World-Earth and *is* Truth (e.g. modern Objectivity) as instrumental

‘filling’ of the metaphysical correspondence between World and Earth (e.g. subject-object relation). Theoretical Dasein betrays a desire for an artefact that ceases revealing the real and *is* the Real or alternatively, ceases coming-into-presence and *is* Presence (e.g. objective Instrument). Once again, this is the theoretical making present of being: a fight against the difference that betrays a desire for metaphysical identity. Alternatively, this is a pointless attempt to be-in the unachievable Present. Whereas in Modernity this occurred in terms of the (un)truth of Objectivity, at the time of delivering QCT in the early 1950s, Heidegger believes the Event of (mis)thinking about the question concerning (the essence/meaning of) technology has undergone an epochal turn.

4.6. The epochal turn of Enframing

Neither in AWP nor in OWA had the concept of Enframing entered Heidegger’s thinking yet. For this, one must await three lectures delivered between 1949 and 1955: SR, TT, and QCT. The term “Enframing” names an epochal sending of being that follows the Picture: “the destining of the coming to presence of being itself” (TT, 37). SR identifies a “distinction between epochs” that sets apart classical and atomic physics (SR, 172):

> “ […] the way in which in the most recent phase of atomic physics even the object vanishes also, and the way in which, above all, the subject-object relation as pure relation thus takes precedence over the object and the subject, to become secured as standing-reserve, cannot be more precisely discussed in this place” (SR, 173).

Heidegger has identified a “distinction”, whereby Modern objectness “changes into” something *different*: “the constancy of the Standing Reserve” (SR, 173). SR does not proceed to further examine this change because it has already been discussed in QCT (SR, 173). Although QCT makes it abundantly clear that something has changed about the epochal giving of being, it continues referring to the epoch of Enframing as “modern”. The reason is straightforward. As per SR, Heidegger identifies the new sending of being upon noticing a difference between classical physics and the atomic physics of *his own* present. In other words, Enframing is the present epoch in which Heidegger finds himself at the time of delivering QCT. In the early 1950s, Heidegger, who has spent his entire life destroying the meaning of modern metaphysics, is positioned right in the midst of this epochal Turn. Using a spatial metaphor with a Foucauldian imprinting, a new grid is sliding over the modern one, without taking it over yet:

> "That which has the character of destining moves, in itself, at any given time, toward a special moment that sends it into another destining, in which, however, it is not simply submerged and lost" (TT, 37).

Here the thesis agrees - albeit in different terms - with Dreyfus and Verbeek (Section 2.10):

> *although Heidegger refers to the Event of Enframing as 'modern', he has noticed the turn into a new epoch.*

At this point, the discussion is not ready to follow Dreyfus and Verbeek and assess whether Enframing has survived, so to speak, until their/our present. Heidegger's epochal distinction should not be misunderstood as a historiographical tool for the division of history in objective spans of time. The concept of epoch must be thought in terms of epochal sending/ Event of being. It has been seen extensively that the latter always already appropriates the language of the epochal thinker, hence Heidegger's interpretation of the meaning of an epochal sending via (destruction of) the theories of epochal thinkers (e.g. Descartes). For this reason, it is premature to investigate whether Enframing is the Event of *our* present epoch. In fact, what is interrogated here is something else: the meaning of 'Enframing', which Dreyfus and Verbeek have interpreted - in opposition to readiness-to-hand - as a corrupted form of interactivity. Let us stick with QCT and interpret what makes Enframing *different* from the preceding epoch of Picture.

4.7. The double danger of Enframing: from modern "objectness" into the "objectlessness" of the Standing Reserve

As per Heidegger's clarification in the addendum to OWA, QCT continues thinking about technology as Event of being-creative that appropriates Dasein upon setting in place the strife between World and Earth (OWA, 83). In other words, Heidegger continues thinking about the self-concealment of the essence technology in terms of the World's surmounting of the Earth. The novelty of QCT lies in noticing a *different* surmounting: a turn from modern humanity's subjective setting forth of the Earth as Picture, to the World's "challenging" ('*Herausfordern'*) setting forth of the Earth as Standing Reserve (QCT, 31). QCT exposes a different epochal Event of being-creative, which is the return of the same giving of the gift of presence that conceals itself. What makes the epoch of Enframing different is its being the "supreme danger" (QCT, 26-27) or a somewhat twofold/double danger:

> "Enframing disguises the nearness of world that nears in the thing. Enframing disguises even this, its disguising […]" (TT, 46)

Heidegger provides several examples of new technologies that relate to the Earth via "another kind of setting-in-order": no longer via the subjectifying setting forth of the Modern Picture but via a setting forth that "challenges forth" (QCT, 15). Among the new technologies of Heidegger's present, which challenge forth the Earth as Standing Reserve, QCT focuses on: the airplane, atomic bomb, hydroelectric plant and industrial agriculture (QCT, 14-16).[19] The power plant uses up the stream of the river, entrapping its energy for the production of electricity; similarly, the soil of the field is exploited to extract coal, with its burning ordered to provide the human world with heating; the warmth of the sun itself is now exploitable for the production of electricity (QCT, 14-16). Presently, the human World sets/challenges forth the Earth via "stockpiling" (QCT, 15). The being of everything no longer gives itself to the human World as Picture (*Vorhanden*) but as Standing-Reserve (*Bestand*):

> "Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [*Bestand*]" (QCT, 17).

The Event of being as Standing-Reserve is the return of a different - yet the same ever-recurring - Event of Appropriation whereby "the real reveals itself" (QCT, 24). Heidegger uses the term "Enframing" ("*Ge-stell*") to name the Event of Appropriation that pulls in the humanity of Heidegger's own present: everything *is* only insofar as it can stand by and *always* be available for *future* needs of a human World (QCT, 19). Once again, the term *Ge-stell* (Enframing) is a redevelopment of the thematic of the *Gestalt* of technical creation OWA (OWA, 83) (Section 4.2) . The order coming from the challenging call of Enframing is that the Earth must be available as stockable energy for further human needs (*bestellar*) or *be* Standing-Reserve (*Bestand*). Alternatively, the being of everything must "stand

[19] A decade after QCT, in 1964 Heidegger includes cybernetics among the new technologies of Enframing (EP, 58; 72). In fact only a couple of years after QCT, in 1957 Heidegger had already combined his critique of the atomic bomb with a critique of the "inessential" calculations of the computer (IP, 41).

by", "be immediately at hand", "be on call for a further ordering" (QCT, 17). Here, Heidegger is informing of the epochal difference of the supreme or *double* danger of Enframing:

> *in Heidegger's present epoch, the Event of time-space extending or the presencing of beings is ordered to be humanly controllable: to freeze off and be ready for technological reactivation.*

At the time of Enframing, the being of beings no longer gives itself as Picture (*Vorhanden)* but as Standing Reserve (*Bestand*). The difference is crucial to grasp the epochal difference of Enframing:

> "The coal that has been hauled out in some mining district has not been supplied in order that it may simply be present somewhere or other. It is stockpiled; that is, it is on call, ready to deliver the sun's warmth that is stored in it" (QCT, 15).

The circular being of beings no longer gives itself as Picture or, in metaphysical thinking, as 'objective' point in time and space ("present somewhere or other") (QCT, 15). At the time of Enframing, the clearing or coming-into-presence of beings is not presentified by a subject that (mis)thinks to have the paradoxical power to make the being of everything present again in the objective present (i.e. representation). The temporalization of time itself, i.e. the very *coming-into-presence* of beings conceals itself as a *supply* or *resource* (Standing-Reserve) that Dasein can order (*challenge forth* or *enframe*) at its own will. As discussed in the next session:

> *as the giving of the gift of presence as Standing Reserve conceals itself, the challenging difference between being and beings is theoretically (mis)understood. Among the physicists of Heidegger's present, the mutual Event of challenging forth (i.e. Enframing) is presentified as a controllable subject-object relation* (SR, 173) *and posited as the Truth of the Event of being-creative.*

4.8. The Event of (mis)thinking of Enframing: the interactional (mis)understanding of being

Heidegger identifies the turn of Enframing via destruction of the language of the physics of his present. Although the atomic physicists continue (mis)understanding Nature as something that requires setting upon through calculation,

this is no longer via Modern representation. The orderable system of physics as objective Nature has changed. A new concept of causality, i.e. truth, has replaced Modernity's (mis)understanding of *aletheia* as objective correspondence between subject and object:

> "It seems as though causality is shrinking into a reporting- a reporting challenged forth- of standing-reserves that must be guaranteed either simultaneously or in sequence. To this shrinking would correspond the process of growing resignation that Heisenberg's lecture depicts in so impressive a manner" (QCT, 23).

Heidegger expresses admiration for Werner Heisenberg's "The Representation of Nature in Contemporary Physics", a lecture from 1954 that predates QCT by one year (Heisenberg, 1958). Heisenberg has also noticed a change in the new thinking of atomic physicists: the object of scientific investigation is no longer (understood as) the Objective Nature that Newtonian physics could represent (1958, 99-100). Atomic physicists no longer intend to represent an objective reality, i.e. the occurrence of the particles in objective space and time (i.e. the particles "in themselves") (1958: 100). Representable objectivity has been replaced with a different "reality concept": "endless chain of discussions" between scientists and Nature (1958, 100). The latter is no longer "nature 'as such'" - i.e. Objectivity that *is* (meant to be) independently from the human being - but a "link" in the discussion (1958: 100). Present physicists have reacted against the paradox of Modern (mis)thinking seen in the previous sections: Nature *is* independently from the human being, and yet contemporaneously, Objectivity that the scientist re-presents. The physics of Heisenberg's present has rejected the Modern view of Nature as representable objectivity, and redefined it as product of "endless processes [of] interaction" with the human scientist (1958: 100):

> "The familiar classification of the world into subject and object, inner and outer world, body and soul, somehow no longer quite applies, and indeed leads to difficulties. In science, also, the object of research is no longer nature in itself but rather nature exposed to man's questioning, and to this extent *man here also meets himself*" (1958: 104-105, italics my emphasis).

For the atomic physicist, there are no longer a separate subject and object (Modernity). Both *are* (understood to be) only through an *endless process of interaction*. In other words, the scientist of Heisenberg's present (mis)understands

the being of subject and object as (inter-)relational. In fact, Heidegger describes the turn of thinking from the "objectness "of World Picture into "the constancy of the standing reserve" in the same terms (SR, 173):

> "The subject-object relation thus reaches, for the first time, its pure "relational," i.e., ordering, character in which both the subject and the object are sucked up as standing-reserves. That does not mean that the subject object relation vanishes, but rather the opposite: it now attains to its most extreme dominance, which is predetermined from out of Enframing. It becomes a standing-reserve to be commanded and set in order" (SR, 173).

To present (mis)thinking (QCT), the subject-object relation has reached dominance, hence defining the being of subject and object alike upon becoming an orderable resource (i.e. Standing Reserve). In Modernity, the relation or *difference* was (mis)understood as subject-activated, and yet the being of the object was (mis)understood as objectivity: a deity that is (mis)understood to *be* independently from the human representation. Now instead, the subject is (mis)understood to *be* only in relation to the object and the object *is* (mis)understood to *be* only in relation to the subject. The subject seems to have lost its former centrality. And yet, as highlighted by both Heisenberg and Heidegger, the turn in thinking they are witnessing in their own present bespeaks of the very opposite Event.

In Modernity everything was (mis)understood to be only insofar as it could be brought to stand before the subject as representable object: modern thinkers such as Descartes (mis)thought that they could make present again (i.e. re-present) a separate object that *was* (mis)understood to be autonomously from human thinking itself. Instead, in the new Event of thinking destroyed by Heidegger, the being of everything is (mis)understood to be only through inter-relation with human thinking itself. In other words, everything *is* (mis)understood to be only via "interaction" with the thinker (Heisenberg): everything is allowed to *be* only insofar the subject has *interactively created* it. This is the meaning of the *double* danger of Enframing, whereby *humanity meets itself everywhere* (Heisenberg, 1958: 104-105; QCT, 27). The Event of being-creative is (mis)understood as a humanly controllable Standing Reserve of inter-relations: "a reporting challenged forth of standing-reserves that must be guaranteed either simultaneously or in sequence" (QCT, 23).

As per Heidegger's critique of the atomic physicists' new concept of causality (i.e. truth), the thinker is oblivious to the meaning of their own (mis)thinking about the beings of beings (QCT, 23). Understood as Event of (mis)thinking, atomic physics *is* the double danger of Enframing, whereby being denies itself as a humanly

controllable *stretch* of inter-relations: a *supply, resource or Standing Reserve* that theoretical Dasein interactively *creates* (i.e. set in place, orders, commands, challenges forth, enframes). The appropriating Event of being or *aletheia*, is theoretically (mis)understood as a humanly controllable stretch of inter-relations between subject and object to be challenged forth, stockpiled, enframed by Dasein:

> *in Heidegger's present epoch, the subject-object relation has achieved dominance as thinkers (mis)think that subject and object alike come into being through a mutual relation or inter-relation (Heisenberg's "interaction") that the subject itself* creates, *namely sets in order as a resource (Heidegger's challenging forth). The thinkers of Heidegger's present no longer display a representational but an interactional (mis)understanding of being. This is the (mis)understanding whereby beings come into presence at the* interface *of inter-relations with the human being.*

The thinkers of Heidegger's present no longer (mis)understand the epochal Event of time-space extending as a succession of objective points (i.e. modern causality) but as: endless process of interaction (Heisenberg) or freezable reporting challenged forth of standing-reserves (Heidegger). Whereas in Modernity *energeia*, i.e. the Event of time-space extending, was forgotten as mere objective point (i.e. presentification of Picture), the new physics of Heidegger's present (mis)understands it as stockable *energy* that comes into presence through clashes of inter-relations between inter-related beings (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve). Temporality, i.e. the circular being-stretched-into-itself of the Event of truth, has come to be (mis)understood as a humanly controllable *stretch* of energy that comes into presence at the *inter-face* of *endless* inter-relations between interactive beings:

> *the new metaphysics of Heidegger's present has turned from a (mis)understanding of being as* Object *(i.e. presentification of Event of being as* Picture*) to being as freezable stretch or* Interface *(i.e. presentification of Event of being as* Standing Reserve*) of inter-relations as* Interactivity. *As the giving of the gift of 'interactive' presence (i.e. Event of Standing Reserve) is forgotten, the thinker (mis)understands the meaning of the ever-recurring Event of being in terms of the 'interactional' present (i.e. Anti-Event of Standing Reserve): in terms of the present (un)truth of Enframing as Interactivity.*

This is no longer Modernity's *representational* making present of being, namely the subject's representation of the objective future/past in the objective here and now. This is instead an *interactional* presentification of being or a turn from Objectivity to Interactivity:

> *differently, yet similarly, to the modern thinker's presentification of the Event of Picture as Objectivity, the theoretical Dasein of Heidegger's present presentifies the Event of Enframing as* Interactivity. *Being (Sein) is once again (mis)theorised as an unthinkable being or* deity*:* Interface. *The meaning of the Event of (mis)thinking about technology as Interface* is *the same (Anti-)Event of Enframing that thinkers fail to think about and yet, has always appropriated their (mis)thinking in terms of the 'interactional' present: the (mis)understanding of being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing.*

In summary, the physicists of Heidegger's present have (mis)theorised the meaning of being-creative in terms of the Anti-Event/self-concealment of their present epoch of Enframing: in terms of the (un)truth that present technology such as the atomic bomb *is* (*misunderstood as*): Interactivity. The challenging belonging together of being and human being (i.e. ontological difference) that informs the Event of Enframing is forgotten, whilst always already appropriating the metaphysical thinker as presentified essence of everything qua 'interactivity'. The ontological difference is forgotten: the thinker has presentified it *as* a fluid Inter-face that *is* in-between a challenging back-and-forth of inter-relations. This is the return, in Heidegger's own present, of the ever-recurring vicious circularity that appropriates the thinker of technology:

> *the new physicists (mis)think about the essence of technology (i.e. Event of being-creative) in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing that the technology of their own present* is *(misunderstood as): in terms of the 'interactional' present of the (un)truth of Interactivity.*

The thesis is nearly ready to close its first circle of doubt. It has been established that the early and later philosophies of technology are not meant to be read in opposition. Albeit from two different viewpoints, the passage about the

ready-to-hand hammer (BT) and the Event of being-creative (OWA; AWP; QCT) are meant to describe the same ambiguous Event that leads to the concealment of the ontological difference. This is the same (Anti-)Event of (un)truth that has always already appropriated the (mis)thinking of theorists of technology, who have (mis)understood/presentified the essence of technology in terms of the present (self-concealment of being-creative).

It has been established that in Modernity this (mis)understanding occurred in terms of the 'objective' present (self-concealment/Anti-Event of being as Picture). Instead, in the epoch of Enframing of Heidegger's present, this (mis)understanding occurs in terms of the 'interactional' present (self-concealment/Anti-Event of being as Standing Reserve). And yet, Dreyfus and Verbeek believe that the two philosophies of technology refer to two different forms of '*interactivity'*. By this point, the doubt has grown too strong to be ignored: present readers of Heidegger (i.e. Dreyfus; Verbeek; alternative designers; Bardini) *seem* to have misread Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the same (un)truth that Heidegger had meant to critique: in the 'interactional' terms of the (un)truth of Enframing (i.e. Interactivity).

However, these thinkers deserve the benefit of the doubt: the (un)truth of Enframing (i.e. Interactivity) may not conceal itself behind their interactional terminology. The problem does not have to do with the terms 'interaction', 'interactivity', 'interface', which - as further discussed in Section 5.3 - have recurred throughout human history. What is at stake is the *meaning* of Dreyfus and Verbeek's conceptualisation of 'interactivity'. Chapter 5 can proceed to close the circle of doubt and interpret the present reading of Heidegger's philosophy of technology in its own Heideggerian terms: as epochal Event of (mis)thinking about the essence of technology, with the meaning of its 'interactional' language destroyed via the hermeneutic method of being-historical thinking.

Chapter 5. Destruction of the first circle of doubt via being-historical thinking: the interactional (mis)reading of Heidegger's philosophy as double danger of Enframing

5.1. Dreyfus and Verbeek's validation of Heidegger's critique of Enframing via interactional (mis)reading

As per Section 2.19, both Dreyfus and Verbeek have separated Heidegger's early analytic of equipment from the later philosophy of Enframing. In Dreyfus' *Commentary*, the discovery of readiness-to-hand is the human condition of immersion in *practical* dealings with technical artifacts that the Cartesian tradition misunderstands in mentalist terms:

> "Heidegger's examples start with involved acting in the world, using things such as hammers and doorknobs. […] To see this, we must first overcome the traditional interpretation that theory is prior to practice. Only then will we be ready to describe our involved, practical dealings with things and what they reveal" (Dreyfus, 1991: 46).

One already gets a doubt that Dreyfus' hermeneutic realism is flawed. As per Heidegger's own clarification in KM, the intention of the early analytic was not to study how we *practically use* a fork and knife or, in this case, hammers and doorknobs. *Pace* Dreyfus, Heidegger's point of contention is not to determine which comes first: practice or theory. So-called practice and theory are different gifts of the same ek-static condition that defines Dasein's care; alternatively, both belong to the same difference: the ever-recurring Event of being-creative that appropriates Dasein in a mutual call of Nearness. Similar difficulties (mis)inform Dreyfus' history of equipmental being, which is oblivious to the meaning of its epochal difference/sameness.

As seen in Section 2.10, Dreyfus' history of equipmental being redefines readiness-to-hand as a stage of technological development wherein Dasein is still taking care of things, instead of exploiting them as Standing-Reserve (Dreyfus, 1992: 177). The historical transition from ready-to-hand into Standing Reserve bespeaks of a progressive degeneration of the tool's being. The tool is sucked up in a system whereby everything *is* only insofar it can be at the disposal of a totalitarian system of ordering for ordering sake (1992: 182). Equipment no longer partakes in networks of local practices as ready-at-hand but is sucked in the uniform "interconnectedness" of the postmodern technology of Enframing (1992: 182). Despite this historicisation of readiness-to-hand, here Dreyfus is building on his (mis)reading of the early analytic of BT from *Commentary*, where the relationship between Dasein and world (being-in-the-world) is already defined as "interdependence" and "intertwining":

> “"Subject" and "object," Dasein and world, are ultimately so intimately intertwined that one cannot separate the world from Daseining. "With equal primordiality the understanding projects Dasein's being both upon its "for-the-sake-of-which" and upon significance, as the worldliness of its current world” (1991, 98).

Heidegger is trying to put into words the *circularity* of Dasein’s being-technical. The upon-whics of Dasein’s ek-static projections of being define the *circular* significance of the referential totality (i.e. world), which is always pre-disclosed by Dasein upon discovering beings *as* beings. Instead, Dreyfus *presentifies* the referential totality as a network of “interrelated” practices or “interrelations”:

> “The equipmental whole, I take it, describes the interrelated equipment; the referential whole its interrelations” (1991, 97).

These “interrelated” practices *give* being (*Sein*) to equipment:

> “[...] any given piece of equipment, e.g., a hammer, is what it is in a referential whole which connects it with other equipment, and any use of equipment, e.g., hammering, takes place in an involvement whole that connects it with many ways of being human” (1991, 98).

As “interconnectedness” has *always* defined the being of equipment or Dasein’s being-creative, Dreyfus in fact (mis)understands the essence of equipment *as* “interrelatedness”:

> “The primary point which distinguishes equipment from “mere things” is its thoroughgoing *interrelatedness* […] In other words, what an item of equipment *is* is entirely dependent on how it is incorporated into a total equipment in context” (Dreyfus, 1992: 180 italics my emphasis).

Pace Dreyfus, the hammer does not *receive* its being from the referential whole: the essence of equipment *is not* Interrelatedness (i.e. abstract form or presentified being). As per Heidegger’s own clarification, the objective of the early analytic was not to explain how we practically use, namely ‘interact with’ a fork or knife. Heidegger wanted to

put into words the ek-static condition that enables Dasein to deal with the hammer, namely what makes possible Dasein's being-creative. In the terminology of the *Kehre*, the essence of technology is not Interrelatedness but the circular Event of *techne* whereby the human being fails to set into place the strife between World and Earth. Once again: Dasein's being-creative is not given or *created* by 'interrelatedness'.

In Dreyfus' reading, even Dasein's understanding of being, i.e. ek-static disclosedness to the openness of its there, is subordinated to the inter-related practices that give being to everything: "the understanding of being is in our background practices" (Dreyfus, 1991: 11). Upon making of human *praxis* the central principle of Heidegger's philosophy, Dreyfus goes so far as to claim that Dasein's understanding of being "creates*"* the clearing of being (Dreyfus, 2003: 31). In Heideggerian terms, this is a fatal mistake: Dasein's understanding does not create the clearing but is appropriated by the epochal Event of being(-creative).

A paradox seems to (mis)inform Dreyfus' attempts to critique the technology of his/our present/'postmodern' world, which *Dreyfus himself* has conflated with the epoch of Enframing. Dreyfus seems to have transformed Heidegger's philosophy in a pseudo-anthropology, whereby *the human being encounters itself everywhere* (QCT). As further discussed below, here is the doubt:

> *Dreyfus presentifies the circular belonging together of Dasein and being-creative (i.e. ontological difference) as exchange of "interrelations": "interwining" of subject and object; "interdependence" between Dasein and world. The meaning of Dreyfus' concept of "interrelatedness" is an unthinkable deity: Interrelatedness. Paradoxically, Dreyfus displays an interactional (mis)understanding of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing that Heidegger had meant to critique: Interactivity. Understood in its own Heideggerian terms as epochal Event of (mis)thinking, the meaning of Dreyfus' (mis)reading of Heidegger* is *the double danger of Enframing.*

This doubt is confirmed by Dreyfus' history of equipmental being/technological development, which is (mis)informed by a deep-seated from of presentism: the projection of the past in terms of the present (self-concealment of being). Dreyfus subordinates the history of technology to a formal change in the organisation of inter-related practices:

> "One might say that a culture's understanding of being is its *style* of life manifest in the *way* its everyday practices are coordinated […]" (2003: 31, italics my emphasis).

Dreyfus contends that the postmodern humanity of his own present has moved away from the self-contained and localised networks of pre-Technological societies into the global society of Enframing: the Interconnectedness of Dreyfus' present world is organised as a totalising system that incorporates formerly autonomous networks. As the essence of equipment has *always* been Inter-connectedness, one already gets more than a hint that the present technology of Enframing has finally *overlapped with* the interactional Truth that Technology was *always meant to be* (metaphysical identity). This is the lesson of presentism *par excellence*: Dreyfus' present is the necessary completion of history: the destruction of the difference between Form (i.e. Interactivity) and Reality (i.e. network of interrelated practices) and return of *a* being to itself (metaphysical identity).

The presentism of Dreyfus' historical (mis)thinking reaches a climax in *Being and Power* (Dreyfus, 2003). Here Dreyfus attempts to bring together Heidegger's history of being and Michel Foucault's genealogy of power.[20] On several occasions, the reader is warned about the uniqueness or *difference* of their present/postmodern regime of bio-power (Foucault), which Dreyfus has conflated with the technological world of Enframing (Heidegger):

> "The everyday person to person power relations whose coordination produces the style of any regime of power are, indeed, everywhere. But in earlier regimes of power there were no micropractices. Only disciplinary power works meticulously by ordering every detail. So, while for Foucault all forms of power are bottom up and the understanding of power as emanating from the sovereign or the state misses this important fact, nonetheless bio-power is bottom-up in a new and dangerously totalizing way" (2003: 45).

Dreyfus informs his readers that power has always worked through the coordination of practices. Yet, his/our present power regime is utterly unique as it has fully realised, i.e. *made real*, the Form that power regimes have always been *in potentia*. In other words, the present regime of power has really or truly overlapped with the formal Reality or Truth

[20] At this point, when the power question is still to be addressed, it might difficult for the reader to fully grasp Dreyfus' arguments. The reader is invited to return to this passage after reading Chapter 7, which contains an extensive analysis of Michel Foucault's genealogy of power regimes.

that Power was always meant to be: an abstract form, deity, or being (*Seiendes*) of Dreyfus' own (mis)thinking. Unsurprisingly, Dreyfus stands in awe and confusion before the *realization* of Power-form qua present Reality:

> "This raises a puzzling question: When Foucault describes power as "coming from everywhere" is he describing power in general, i.e. the social clearing, or is he describing bio-power, which is uniquely discrete, continuous and bottom-up?" (2003: 44).

This is indeed a dilemma: a paradox with no solution for it attempts to close an unclosable difference of not-being between mental Form and Reality. This difference is unclosable because it *is* only for the sake of the *vicious circularity* that (mis)informs Dreyfus' historical (mis)thinking. Having pre-projected the whole history of being-creative in terms of the *interactional* present of Enframing, Dreyfus' Present cannot but be the necessary completion of history and return of a being to itself (i.e. Interactivity). And yet, the unclosable/unthinkable gap between Form and Reality cannot but *be* there, forcing Dreyfus's (mis)thinking in vicious circles.

At this point, it is finally explained why Dreyfus misquoted OWA's passage about the history of equipmental being (Dreyfus, 1992: 174-75) (Section 2.10):

> "We are *disregarding* the possibility, however, that differences relating to the essential history of Being may yet also be present in the way equipment *is*" (OWA, 158).

Here Heidegger is exposing his understanding of the history of technological development as *different* repetitions of the *same* epochal Event of being(-creative). However Dreyfus *cannot* understand the meaning of epochal sameness/difference, because he has pre-projected its meaning in terms of the (interactional) present (of Enframing). Once again, sameness/difference is presentified as a gap of not-being between Form and Reality. Similarly, Dreyfus cannot understand that the early analytic of equipment (i.e. ready-to-hand hammer) and the later philosophy of technology (i.e. Enframing) are referring – albeit from different viewpoints - to the same ambiguous Event of being-creative. *In Dreyfus' own terms, i.e. in the Heideggerian terms of being-historical thinking,* Dreyfus' thinking about the history of being-creative *cannot* stand. Therefore, Dreyfus *must* misquote OWA's passage about the history of technological development - and turn its original meaning upside down – in order to (not) make sense of it:

> "Heidegger notes "the possibility that differences relating to the history of Being may also be present in the way equipment *is*." This immediately casts suspicion on the ahistorical transcendental priority given to equipment in *Being and Time*" (Dreyfus, 1992: 174-75).

The doubt is no longer a doubt: *in its own terms,* Dreyfus' hermeneutic *realism* is incapable of gaining a historical understanding of the human being, along with its being-creative (i.e. technological development). His historical (mis)thinking fails to understand the *sameness* and *difference* of the ever-recurring Event of being-creative that conceals itself. This Event is no return of the same interactive Form of inter-related practices, which has come to overlap with Dreyfus' Present (metaphysical identity). Instead, this is the return of the same unsayable Event of being, i.e. the mysterious giving of the gift of presence that conceals itself. Once again, the *difference* between epochal sendings of being has got nothing to do with the gradual closure of a gap of not-being between Form and Reality.

In open disagreement with Dreyfus, Verbeek understands Heidegger's existential analytic of equipment as ahistorical (Verbeek, 2005: 81-83). Whereas Dreyfus attempts to save both the early and later Heidegger by historicizing the former, Verbeek drops the later Heidegger *tout court.* QCT is criticised for leveling down technology to pre-given conditions of production outside of human control (2005: 92). The early Heidegger is celebrated for inserting technical artifacts in meaningful webs of human *interactions*, with the tool-user being free to negotiate inscribed scripts (2005: 82-3) The discovery of "handiness" (i.e. readiness-to-hand) is defined as a matter of "co-shaping" between human being and tool:

> "When things are used, people take up a relation to the world that these things, thanks to their "handiness," coshape. In this coshaping, not only does the human interaction with products have a sensory character, so does the human-world relation that is mediated by the products" (2005: 211).

The meaning of "co-shaping" is Interactivity (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve): the (mis)understanding whereby being comes into presence at the interface of inter-relations (i.e. "coshaping") between inter-related beings. Once again, the early Heidegger did not mean to describe how an individual tool withdraws in invisibility upon being *practically* used in *interaction with* a broader web of human practices. The misreading of the handling of the hammer as practice that interacts with a broader network of inter-related practices is a twofold presentification of being. Practical/interactional (mis)readings of Section 15 presentify Dasein's existence and its existential web of everyday

references, which are no interactive practices but the ek-static upon-whichs of Dasein's circular (mis)understanding of being. Once again, the discovery of readiness-to-hand has got nothing to do with an exchange of inter-relations between interactive subject and object; paradoxically, this is a misreading of the mutual Event of being-creative in terms of the interactional present of Enframing that Verbeek has rejected on theoretical grounds.

As per Heidegger's own clarification, the hammer was an example used to put into words the circularity -*not the Interactivity*- of Dasein's ek-static being(-creative): the condition whereby Dasein can stand before the openness of (its) being and, contemporaneously, forget the truth of this condition in terms of the present(at-hand). Paradoxically, practical/interactional (mis)readings of BT have given full voice to the forgetful (mis)understanding of being in terms of the (interactional) present (of Enframing). As further discussed below:

> *albeit via different routes, both Verbeek and Dreyfus have (mis)understood the meaning of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the same (un)truth that his critique of Enframing had warned us about: Interactivity as metaphysical presentification of the Event of Enframing. Understood as Event of (mis)thinking about the essence of technology, the meaning of the interactional (mis)reading of Heidegger's philosophy* is *the double danger of Enframing.*

Whether QCT's analysis of Enframing is theoretically rejected (Verbeek) or uptaken as a tool of critique (Dreyfus) makes little difference. Its message about humanity's loss of mastery over technology is similarly (mis)interpreted as present/'postmodern' humanity's *inability to gain what it wants*. Paradoxically, the message of QCT is misinterpreted as a critique of humanity's *loss of control* over Interactivity: the same (un)truth or deity that Heidegger had meant to critique as Event of (mis)thinking about Enframing. In this respect, the iconic passage about the forester is one of the main inspirations for the (mis)reading of QCT in interactional terms:

> "The forester who, in the wood, measures the felled timber and to all appearances walks the same forest path in the same way as did his grandfather is today commanded by profit-making in the lumber industry, whether he knows it or not. He is made subordinate to the orderability of cellulose, which for its part is challenged forth by the need for paper, which is then delivered to newspapers and illustrated magazines. The latter, in their turn, set public opinion to swallowing what is printed, so that a set configuration of opinion becomes available on demand" (QCT, 18).

Here Heidegger is not describing Dasein's lack of practical control individual artifacts (Verbeek) nor a network of interrelated practices without a human orderer (Dreyfus). Heidegger never denies that it is the human being who is responsible for revealing the real as Standing Reserve:

> "Who accomplishes the challenging setting-upon through which what we call the real is revealed as standing-reserve? Obviously, man" (QCT, 18).

Nor is Heidegger doubting that technological development is under human guidance:

> "Since man drives technology forward, he takes part in ordering as a way of revealing" (QCT, 18).

That the technology of Enframing masters the humanity of Heidegger's present, does not mean that humanity is failing to obtain what it wants via technological artefacts. Heidegger is not contending that humanity has lost control over technology, insofar as by control one means the technological extraction of a pre-established amount of electricity from the river flow. The meaning of Heidegger's critique is the very opposite: existentially, what makes humanity unfree is precisely its pursuit of technologically-induced control over beings.

Upon providing humanity with the instrument to set the Earth into order (*Gestell*), i.e. to subject it to the needs of a human World, technology *deprives* humanity of freedom. Humanity's lack of authentic mastery over technology is due to precisely to the (mis)understanding of the presencing of beings as a technologically controllable resource (Standing Reserve). *Existentially*, freedom is lost *because* of Dasein's obsessive pursuit of technological control:

> "Since man drives technology forward, he takes part in ordering as a way of revealing. *But the un concealment itself, within which ordering unfolds, is never a human handiwork*" (QCT, 18; italics my emphasis).

In QCT, Heidegger is not doubting whether the humanity of his present can achieve pre-planned objectives via technology. Once again, Heidegger is *not* criticizing humanity's loss of practical control over interaction with individual tools (Verbeek) nor a network of inter-related practices without human orderer (Dreyfus):

the later Heidegger did not mean to critique Enframing as a corrupted form of Interactivity.

Not only does QCT bypass this critique altogether but it shows that it is flawed by the same (mis)understanding of the question concerning technology that Heidegger had meant to critique. Upon asking themselves who or what is in control of technological development, i.e. humanity or technology, Dreyfus and Verbeek are driven by the same premise: humanity *must* be in (interactional) control of its being-creative. Alternatively, the human being must be in technological control over the presencing of everything. Paradoxically, the thinking of the participants in the debate fostered by QCT feeds on the same Event of Enframing that they intend to overcome through "marginal practices" (Dreyfus, 2003) or theoretically invalidate (Verbeek, 2005). Paradoxically, the meaning of QCT's critique of Enframing has come to be *validated by its present (mis)reading*. The interactional (mis)reading of Heidegger's philosophy has given full voice to – and in fact *is* - the *double* danger of Enframing:

> "The unconcealment of the unconcealed has already come to pass whenever it calls man forth into the modes of revealing allotted to him. When man, in his way, from within unconcealment reveals that which presences, he merely responds to the call of unconcealment even when he contradicts it" (QCT, 19).

This passage is not meant to describe humanity's loss of *practical* control over Interactivity. Instead, here Heidegger unknowingly informed us of the paradoxical mistake that would be committed by his present readers:

> *when epochal thinkers attempt to think of an alternative to humanity's present condition of unfreedom, they cannot help but think about the future in terms of the present (self-concealment of being).*

Upon drawing from Heidegger, both Dreyfus and Verbeek have set their theories against modern theories of technology. Dreyfus has interpreted the whole of Heidegger's philosophy in opposition to Descartes; similarly, Verbeek has drawn from a wide array of so-called 'postmodern' thinkers (e.g. Bruno Latour) to undermine modern metaphysics. And yet, once interpreted via being-historical thinking as epochal Event of (mis)thinking about

technology, their (mis)reading of Heidegger has repeated the same mistake of their modern counterparts: the ever-recurring (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present.

In summary, Dreyfus and Verbeek have (mis)understood Heidegger's lessons about the *invisible* hammer of BT and the *self-concealment* of being from QCT. Both thinkers ignore that the early and later Heidegger are referring to the *same* ambiguous Event of being-creative. Neither of them can think about this ambiguity, for they have both presentified the circularity of the Event of appropriation as interactive exchanges of challenging-forths (Standing Reserve). Their (mis)thinking about technology in 'interactional' terms has always already been appropriated by the same (Anti-)Event or (un)truth of Enframing that they (fail to) understand: Interactivity. Paradoxically, Heidegger's very philosophy is presently misread via the metaphysical truth of Enframing. One could hardly think of a more emblematic instance of *double* danger:

> *in our present, the meaning of Heidegger's critique of Enframing is (mis)interpreted in terms of the same double danger that Heidegger had meant to critique: Interactivity as the (un)truth of Enframing, whereby the human being encounters itself everywhere as master of all beings.*

In yet another paradox, an insight of Dreyfus and Verbeek is proven right: *in Heideggerian terms*, the meaning of their 'interactional' present and its 'interactive' media technology *is* indeed Enframing. It is important to understand that this is not *my* claim. As seen before, Heidegger identifies an epochal sending of being via hermeneutic destruction of epochal thinkers' language. This is insofar as epochal thinkers of technology (mis)think about the essence of technology in terms of the (un)truth that the technology of their own present *is* (misunderstood as). Therefore, upon (mis)understanding the essence of technology in interactional terms, i.e. in terms of Interactivity (i.e. presentification of Enframing), Dreyfus and Verbeek *themselves* demonstrate that the meaning of the 'interactive' media technology of their own present is the Event of Enframing. However, this is not because of the *truthness* of their insights about the corrupted 'interactivity' of present media technology. Instead, this is because of the vicious circularity that defines the *correctness* of their arguments about 'interactivity': because of their (mis)understanding of the essence of technology (i.e. Event of being-creative) in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing that the technology of their/our own present *is* (misunderstood as): Interactivity. As seen in the next section, the same paradox (mis)informs the (mis)appropriation of Section 15 among the alternative HCI designers (Section 1.6).

5.2. The HCI designers' theorisation of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' as double danger of Enframing

As seen in Section 1.6, the alternative HCI designers have attempted to think about a *different* form of 'interaction' between Human and Computer, which must overcome the outdated model of mainstream or commercial 'interfaces'. Instead, the alternative designers dream of an interface that adapts itself to the everyday needs of the user upon creating 'feedback loop' of sorts: 'interactive situation' (Suchman); 'embodied interaction' (Dourish); 'autopoietic system' (Winograd and Flores).

Albeit via different routes, the alternative designers have converged toward Heidegger's concept of readiness-to-hand and interpreted it in terms of 'interactivity'. In opposition to the blackboxed design of mainstream interfaces, the ready-to-hand Human-Computer interface merges with the *user's endless interactions of everyday life*. In light of QCT, the doubt cannot but grow stronger. The above concepts of 'feedback loop' seem to presentify Dasein's discovery of readiness-to-hand or the mutual Event of being-creative as a fluid 'interface of inter-relations' (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve) that can be controlled or designed (i.e. challenged forth or enframed) by the human being. Paradoxically:

> *the alternative designers (mis)understand the Event of Dasein's being-creative in the interactional terms of 'feedback loop' as Interactivity: in terms of the same world of Enframing that they (fail to) critique. The designers (mis)understand the essence of technology in terms of the same (un)truth or (Anti-)Event that their philosophical hero had meant to critique. This is the (un)truth of Interactivity as the (Anti-)Event whereby the being of everything conceals itself as humanly controllable resource or (Human-Computer) Interface.*

Across the alternative literature of HCI design, the ek-static discovery of readiness-to-hand and unreadiness-to-hand is presentified as an interactive exchange between human being and tool. This is a presentification of the ek-static projections of Dasein's being in equipmental possibilities: a presentification of Dasein's being-creative in interactional terms. Dasein's circular projection into and return from the in-order-to is what enables the *presencing* of the hammer or alternatively, what enables Dasein to be-creative. In the language of the *Kehre*, the alternative designers have presentified the Event of being-creative or *techne* as interactive exchange between two beings (*Seiende*).

The alternative designers have forgotten the circularity of being-creative and made it present *as* Interactivity: endless exchange of inter-relations between Human and Technology/Computer ('feedback loop'). The difference between being and beings, i.e. the circular belonging together of human being and being-creative, is (mis)understood as a 'resource' or 'user model' (i.e. interactional presentification of Standing Reserve) to be ''managed' (i.e. interactional presentification of Enframing/challenging forth) via 'HCI design' (i.e. interactional presentification of Event of creation).

For the alternative designer, the objective remains to make things comfortable or 'friendly' for the user. The very basic mechanism of everyday unfreedom, i.e. Dasein's immersion in invisible artifacts, is glorified as 'user-friendliness' (i.e. interactional presentification of freedom). The user must always have the 'resources' to recover from disturbances of their 'interaction' (i.e. interactional presentification of unreadiness-to-hand), and comfortably return to efficient 'interaction' with a 'ready-to-hand interface' (i.e. interactional presentification of readiness-to-hand). In Heideggerian terms, Dasein's comfortable immersion in its everyday world is the very first vehicle of (un)freedom: Dasein's pre-ontological (mis)understanding of (its) being(-creative) in terms of the present (beings closets to ourselves). Instead, authentic freedom resides in the individual moment of existential nihilism, whereby Dasein acknowledges the nullity of its being-possible.

In Heideggerian terms, which are the designers' own terms, the conceptualisation of 'ready-to-hand user-friendliness' bespeaks of the very opposite of freedom. This is a state of impotence whereby, instead of being free for the authentic present or Moment, the human being desperately clings to the (interactive) presence of equipmental possibilities. Their alternative theorisation of technology as (Human-Computer) 'interface' that constantly adapts itself to our everyday needs is the ultimate form of blackboxing, insofar as one understands blackboxing *existentially* as Dasein's delegation of choice to the present tool:

> *the alternative designer delegates the achievement of human freedom to a deity, i.e. the technological Interface, which must make our lives easy ad infinitum via endless loop of 'feedback', 'embodied interaction', structural coupling' or Interactivity. As per QCT, the essence of technology or being-creative is (mis)understood as a controllable resource, supply, or Standing Reserve that must freeze off and always be available to satisfy human needs. Paradoxically, it is precisely upon*

providing us with (inauthentic) control over our lives, i.e. moment by moment, that the interfacial technology of Enframing masters us.

Essentially, the objective of the alternative designer is to provide the user with a 'resource' of freedom management. The discovery of readiness-to-hand/unreadiness-to-hand, i.e. Dasein's own being(-creative), has become a 'user model' or 'resource' (Standing Reserve) to be 'managed' by the user moment-by-moment (i.e. challenged forth or enframed). Freedom itself is (mis)understood as *a* being that comes into presence at the interface of inter-relations between designer and user. In other words, the alternative designer (mis)thinks about Dasein's very existence or care as a resource or supply to be commanded and set in order (i.e. enframed):

Dasein's ek-sistential freedom is (mis)understood as a technologically controllable resource (Standing Reserve) to be set in order via design (Enframing). Freedom must always be available as Interface of Interactivity between designer and user, in the same way in which the being of everything else must freeze off and always be available for human reactivation. Upon being savagely (mis)read in interactional terms, Heidegger's early analytic is under the service of the same metaphysics that his later philosophy of Enframing had meant to critique.

The belongingness of human being and being is thus forgotten: the circular difference is misunderstood/presentified as a constant exchange of actions and reactions between inter-related subject and object (Interactivity of 'feedback loop'). 'Feedback loop' is the resource that brings the interactional being of everything into presence and, at the same time, what opens an infra-thin gap to be fought and erased. This is the in-ter of the In-terface: the spatio-temporal gap of not-being between actions and reactions. As the alternative designers fail to think about the coming-into-presence or *poiesis* of technology, they discover the ontological difference as an abyssal gap. This is therefore the meaning of 'feedback *loop'*:

the exchange of inter-relations must be endless *because, otherwise, the designer' thinking would fall into the unresolvable paradox of not-being: the ultrathin in-ter of the unthinkable Interface-*

deity. The alternative designers' 'ready-to-hand interface' (mis)understands the essence of technology as a weapon in humanity's fight against an empty abyss of their own pre-projection.

Finally, it is possible to explain – in Heideggerian terms - the appeal of Heidegger's concept of ready-to-hand '*invisibility'*. As technology is expected to annihilate the interfacial difference of not-being, the 'interface' *must* become invisible upon *overlapping with* the interfacial exchange of inter-relations or Interactivity that Technology is (misunderstood *as*): Interface. Nothing new under the sun, other than the return of a metaphysical desire for unachievable identity between two beings (i.e. interactive Form and interactive Reality) and return of an unthinkable being to itself (Interface). Understood as Event of (mis)thinking about the essence of technology, the alternative designers' (mis)reading of Heidegger bespeaks of the theoretical attempt to be-in the Present, which has *turned* from 'objective' present into 'interactional' present.

The alternative designers critique the corrupted 'interactivity' of present/'interactive' media technology because it anticipates, predetermines or 'abstracts' user 'interactivity'. *Essentially*, what they silently critique is the interfacial gap that mainstream HCI design has left open upon 'abstracting' from the fullness of 'feedback loop': the mainstream designer is the infidel who does not bow before the Truth of Interactivity. For the alternative designer, the objective is to design a technology that *overlaps with* the interfacial exchange between designer's representations and user's interpretations (Interactivity): to design an 'interface' that *is* Interface. As the Event of creation is (mis)understood as Interface of endless exchanges between two inter-related beings (designer and user), technology is given the daunting task of destroying the difference of not-being and *be* one and the same with the presentified Being that technology is (misunderstood as): Interactivity of 'feedback loop'. The alternative designers dream about a technological artefact that ceases revealing the real and *is* (interactive) Reality, ceases coming-into-presence and *is* (interactive) Present, ceases unconcealing truth and *is* (interactive) Truth.

The alternative designers wish to *create* Human-Computer 'Interaction' that no longer abstracts from Interactivity. Instead, their artefacts must *invisibly merge* with the interfacial Being that being-creative *is* (misunderstood as): Interface. Hence the popularisation of an alternative concept of interface invisibility such as Heidegger's concept of readiness-to-hand, which is (mis)interpreted in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. Albeit via so-called *critique*, the alternative designers remain prey of the (mis)understanding whereby the meaning of technology, human being, and freedom is Interactivity:

the meaning of the alternative theorisation of uncorrupted interactivity as Heideggerian readiness-to-hand is the ever-recurring attempt to be-in the (interactional) Present. Paradoxically, Heidegger's hammer has been (mis)appropriated as a weapon in humanity's fight against the abyss of not-being: a resource (Standing Reserve) to think about an artefact that overlaps with or disappears into *the Interactional Reality of the designers' Present (metaphysical identity).*

As *already* contended in Section 2.9 (albeit unknowingly), the (mis)reading of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of 'practical interactivity' bespeaks of the ontological (mis)understanding of being-creative in terms of the present(-at-hand): a (mis)understanding of being-creative in terms of the present (un)truth of Enframing that the designers (fail to) critique. *In Heideggerian terms*, the meaning of the present (mis)reading of Heidegger as a theorist of uncorrupted 'interactivity' is the double danger of Enframing. In fully circular fashion:

in Heideggerian terms, the meaning of the Heideggerian-(mis)informed concept of 'ready-to-hand interactivity' is the (un)truth of Interactivity. This is the (un)truth of Enframing, whereby the human being must challenge forth the being of everything (including Heidegger's philosophy) as humanly controllable resource (Standing Resource). In its own Heideggerian terms, the meaning of the concept of 'ready-to-hand interface' is the (Anti-)Event of (mis)thinking about being-creative as humanly controllable resource, Standing Reserve or Interface.

As seen in the next section, the same paradox (mis)informs Bardini's (mis)reading of the early Heidegger as a theorist of pre-recuperated/de-blackboxed interactivity.

5.3. The presentism of Bardini's genealogy of the Interface as double danger of Enframing

As seen in Section 1.5, Bardini has used the passage about the ready-to-hand hammer as an example of alternative HCI design, in opposition to the mainstream model of the Macintosh GUI. Whereas the latter constantly forces the user to face present-at-hand breakdowns, ready-to-hand invisibility provides the user with a liberating experience of practical interactivity. Bardini seems to have reproduced the same mistake as the alternative HCI designers: a

(mis)understanding of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. Paradoxically, in Heideggerian terms, Bardini continues (mis)thinking about the meaning of technology and human freedom in terms of the double danger of Enframing that present media technology *is* (misunderstood as): Interactivity of (Engelbart's) 'feedback loop'.

Bardini draws from André Leroi-Gourhan's history of technological development and tells us that Engelbart's Human-Computer interface had the potential of becoming one and the same with what technology has always been *in potentia*: "an on-going process of interchange" between human being and external world (2000: 230).

> "If Leroi-Gourhan was right, the joint liberation of the hand and memory are the two crucial characteristics of this coevolution. Conscious efforts to design personal computers should take this into and strive for a harmonious experience in its fullest expression […] For the computer ever to be truly personal, it must be able to afford a real sense of presence for its users, stemming from the joint action of the full human senses" (2000: 231).

Engelbart's prosthetic interface is (mis)understood as the fulfillment ("fullest expression") of what being-creative has always been *in potentia*: "coevolution" as the Truth whereby human being and equipment come into being at the Interface of inter-relations (2000: 231). Were HCI designers to rediscover Engelbart's Truth about 'interactivity', their 'interface' would *merge* with the Truth or Reality of kinesthetic Interactivity that technology was always meant to be ("afford a real sense of presence") (2000: 231). Via Leroi-Gourhan and Engelbart, Bardini has projected the whole history of technological development in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. Consequently, Engelbart's 'interface' as kinesthetic fullness of 'feedback loop' cannot but be the *necessary* completion of the history of technological development and *return* of being-creative (*Sein*) to its original Being (*Seiendes*) as full Interactivity of 'feedback loop' (presentism). Alternatively, the resulting 'interface' would *invisibly merge with* the Reality of Interface itself:

> "The computer will become a *transparent* medium, *disappearing into the interaction* it enables […] (2000: 232, italics my emphasis).

As seen before, Bardini equates this ideal form of invisible interactivity with Heidegger's ready-to-hand hammer. Like the HCI designers, Bardini (mis)appropriates the Heideggerian hammer as an interfacial weapon for the fight against not-being: an artefact that becomes invisible ("transparent") as it ceases clearing and *is* (interactional) Truth; ceases revealing the Real and *is* (interactional) Reality; ceases coming-into-presence and *is* (interactional) Present (2000: 232). This is the theoretical return of the ever-recurring fight against difference: the making present of being *as* Interface, which attempts to be-in the (interactive) Present of Enframing.

Albeit infrathin, an abyssal gap of not-being pervades the in-ter of Bardini's interface: the spatio-temporal gap between actions and reactions. Hence the return of the metaphysical dog that chases a tail of its own imagination, now in *endless* 'feedback loop' of inter-actions. If Bardini's dog stopped running and started thinking about its own (mis)thinking, it would inevitably fall into the unresolvable paradox of not-being:

> " […] tomorrow's user has to be considered as a biological and social entity fully involved in a *never-ending interaction* with the whole symbolic and material world of human experience. Like any other human interaction with the world, human-computer interaction is both a biological and social process, as Douglas Engelbart knew" (2000: 227 italics my emphasis).

Expressed in the language of Bardini's genealogy is the desire for an artifact that annihilates a metaphysical difference between beings, i.e. the interfacial/presentified gap of not-being between actions and reactions and becomes one and the same with an unreachable Being, Interface. Bardini theorizes the essence of technology as an interfacial instrument, weapon or resource (Standing Reserve) in humanity's pointless fight against the (interfacial) abyss of not-being. Paradoxically, upon attempting to theorise a liberatory experience for the user, Bardini has delegated freedom to a being/deity/Truth/(un)truth: Interface. Interestingly, Bardini gives a great deal of attention to the *meaning* of being-human and freedom as he engages in an etymological study of the word 'person'; here Bardini draws from Michael Heim and claims that the meaning of person *is* 'interface' (2000: 229-230).

According to Michael Heim's genealogy of the Human-Computer Interface, the English term 'interface' has come to replace the Ancient Greek '*prosopon*' ('face'):

> "In ancient times, the term interface sparked awe and mystery. The archaic Greeks spoke reverently of prosopon, or a face facing another face. Two opposite faces make up a mutual relationship. One face reacts to

> the other, and the other face reacts to the other's reaction, and the other reacts to that reaction, and so on ad infinitum. The relationship then lives on as a third thing or state of being" (Heim, 1993: 78).

In the Middle Ages, Scholastic philosophers would re-appropriate the same term to refer to the three Godly persons:

> "The Father and the Son subsist together as an interface or distinct spirit. The ancient word suggests a spiritual interaction between eternity and time" (1993: 78).

Pro-sopon' or 'before the eyes', translates as 'mask' (Mauss, 1950 in Bardini, 2000: 229-30). 'Mask' does name the presencing of the human being among Ancient Greeks and Romans ('*persona*'); the term is indeed re-deployed by Scholastic thinkers to name the presencing of the Godly faces. However, Heim's interpretation of the Greek and Scholastic meanings of 'interface' is flawed by presentism.

First, it is necessary to examine the etymological roots of the Latin preposition '*inter*-'. 'Inter-face' means 'between or among face(s)': '*inter vallum'* ('between the valleys'), '*inter bellum*' ('between wars'), '*inter nos*' ('among us') (de Vaan, 2008: 306). Whereas the Ancient Romans used '*medium*' to call a spatio-temporal point in-between two extremes, '*inter*' named the mysterious spatio-temporal in-between itself. At this point, let us further divide '*inter*' into '*in-ter*'. The locative adverb '*in*-' has been identified in the Proto Indo-European language as denoting 'insideness' (de Vaan, 2008: 30). The suffix '-*ter*' presents a more volatile meaning qua 'contrast', 'separation' or 'difference' (Benveniste, 1948: 120-21; Pinault, 2007: 273-74). As per Heidegger's remarks on the *difference* between thing (*Seiendes*) and world (*Sein* qua unity of the fourfould or epochal Event of thinging), '*inter*' means 'being-in-the-difference':

> "The middle of the two is intimacy—in Latin, inter. The corresponding German word is *unter*, the English inter-. The intimacy of world and thing is not a fusion. Intimacy obtains only where the intimate— world and thing—divides itself cleanly and remains separated. In the midst of the two, in the between of world and thing, in their inter, division prevails: a difference" (DS, 199).

Throughout the history of humanity, the word '*inter'* or its equivalents have *differently* meant a mysterious spatio-temporal difference. Each epochal word for *'inter-'* has meant a *different* difference between beings, which

nevertheless fails to name the *same* difference: the ontological difference between being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiende*). In each epoch, the word '*inter*' has expressed a *different* (mis)understanding of the *same* circular difference between being and beings, i.e. a (mis)understanding of the mutual Event of Appropriation:

> *transpiring through the epochal word* 'inter' *is a* different *return of the* same *(mis)understanding of being (Event of time-space extending) in terms of the present (epoch): the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about being(-human) that conceals itself in terms of the (thinker's) present. Therefore, hidden in the word 'inter' is the epochal meaning of being(-human).*

This is the ever-recurring Event that predates Roman thinking and continues (mis)informing Heim's interpretation of '*prosopon*'. Throughout Heidegger's later writings, the Roman epoch plays a pivotal role in the history of being as turn from the Greek epoch (OWA, 22-3; TB, 8-9). Although the Greeks had a close relationship with the epochal Event of being (*aletheia*), nevertheless they failed to think about and name their experience:

> "At the beginning of Being's unconcealment, Being, *einai, eon* is thought, but not the "It gives," "there is," Instead, Parmenides says *esti gar einai*, "For Being is"" (TB, 8).

The Roman thinker re-appropriates Greek thinking through a different metaphysics, with the Latin language putting into words humanity's further distanciation from the openness of the Event of being (OWA, 23). Heidegger provides numerous examples of Roman re-appropriation of Greek words, such as: '*subiectum'* (LH, 224-27), '*res*' (DD, 172-75), and '*spatium*' (BDT, 153-52). The Latin '*spatium'*, which translates as 'space', takes over the Greek '*stadion*' (BDT, 153). '*Stadion*' (mis)names the Greek experience of the Event of time-space extending: the nearness or thinging of the thing *as* space for which "room has been made" (BDT, 153). *'Spatium'* takes Greek thinking to the next step of forgetfulness as it opens the possibility of thinking about space as "mere distance" or "mere intervals" between things occupying points in "pure" space (BDT, 153). However, Roman thinking does not project the being of everything in terms of its mathematical measurability; for this, it is necessary to wait until Modern thinking projects the being of everything in objectivist terms (BDT, 153-54)

Although the Romans were unable to think about their own experience of the being of beings, they nevertheless related to the being of beings as something that "pertains to" or "bears upon" humanity (DD, 173-74). Heidegger finds confirmation for this in the Latin word '*res'*, which (mis)names the Roman experience of the thinging of the thing (bearing upon) as something merely present. The thinging of the '*res'*-thing is thought by the Roman thinker via re-appropriation of the Greek '*on*', which is still visible in the Latin word '*ens*'. Whereas the Greek '*on*' named something that *stands forth*, the Latin '*ens*' paves the way for thinking about the thing as something that is just "before us, presented" (DD, 173-74). Roman language puts into words the distanciation of Roman experience from the openness of being: from the Greek standing forth into the Roman concern. Once again, this turn gives itself linguistically with the transformation from '*on*' to '*ens*'.

The passage from the Greek '*prosopon*' to the Latin '*persona*' bespeaks of this epochal Turn. The two words for 'mask' as 'person' name a *different* thought about the *same* Event of presencing of the human being, i.e. Dasein's ek-static relatedness to (its) being or *existence*:

- '*Pro-sop-on*': mask as something that stands-(forth)-before-the-eyes (Beekes, 2010: 1235; 1240);
- '*Per-sona*': mask as something through which human sound passes (Bardini, 2000: 229).

The two words for 'mask' name *differently* the *same* Event of presencing of the human being: ek-sistence as Dasein's concern towards (its) being (care). The '*on'* where the Greek mask stands-forth (mis)names Dasein's ek-static there (*Da*-). Greek (mis)thinking (mis)understands the circular difference or interval between human being and (its) being as the '*stadion'* between mask and human eyes. In the Latin '*persona*', '*-on*' is replaced with the *'per-'* of the '*per-sona*' through which human voice sounds. The circular difference of ek-sistence has turned from the space opened by the Greek standing-forth into a different (yet the same) metaphysical *inter*: the Latin '*spatium*'.

In Scholastic thinking, the Roman '*ens*' as something that bears upon the human being has become '*ens creatum*': a being that *is* only insofar as it has been created by God (DD, 174; OWA, 29). The essence of beings, including the human *being* as "child of God" (LH, 224), is (mis)thought in terms of a different deity: God as '*ens increatum*' (WM, 107). The difference or interval between human being (*Seiendes* as *ens creatum*) and being (presentified *Sein* as *ens increatum*), is (mis)understood by a different Event of (mis)thinking: the biblical faith or Christian dogma that pre-projects the being of everything as '*ens creatum*' (OWA, 29; WM, 107). By now, the reader

should be familiar with the interval of the Modern epoch: the 'subject-object relation' that (mis)names the mutual Event of Picture.

As per Section 4.8, the thinker of Enframing has turned the objective interval of the 'subject-object relation' from the undesired leftover of Modernity into the central principle of a different metaphysics. In the attempt to close the unclosable difference between objectified subject and subjectified object, the physicists of Heidegger's present activated it, so to speak. The difference is filled with a myriad of endless exchanges between mutual relations or 'interrelations'/'interactions'. Hence the (un)truth of Enframing, i.e. Interactivity, whereby everything comes into presence at the (humanly controllable) '*inter*-face' (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve) of 'endless *inter*-relations' between '*inter*-related subject and object' (i.e. presentification of mutual Event of Enframing).

Contra Heim, the Scholastic thinker does not think about the intervallic separation or difference between the Godly faces as a matter of "mutual relationship […] ad infinitum"(Heim, 1993: 78), namely as endless Interactivity. The way in which the godly faces presence to each other could only be discovered by the Christian faith or belief in the Holy Mystery, whereby the faces are *different* entities and yet the *same* one as '*ens increatum*'. Similarly, when it comes to the Greek thinking about '*prosopon*', the intervallic difference, i.e. the mutual Event of time-space extending that appropriates, was not understood as endless Interactivity. Neither the Greeks nor Scholastics had any grasp of Heim's *present* (un)truth of Interactivity as interaction *ad infinitum* or "feedback loop" (Heim, 1993: xi; 43; 76).

> *Heim's genealogy of 'interface' (mis)understands the meaning of the Greek and Scholastic 'inter'* in terms of its present meaning *as 'endless process of interaction' (i.e. Interactivity of 'feedback loop'): in terms of the present (un)truth of Enframing that present media technology is (misunderstood as).*

Heim displays the same presentism that affects the genealogies of Bardini and Dreyfus. Via the concept of 'feedback loop', Heim expresses into words the present self-concealment of the ontological difference: the present meaning of '*interface'* as challenging(back-and-)forth of Standing Reserves. 'Feedback loop' is the resource of Heim's present metaphysics, which brings beings into presence *as* 'inter-related', hence providing Heim with proof of the interactive Real. That 'an action is followed by a re-action *ad infinitum*' is the metaphysical truth or (un)truth of Interactivity that belongs to Heim's present epoch, not a *transhistorical Truth* that has always applied to the human being:

> *Heim's application of his present (un)truth of Interactivity to the past reveals a desperate obsession with the unachievable* Present. *Heim pre-projects the whole history of being in terms of the self-concealment of being of his present epoch: presentism as the making present of the history of being.*

Genealogists of 'interactive' media technology such as Heim, Bardini and Dreyfus fight a desperate fight against the epochal difference of being-creative in the pointless attempt to achieve the (interactional) Present of Enframing:

> "Computer networks have sprung up to form a giant web for human exchange. Ideas fly back and forth, circling the globe at the speed of electricity. This new electric language forms an instant feedback loop, *the likes of which have never before existed*" (1993: xi italics my emphasis).

As the being of technology has *always* been an interfacial process of interaction *ad infinitum*, our present electronic media cannot but be utterly special: the *necessary* completion of the history of technological development as the final overlapping between abstract Form (Interactivity) and present Reality ('feedback loop' of present/'interactive' media technology). In other words, the 'interactivity' of present/'interactive' media technology fully realizes the Truth or Reality that Technology was *always meant to be*: present 'feedback loop' as full/true/real 'interactivity' or Interactivity. However, this is only insofar as the genealogist has pre-projected the history of being in terms of the (interactional) present (of Enframing) *as* Interactivity of 'feedback loop'. As discussed in the next discussion, the thesis has finally obtained and in fact, just applied, the historical understanding or critical genealogy of 'interactive' media technology advocated by Gane and Beer (Sections 0.1-0.2).

5.4.Upon opening a new circle of doubt and finding the research method: for a critical genealogy of 'interactive' media technology via genealogical destruction of the 'critical' concepts of 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity'

At this point, the first major circle of doubt has been closed. *According to early and later Heidegger alike*, the *Heideggerian-informed* critiques of present/'interactive' media technology as corrupted 'interactivity' holds no critical efficacy. *In Heideggerian terms*, the meaning of the present (mis)readings of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of 'interactivity' is the (un)truth of Interactivity: the interactional (mis)understanding of being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. Paradoxically, the Heideggerian critics (mis)think about the meaning of

technology, human freedom (i.e. Event of being-creative) and in fact Heidegger's own philosophy (i.e. being-historical thinking) in terms of the present (un)truth or technological condition that makes humanity unfree:

> *in their own Heideggerian terms, the Heideggerian-(mis)informed critiques of 'interactive' media technology are incapable of thinking about a future of freedom for the 'interactive' user. This is because their (mis)understanding of the problem (i.e. double danger of Enframing) is itself the problem: the (un)truth of Interactivity, whereby the human being* must be *interactive master of everything.*

In Bardini's case, the interactional (mis)understanding is inherited from Heim, Leroi-Gourhan and Engelbart, and is then applied to Heidegger. BT is (mis)theorised as a tool to return present interfaces to the real/true/uncorrupted/de-blackboxed Interface first envisioned by Engelbart. Heidegger himself is (mis)interpreted as a theorist of 'uncorrupted/recuperated/de-blackboxed *interactivity*': in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. At this point, a question begs to be asked: what about the concept of '*blackboxed* interactivity'?

Bardini inherits the notion that designers 'socially construct' or 'blackbox' the user from Trevor Pinch and Bruno Latour (2000: 109). In this respect, Engelbart's theory of feedback loop should be rediscovered as a desirable/uncorrupted form of user construction/blackboxing: Engelbart had the merit of representing the human being as real/true fullness of 'feedback loop' or Interface. Instead, Apple's corrupt/recuperated form of user construction/blackboxing abstracts from the fullness of 'feedback loop'. At this point, the thesis has already destroyed the meaning of the *object* of social construction/blackboxing: Bardini's interactional metaphysics of corrupted/uncorrupted 'interactivity' as (un)truth of Interactivity. However, what about the very concept of 'social construction'/'blackboxing'? The question is worth asking because Neo-Marxist genealogists have similarly critiqued present media technology for predetermining user activity, namely for 'blackboxing' the user as 'subjugated subject' or 'subjectivity' (Sections 1.1 - 1.3).

Albeit in different terms, the Neo-Marxist genealogists from Chapter 1 have founded their critique of present media technology on the same premises as Heideggerian students (Dreyfus; Verbeek; HCI designers; Bardini). The interactive user is unfree because the design of present media technology contains a corrupted form of 'interactivity': an exploited 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism) or wrong 'user model' (STS/Bardini) that has been blackboxed following

the ‘recuperation’ of an original/liberatory form of design (Neo/Marxism; STS/Bardini). The solution lies in fixing ‘blackboxed interactivity’, either via technical inscription of different ‘subjectivities’ (Neo-Marxism) or via processes of ‘user-reconfiguration’ (Bardini/ST). Hence the doubt that must be investigated in the rest of the thesis: do the present concepts of ‘blackbox’ and ‘subjectivity’ enable the genealogists to critique ‘interactive’ media technology and think about a different future of freedom for the ‘interactive user’?

And yet, how to interpret the critical efficacy or meaning of the critical genealogists’ arguments? After all, the answer to the doubt about the arguments of Heideggerian readers stood only insofar as it was raised and interpreted in their own Heideggerian terms. As further explained below:

> *the thesis has unknowingly gained its own method to interpret the critical efficacy or meaning of the genealogists’ critiques of ‘interactive’ media technology: hermeneutic destruction of the language of present thinkers via being-historical thinking. This is because Heidegger’s method of meaning interpretation* always already *enables the interpretation to be carried out in circular terms: in terms’ of the epochal thinker’s (in)ability to think about their own thinking.*

As anticipated at the end of the last section, the thesis has *already* applied Heidegger’s method to interpret the epochal meaning of the *present* readings of Heidegger’s philosophy of technology (Bardini; HCI designers; Dreyfus; Verbeek). However, Heidegger’s being-historical thinking used hermeneutic destruction to answer the question about the meaning of ever-recurring Event of being(-human): the mutual Event of Appropriation, Nearness, time-space extending (TB). And yet, as per Chapter 3, hermeneutic destruction of past metaphysics would present Heidegger’s being-historical thinking with the gift of the different epochal meanings of being(-human), such as: Scholastic *ens creatum*, Modern Picture, Standing Reserve. At its core, the thesis has adopted and will continue adopting the same method of hermeneutic destruction. However, this method is not used to interpret the meaning of the Event of being (Heidegger), but to interpret/destroy the epochal meaning of being-human in *my present* epoch. Henceforth, this will be referred to as the method of *genealogical destruction*:

the thesis will adopt the Heideggerian-informed method of genealogical destruction to gain a (critical)[21] *"historical understanding or genealogy" of present/'interactive' media technology (Gane and Beer, 2008: 101).*

Hence the questions to be answered via genealogical destruction in the next chapters:

what does it mean to be a 'blackboxed' 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism) or 'blackboxed' 'user model/configuration' (STS/Bardini)? What does it mean to be a free/'de-blackboxed' 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism) or free/'de-blackboxed' 'user reconfiguration' (STS/Bardini)? In fact, what does it mean to be an 'interactive user'?

This is the task ahead: genealogical destruction of the present concepts of 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity'[22] via hermeneutic destruction of the epochal thinking that was first appropriated by them. The procedure is the same as before, namely testing the epochal thinkers' ability to think about the conditions of their own thinking about these concepts:

do the concepts of 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity' betray a vicious circularity that – qua unthinkable paradox of not-being – forces the thinker to (mis)think about the meaning of being in terms of (the thinker's) present (world)?

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[21] As seen below, the interpretation of the meaning of 'critical' thinking is itself one of the questions of genealogical destruction.

[22] The concept of 'user model/configuration' has been left out from the doubt but is not forgotten. As it becomes apparent in Chapter 5, the STS concepts of 'blackbox' and 'user model/configuration' mean the *same* thing. Common parlance and the Neo-Marxist genealogists from Chapter 1 use the 'blackbox' concept in a disparaging sense as synonymous of '*subjugated* subjectivity'. However, for the founders of the 'blackbox' concept (i.e. STS), 'blackboxing' *is* the same as 'user social construction/modelling/configuring'. And yet, as seen before, critical STS thinkers do converge towards the Neo-Marxist critique of blackboxing. As per Bardini, whereas mainstream blackboxing exploits the user as it predetermines their activity, an uncorrupted form of blackboxing (i.e. Engelbart's) may present the user with a liberatory form of interaction with the Computer.

Although it has been established that the meaning of *Heideggerian-informed* concepts of 'interactivity' is the vicious (un)truth of Interactivity – i.e. the (mis)understanding of being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing - it does not imply that the same vicious circularity is operative in the Neo-Marxist/STS genealogies of 'blackboxed *interactivity'*. After all, as seen in the last section, the problem does not have to do with the ever-recurring word 'inter' but with its *epochal meaning*. In summary:

> *has the vicious (un)truth of Interactivity/Enframing appropriated the critical genealogies of 'blackboxed interactivity'? What is the meaning – in their own terms - of the critical concepts of 'blackbox' (STS) and 'subjectivity' (Neo-Marxism)?*

The next chapter begins with genealogical destruction of the 'blackbox' concept (STS/Bardini), which is traced back to the famous debate about the Moses Bridge that divided the STS field in the 1980s. This debate bespeaks of an epochal turn in sociological thinking about the essence of 'technology', 'society' and 'power', as well as a turn in 'thinking critically' about these concepts. By this point, the second task of genealogical destruction has revealed itself: an interpretation of the meaning of 'critical thinking' itself. In other words:

what does it mean to 'critique' the present?

In this respect, Chapter 7 kills two birds with one stone. Not only does it address the question concerning critical thinking but does so via genealogical destruction of the concept of 'subjectivity'. Once again, this is the concept that has influenced the Neo-Marxist genealogies of interactive media technology from Chapter 1: the 'interactive user' is a 'blackboxed subjectivity', namely a 'subjugated subjectivity' that must be liberated via 'desubjugation' or technical inscription of 'different subjectivities'. Chapter 8 proceeds to close the new circle of doubt. Being-historical/genealogical thinking can return to the present genealogies of 'corrupted-recuperated-blackboxed interactivity' and interpret – *in their own terms* - the critical efficacy or meaning of their arguments about present/'interactive' media technology.

PART 3. GENEALOGICAL DESTRUCTION OF THE 'BLACKBOX' AND 'SUBJECTIVITY' CONCEPTS

Chapter 6. Genealogical destruction of the 'blackbox' concept: STS and the interactional (mis)understanding of technology

6.1. Langdon Winner vs Social Constructivism: introducing the debate

In 1980 Langdon Winner publishes his iconic article 'Do artefacts have politics?', whose thesis is that "certain technologies in themselves have political properties" or that they are "inherently political" (Winner, 1980: 122; 123). In the following years, Winner's article is critiqued by a faction of social scientists who are committed to exporting social constructivism from the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge (SSK) to the Sociology of Technology (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1985; Pinch and Bijker, 2012; Woolgar, 1991). The debate continues until the end of the 1990s, when the social constructivists deliver the *coup de grace* to Winner (Joerges, 1999; Woolgar and Cooper, 1999).

Only insofar as these thinkers proceeded to impose their thinking across the STS field (Section 1.4), it is claimed that social constructivism won the debate. The social constructivist truth about technology was not truer than Winner's, nor was Winner defeated despite the superiority of his insights. The debate must be understood as epochal Event of thinking about the essence of technology: does technology have inherent properties that pre-determine its social consequences (Winner) or is it socially constructed (social constructivism)? That technology is socially constructed *seem* to mean different things for the social constructivist branches of STS: Social Construction of Technology (SCOT), Large Technological Systems (LTS), Actor-Network Theory (ANT), and Cyborg Theory[23]. However, all these strands are committed to taking down the theoretical barriers between Society and Technology upon opening their "blackboxes" (Hughes and Pinch, 2012: XVI-XVII).

6.2. Winner's technological politics

Winner accounts for two mechanisms whereby technologies contain a predetermined political meaning (Winner, 1980). In the first case, a social group or individual pursues power via inscription of a political project in technical

[23] Although, Donna Haraway may stand out as an outsider, cyborg theory can be brought back to a social constructivist framework, as pointed out by the founders of SCOT (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1999: 6).

design (1980: 123-128). Winner uses as a case study the parkway bridges built by Robert Moses in Long Island (1980: 123-24). Winner contends that Moses deliberately built the bridges too low for public buses to transit, hence preventing the racial minorities and working class of New York from accessing Jones Beach. Inscribed in the design of the bridges was a predetermined social effect: Winner's technology is a physical arrangement that reproduces the political intentionality of the powerful (1980: 123-124). The analyst should stop interpreting technologies as "neutral tools" that can be deployed either for good or bad uses (1980: 125). Although the bridges contained predetermined social effects, Winner concedes that this mechanism of power inscription is somewhat flexible and reversible (1980: 134).

When it comes to the second mechanism of technological politics (1980: 128-134), one is dealing with technologies that inevitably require ("appear to [...] be strongly compatible with") a social system based on unequal relations of power (1980: 123). Here Winner is building on his theory of Autonomous Technology: modern technology is a system that produces uncontrollable consequences, with the human being reduced to mere instrument of technology (Winner, 1977: 188-190).

After a certain stage of development, technological innovations turn into systems to which society *must* conform; hence the unfolding of unintended consequences that were not contemplated at the stage of production (1977: 89). Individual agents are preconditioned by a technological order or imperative, which maintains autonomy through artefacts that predefine the rules for their correct usage (1977: 199). The concept of technological imperative denotes the process of social adaptation that a technological system or technocracy requires in order to reproduce itself (1977: 100): an inverted process of conformation of social ends to technical means (1977: 229). Although the critical analyst may trace a technology back to an original intentionality, eventually the instrumentalist logic of the technological imperative (i.e. "the pursuit of means for the means") imposes itself over individual social agents (1977: 259). An autonomous technocracy does not reproduce the intentionality of the powerful but an imperative or "drift" that even the privileged ruling class *cannot* master (1977: 88-90).

6.3. The social constructivist reply to Winner

In one of the founding texts of SCOT, Donald MacKenzie and Judy Wajcman begin celebrating Winner's theory as one of the "thoughtful attempts" that have challenged the naïve view of technology as neutral (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1985: 7). Yet, later on in the analysis, they replace his concept of autonomous technology with the concept

of "technological system"[24] (1985: 12). An offshoot of Thomas Kuhn's concept of paradigm, a technological system does not pre-impose a rule of behaviour "to be followed mechanically" (1985: 11). Approaches *a la* Winner reduce technological development to the Promethean act of invention of a social group or individual; instead, social constructivism interprets the creation of a new artefact as the end point of a complex process of technological/social/economic innovation (1985: 9). Neither does technological change follow predetermined trajectories (i.e. Winner's Autonomous Technology) but is deeply embedded in a complex network of social phenomena: technology and society are not separate but "inextricably" related to each other (1985: 14). Social constructivism condemns Winner as a believer in *technological determinism*: "the theory that technology is an independent factor, and that changes in technology cause social changes" (1985: 4).

As explained by Pinch and Bijker in 1987, Sociology must analyse the unfolding of the complex interplay between society and technology whereby a new artifact comes into being (Pinch and Bijker, 2012: 18). Pinch and Bijker embrace a method that is already in use within SSK: the Empirical Program of Relativism (EPOR). For SSK, scientific knowledge is not about the discovery of objective truth but socially constructed (2012: 12-15). A new scientific truth emerges when a plethora of social groups have reached consensus regarding the meaning of a contested finding (2012: 12-15). This is the same principle that must be applied to the sociological study of technological development: the interpretative flexibility of scientific knowledge/technology (2012: 33-37).

As opposed to mono-directional models of technological development, SCOT adopts a multi-directional explanation, which must account for the complex process of meaning negotiation that a technical artefact undergoes before reaching completion (2012: 22-23). Pinch and Bijker refer to the end of meaning negotiation as the moment of "stabilisation" or "closure" of an artefact (2012: 30-33). Alternatively, this is the "blackbox" that must be opened, i.e. interpreted linguistically through the metaphor of technology as text (Woolgar, 1991: 38). *Contra* Winner, the only inherent property that social constructivism might attribute to technological design is its interpretative *flexibility* (Pinch and Bijker, 2012: 34).

In 1991, Steve Woolgar completes the first round of critique against Winner (1991: 32-35). Woolgar treats Winner's theory as one of the possible stories about the meaning of the Moses Bridge (1991: 134). The problem with

[24] The concept of technological system used by MacKenzie and Wajcman belongs to the LTS branch of social constructivism (Hughes, 2012).

Winner's story is that it *predetermines* the meaning of his "preferred reading" as "definitive": having *pre*-set in stone the link between Moses' intentionality and social effects, the inherently political meaning of the bridge leaves no room for further interpretation (1991: 35). Woolgar refers to Winner's approach as "instrumentalist": like in a linear cause-effect relationship, Winner has pre-determined the relationship between technical design and social effect (1991: 40). Instead, Woolgar proposes an interpretative stance: the point is not to determine the "real" meaning of a technology but to study the process whereby an artifact such as the Moses bridge comes to be interpreted differently by several "technology texts" (1991: 41). Winner's theory itself is treated as a blackboxed artefact that must be opened: only insofar as Winner has predefined the relationship between design and social effect instrumentally, may the bridge be interpreted as inherently racist/classist (1991: 43).

Despite Winner's reply that the social constructivist blackbox is "empty" (Winner, 1993), in 1999 Steve Woolgar and Geoff Cooper deliver the *coup de grâce* (Woolgar and Cooper, 1999: 433-436). The authors discover from several New York-based sources that the bridges were not built too low: the urban minorities could reach the beach via bus (1999: 436). However, the social constructivists did not win the debate upon proving Winner's story *wrong*:

> "To do so, however, would be to submit to quite the wrong parameters. In particular, it would mean to imply that we are at or near a resolution of the matter - that, for example, we have definitely established Moses' true intentions" (1999: 436-37).

The point of contention is not whether Winner's interpretation of Moses' intentions corresponded to the "true" state of affairs (1999: 437) or to establish the "actual" intentionality of Moses' plans (1999: 442). If anything, this is precisely *why* Winner is criticized: Winner is committed to establishing the "referential adequacy" between his story and the "true" state of affairs (1999: 442). In other words, what is contested is not the content of Winner's story, but its conceptualisation of what *truth* is or its meaning. Having dismissed Winner's approach as "naive realism" (1999: 443), the meaning of the social constructivist critique should have become clear:

> *the social constructivists are contesting Winner's (mis)understanding of truth as objective correspondence between statement and reality: a representational (mis)understanding of the essence of truth in modern terms.*

At first glance, the social constructivists seem to embrace the same critique as AWP: Heidegger's destruction of the unthinkable paradox of the modern re-presentation (Sections 4.4; 4.5). As the next section destroys the epochal meaning of Winner's arguments, then it will be possible to interpret the meaning of the social constructivist reply.

6.4. The debate as sociological Turn in thinking about technology

Winner draws from several Modern thinkers of technology, such as Hegel, Lewis Mumford, David Noble, Jacques Ellul and Karl Marx (Winner, 1977). Another inspiration is Heidegger's QCT (1977: 131). However, Winner appropriates Heidegger's philosophy for the sole purpose of confirming his theory of *autonomous* technology: similarly to Dreyfus and Verbeek, Winner (mis)interprets Enframing as a technological system without human orderer. And yet, *differently* from Dreyfus and Verbeek, Winner does not display an interactional (mis)reading of Heidegger. Winner (mis)interprets the technology of Enframing in modern/Hegelian terms as instrument that has turned into master. The main concern that haunts Winner's analysis is to re-invert the reverted dialectic, hence re-establishing the essence of Technology as Instrument that *is* in-between subject and object. Both mechanisms of technological politics reveal the same conceptualisation of causality (i.e. truth) that the later Heidegger criticized as instrumentalist (i.e. presentification of Event of Truth as Picture in objectivist terms). Winner displays a representational or modern (mis)understanding of being-creative (which is applied to Heidegger himself):

- *Representation of political intentionality*: the Moses bridge *re-presents* the political bias of design (i.e. objective intentionality or form) in technical artifactuality (i.e. matter) *as* material effects of social inequality;
- *Representation of instrumentalism*: technology re-presents a technological imperative (i.e. form) in the thoughts and actions of social agents (i.e. object) *as* instrumental rationality/attitude. It might seem paradoxical that technology represents an unplanned imperative. Nevertheless, the content of the re-presentation remains *objectively* present to Winner's analytical gaze.

Winner fails to think about the circular coming-into-presence of technology: Dasein's (failure of) fixing into place the strife between World and Earth. Winner argues that technology is not neutral because it is *inherently* political. In turn, that technology is inherently political means that the *presence* of this political bias is *objective*. Winner is after the

meaning of technological artifacts (1980: 123), but from the very beginning he has pre-projected it in modern terms as representable objectivity. Paradoxically:

> *Winner's critique of technological politics is grounded in a (mis)understanding of technology as objective, i.e.* neutral, *instrument. Only insofar as technology re-presents objective meaning (i.e. intentionality/technological imperative) can Winner's political argument be correct. Yet, Winner's technological politics is (un)true, for it is permeated by the re-presentational paradox of not-being.*

As per the previous section, the social constructivists seem to be raising the same objection against Winner's theory of causality. This is how Woolgar comments Winner's answer to the question 'do artefacts have politics?':

> "Under this rubric, the answer to Winner's question is: Yes, if you like. It is indeed possible to read a text as "having politics" […] [T]here is little analytic advantage in merely pronouncing upon (or fighting for) one or another interpretation, as if the role of the analyst is to discern the real meaning" (Woolgar, 1991: 41).

Woolgar's insight whereby there is no such thing as (objectively) *"*real" meaning seems compatible with Heidegger's critique of the modern self-concealment of truth (AWP): technology is inherently, i.e. objectively, political only insofar as *you*, Winner, have pre-projected the question in objectivist terms. In Heideggerian terms, Winner is oblivious to the (Anti-)Event that has always already appropriated his (mis)thinking about technology as objective instrument. As per the next section, social constructivism is far from embracing Heidegger's insights concerning the inescapable *circularity* of meaning.

6.5. Upon destroying the 'blackbox' and finding the Standing Reserve

First and foremost, the social constructivist response to Winner is a reaction against Modernity's representational thinking about technology as objective instrument. For SSK, scientific knowledge is no representation of an objective truth. Similarly, neither is technology an application of scientific truth:

> "Science, it is said, shapes technology and science itself is discovery of reality […] Where science and technology are connected, as they increasingly have been in this century, it is mistaken to see the connection

> between them as one in which technology is one-sidedly dependent on science" (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1985: 8-9).

Let us keep in mind the two key words used to define the relationship between science and technology: "connected" and "[co-]dependent". This is how MacKenzie and Wajcman proceed to further define the relationship between science and technology:

> "Technologists use science. They seek from science resources to help them solve the problems they have, to achieve the goals towards which they are working" (1985: 9).

Scientific truths are "resources" that the human technician exploits for the achievement of a certain goal (1985: 9). This seems to be an expression of the same (mis)understanding whereby the humanity of Heidegger's present *encountered itself everywhere*:

> "Scientists are, of course, in constant, intimate dialogue with the real, material world, but they are active participants in that dialogue, bringing to it conceptual schema, experimental traditions, intellectual investments, ways of understanding the world, models and metaphors […]" (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1999: 8).

Like the physicists of Heidegger's own present (QCT), scientists do not re-present an objective reality because they (think they have the power to) *create* reality upon participating in a dialogue with the Real, i.e. upon *interacting* with it at the (controllable) Interface of (inter-)'connection' and '(inter-)codependence'. Truth does not reside in the objective correspondence of Modernity but in a different, yet the same, presentified (inter-)relation between beings:

> *for the social constructivists, truth arises at the Interface of Interactivity between human interpretation and interactive Real. This is the interactional (mis)understanding of truth that Heidegger had warned us about: the Event of Enframing whereby humanity finds itself everywhere as interactive master/creator of everything.*

The very first step of EPOR shows that each relevant social group attaches to the scientific finding/technical artifact a "different" meaning (Pinch and Bijker, 2012: 35-36). The final meaning that an artifact acquires once it is closed, stabilized or blackboxed is no re-presentation of an objective truth. Instead, the meaning of an artefact is the result of negotiation or discursive 'interaction' between a multitude of social actors. Scientific knowledge and technology are socially constructed or, alternatively, their meaning is open to interpretation: not objective but *interactive*. The social constructivist concept of meaning presentifies the circularity of meaning:

> *for the social constructivists, the meaning of technology arises at the Interface of Interactivity between a multitude of inter-related meanings.*

The multi-directional model that explains technological innovation bespeaks of the same cause-effect relationship of the atomic physicist of Heidegger's present (QCT). The coming-into-presence or revealing of technology (*aletheia*) is presentified as a network of inter-relations that make up the essence of technology *as* 'blackbox':

> *for the social constructivists, technology is a 'blackbox' that comes into presence at the Interface of endless interaction between inter-related beings. The meaning of 'blackbox' is the (un)truth of Interactivity: the (anti-)Event of Enframing that appropriates social constructivist thinking and yet, conceals itself in interactional terms as 'blackbox'.*

The concept of inter-relational causality fails to name (and yet is appropriated by) the circular Event of Enframing, whereby everything, in order to be must stand by: freeze off and always be available for human ordering. Here the *challenging* order of Enframing comes from the interpretation of the analyst who has opened the blackbox. Frozen inside the blackbox and presently available to the gaze of the social scientist is a network of *potential* causal relationships that may have given the artifact a certain meaning or another. The revealing or coming-into-presence of technology, i.e. *aletheia*, conceals itself as *a network of freezable potentialities* (Standing Reserve) that the analyst can re-activate (challenge forth) through textualist interpretation.

Interestingly, the social constructivists believe to have *overcome* Modernity's metaphysical glorification of the subject through a process of ontological relativisation. Woolgar describes the reflexive version of textual interpretation that defines the empirical method of "relativism" as "ontologically agnostic":

> " […] the reflexive version takes a more ontologically agnostic position. It includes the question: How is the reality of the technology itself created, described, and sustained, and, in particular, how do the effects and capability of the technology relate to the effects and capabilities of the other entities in the text in which they are inscribed?" (Woolgar, 1991: 41-42).

The strength of the reflexive approach is that it is applied to the social constructivist interpretation itself, i.e. reflexively (1991: 41). However, this is far from a *hermeneutic* move that has accepted the circular limits of (its own) thinking. This transpires from the social constructivist critique of Winner, who is guilty of overlooking the fact that his theory was just one of the possible interpretations of the meaning of the bridge. Instead, Woolgar and Cooper treat *their own* story about the Moses bridge as one of many possible interpretations. According to Woolgar and Cooper, the Moses bridge should itself be treated discursively as an "inconcludeable narrative", which brings together Winner, themselves, their New York sources, the bus timetable, etc. (1999: 437). What has changed is not only the story, but the bridge itself as it is discursively *created* by different social agents in different contexts (1999: 441):

When the social constructivists criticize Winner for pre-determining the meaning of technology, they are not pointing out that Winner has *pre-projected* the meaning of being in *circular* fashion, hence falling in the unresolvable paradox of the objective not-being of the re-presentation. For the authors, this pre-determination is due to Winner's *abstraction* of his interpretation from a broader *network* of discursive interactions in which it partakes (Woolgar, 1991: 40). For the social constructivists, Winner fails to understand that his language *gives* meaning to the bridge upon interacting with an interactive (not objective!) reality and with a network of other stories. The social constructivists reject Winner's thinking because it fails to acknowledge the *Interactivity* of/between thinking, language and reality:

> "In describing (accounting for) technologies as the product of objects or forces outside ourselves, we underplay the sense in which we are enmeshed in the web of associations that makes technology what it appears to be […] In short, technology is to be understood not just as a text that acts at a distance on *its* authors but as an

> entity that acquires this feature through only the relationships constituted in our own texts" (Woolgar, 1991: 43).

The social constructivists fail to understand that their own thinking is also guilty of pre-determining the being of everything. However, this pre-determination does not occur interactively upon *creating* the meaning of the bridge at the interface between their stories and reality/other stories. Paradoxically, this occurs via their very *(mis)understanding of (their own) thinking as an (inter-)action that gives meaning to everything*. Just like Winner, yet in different terms, the authors have *pre-projected* the being of everything. No longer as representational objectivity but in the interactional terms of the self-concealment of Enframing. Once interpreted as epochal Event of (mis)thinking, social constructivism is the double danger whereby humanity encounters itself everywhere as interactive creator of everything:

> *rather than leaping-out of the vicious circle of Winner's re-presentational thinking, the authors have merely jumped into a new one. This circle is the* Interactivity *of the 'blackbox' concept: an* inconcludeable *narrative that reveals the emptiness of the social constructivist enterprise.*

For Winner's representational thinking, the social constructivist blackbox is "empty" (Winner, 1993) because the incessant exchange of interactions that make up the being of technology remains invisible or unthinkable. For Winner, the *endless* commitment to interpretative flexibility prevents the social constructivists from "taking a stand" (1993: 372): from inhabiting the objective here and now of his critique. Yet, the essential emptiness of the blackbox lies elsewhere.

That reality comes into being at the interface of a process of endless interaction with human narrators shows that the social constructivists have forced their thinking into an unresolvable paradox. That the narration is *endless* fails to account for the possibility of *not* narrating for a simple reason. As soon as one has ceased narrating, one has fallen into the unresolvable paradox of *not-being*: if everything demands inter-related narratives to come into presence, as soon as there is no narration, the Moses bridge has ceased being too. Heidegger already held dear the lesson whereby language brings the being of beings into presence. Via the discursive turn in the Social Sciences, SCOT has

transformed this lesson into the metaphysical (un)truth or Truth whereby *meaning is* created *by the human being at the interface of interaction between language and reality*. *Pace* the social constructivists:

> *humanity does not* create *meaning through the* interfacial *resource of language.*

The unsayable truth or essence of language lies in the circularity of (its) meaning: the mutual Event of appropriation whereby the human being *is spoken* by speech (Section 3.10). The social constructivist thinker has forgotten and presentified this truth as 'blackbox' of endless exchanges between inter-related meanings: Interactivity.

> *Upon opening the social constructivist concept of 'blackbox', one does not find Winner's emptiness (i.e. lack of Objectivity), nor the unthinkable (i.e. 'endless') Interactivity between interrelated meanings (social constructivists). Instead, one finds the (Anti-)Event of Enframing that, upon appropriating the social constructivist thinking, conceals itself in interactional terms as 'blackbox'. In fact, empty is the illusionary fight fought by the social constructivists. This is an endless loop of narration that fights against an ultrathin difference of not-being that* is(-not) *only for the sake of social constructivist (mis)thinking: the in-ter of the Interface between inter-related meanings. Loopy ad infinitum is not the essence of Technology (i.e. Interactivity of 'blackbox') but the vicious circularity of social constructivist thinking, which fails to think about the same circular Event of being-creative that enables its (mis)understanding of being-creative as controllable Interface of endless inter-relations: the present (un)truth of Enframing.*

As per the next chapter, the social constructivists similarly (mis)understand the relationship between so-called 'society', 'technology' and 'power' in interactional terms. Before addressing this question, the next two sections complete the analysis of social constructivism as they focus on Bruno Latour's and Donna Haraway's blackboxes.

6.6. The interactional metaphysics of Bruno Latour's 'blackbox'

Bruno Latour asks himself who or what is responsible for shooting people to death: is it the human being who pulled the trigger or the gun that shot the deadly bullet? (Latour, 1999: 176-193). Latour argues that if we continue thinking

in terms of the modern subject-object dichotomy, we cannot but fail to grasp the mediating role of technology (1999: 180). A tool like a gun is not a mere instrument under human mastery but an "actant": a "proposition"' or "program of action" that alters the ontological condition of the human being (1999: 178-80). The original goal (i.e. hurting somebody) changes upon interacting with the gun's field of possible actions (i.e. shooting to death): one turns from non-lethal harmer into potential killer (1999:179). Contemporaneously, the object's being has changed too: from "gun-in-the-armory" into "gun-in-your hand" (1999: 180).

Rather than distinguishing between a non-existing subject and object with autonomous being, Latour's theory postulates symmetrical ontology between humans ("actors") and technical artifacts ("actants") (1999: 180). The principle of "interference" implies that there are only beings that come into presence through mutual interaction (1999: 178-80). The result are hybrids such as the gun-citizen system, which is responsible for the being of both human and gun and for the compositional action of shooting people to death (1999: 182). Latour is convinced of having overcome modern truths via a "nonmodernist" one (1999: 295). Interestingly, his critique of Modernity is often directed against the later Heidegger of QCT:

> "For Heidegger a technology is never an instrument, a mere tool. Does that mean that technologies mediate action? No, because we have ourselves become instruments for no other end than instrumentality itself (Heidegger 1997). Man - there is no Woman in Heidegger - is possessed by technology, and it is a complete illusion to believe that we can master it" (1999: 176).

Heidegger has failed to overcome the modern (mis)understanding of technology as instrument: his later philosophy has merely inverted the metaphysical terms of modernity, i.e. subject and object (1999: 176). Heidegger's mistake is twofold: not only technology does not use us for the sake of its instrumentalist ends, but it is impossible to separate between human and technical goals in the first place. Here is yet another (mis)reading[25] of QCT's lessons about humanity's loss of mastery over technology, which is grounded in Latour (mis)understanding of the essence of

[25] The one thing Latour is right about is that Heidegger's language often reduces humanity to the male human being. This is indeed a mistake, which the language of this work has repudiated. Nevertheless the doubt remains well alive: this seems to be the only insight about Heidegger's philosophy that Latour is right about.

mastery itself as *an action that achieves a predetermined goal*. This bespeaks of a much deeper metaphysics, which has always already pre-projected the meaning of being *as* action:

> "[…] essence is existence and existence is action. If I define you by what you have (the gun) , and by the series of associations that you enter into when you use what you have (when you fire the gun), then you are modified by the gun […]" (1999: 179).

Leaving aside the empty insight whereby "essence is existence", Latour gently informs us that the human being *is* action and yet, as per his own admission, this is a pre-projection of *his own* thinking ("if I define you [….]") (1999: 179). Hence the unbearable order transpiring through Latour's language:

- Latour: "If I define you by the series of associations that you enter into, then you shall be the result of interactions!"
- We, subservient readers: "If you say so, then aye, sir, I am an interaction!".

It is Latour's prerogative to thematise the being of Dasein and things to a proposition: a program of actions aimed at the achievement of a goal (1999: 178). However, this is a presentification of Latour's making, which comes down to an *interactional* presentification of being-creative. Latour (mis)understands the equipment's in-order-to as the gun's intent or will (1999: 178): an (interactively) present program of actions (i.e. shooting to kill) that redirects or 'interferes' with the human plans of actions (i.e. hurting someone). A new entity comes into being at the "zone of articulation" between inter-related propositions (1999: 190): at the *Interface* of Interactivity between inter-related beings or agencies. Dasein's projections into equipmental in-order-tos and the in-order-to itself have become programs of actions or material-semiotic agency. In the language of the later Heidegger:

> *Latour presentifies the circular truth* (aletheia) *of the Event of being-creative* (techne*) as Interface of inter-relations (i.e. Interactivity): endless exchange of challenging-forths or Standing Reserves.*

The everyday condition whereby Dasein (mis)understands itself in terms of equipmental possibilities is presentified as Interactivity between inter-related programs of actions. Dasein's *disburdenment* of choice to equipmental

possibilities (hammer's in-order-to) is presentified as interactive *delegation* of being from one actor/actant to another and, most critically, as the essence of Dasein's being-creative:

> *Latour (mis)understands Dasein's self-(mis)understanding in terms of the present beings closest to itself as the metaphysical essence of (its) being-creative. Latour (mis)understands Interactivity as the presentified essence of technological Dasein's freedom.*

Latour's inability to escape metaphysics is reflected on his (mis)reading of Heidegger: a philosopher that Latour critiques with ironic undertones, a philosopher that Latour (mis)understands, and yet, a philosopher to whom – ironically – Latour's theory of technical mediation seems indebted. As per Latour's analysis of *blackboxing*:

> "Now suppose the projector breaks down. The crisis reminds us of the projector's existence" (1999: 183).

This seems like BT's description of the unhandy hammer that has broken down. However, Latour seems to take a different turn: the program of actions of the blackboxed tool has changed as it has become the totality of a multitude of propositional actions mediated by sub-entities (1999: 183). As *we*, human thinkers, open the blackbox of a wooden desk, *we* find ourselves in the presence of the trees that went into its frame, along with the human woodcutters (1999: 183). Suddenly, *we* become aware of the absent entities from which these components were extracted, as well as the network of propositional transformations that have composed the final program of action mediated by the desk (1999: 183). In other words, the absent beings are present again *to us* in the field of actions opened by the blackboxed desk:

> "They have a peculiar ontological status, but does this mean that they do not act, that they do not mediate action? Can we say that because we have made all of them-and who is this "we," by the way? not I, certainly-should they be considered slaves or tools or merely evidence of a Gestell? The depth of our ignorance about techniques is unfathomable" (1999: 185).

Once again, Latour ridicules the later Heidegger of QCT for arguing that technology masters us. Yet, his analysis of blackboxing contains unacknowledged traces of Section 15 of BT (BT, 70) [70]. Upon projecting its being into the in-order-to of a hammer that is composed of wood and metal, Dasein also discovers Nature, along with beings like

and unlike itself. This is a description of the existential references that define the upon-whichs of Dasein's *circular* understanding of being. Latour instead presentifies these references as interactive programs of action that *are* independently from *his own thinking* about them. The Heideggerian point of the matter is not to establish who made the desk: "can we say that because we have made all of them-and who is this "we," by the way? not I, certainly […]." (1999: 185). The point is that - as per Latour's inadvertent admission - only for *us*, human thinkers who have opened/thought about the blackbox, these absent beings can come into presence *as* inter-related programs of actions. Instead, Latour desperately attempts to take up the (impossible) standpoint of the analyst outside the circle of (Latour's) human thinking, and presentifies Dasein's ek-static discovery of unhandiness as if it *was* independently from theoretical Dasein's/Latour's interactional (mis)thinking.

For Latour, the *no-longer present* entity, i.e. the tree that was cut to make the handle of the hammer, is *present again* in the now of desk-reading as the program of action mediated by the hybrid desk-entity. This is a mere re-definition of Modernity's representational (mis)understanding of being, which is no longer dependent on a representing subject but on a different (yet the same) metaphysical principle: the zone of articulation that arises at the Interface of networks of delegated programs of actions. The concept of delegation defines the translation of plans of actions from one form to another (Latour, 1999: 185-190). The policeperson who is physically absent in the present of the speedbump is made present again by a new action (i.e. a car slowing down) (1999: 188). Latour pays great attention to the new associated entity or "fresh hybrid" that comes into presence in the *interfacial* wherein of the speedbump as articulated agency (1999: 189). The hybrid speedbump is itself the *re*-presentation of past actions as a "return" of presence (1999: 189): the delegation that defines blackboxing is nothing but a delegation of *interactive presence*. Latour's "nonmodern" theory is indeed revolutionary (Latour, 1993), insofar as it has *re*-placed the modern deity (Objectivity) with a different one (Interactivity): the return of the same (mis)understanding of being in terms of the (interactional) present (of Enframing).

> *similarly to Descartes, yet differently (i.e. in interactional terms), Latour is oblivious to the vicious circularity of (his own) (mis)thinking. Only insofar as Latour has pre-projected being in interactional terms, may the being of everything gives itself to Latour's (mis)thinking as interactive blackbox. The meaning of Latour's* 'blackbox' *is the (un)truth of Enframing:* Interactivity.

The consequences of this (mis)understanding cannot but affect Latour's historical (mis)thinking about technological development, which is affected by a deep-seated form of *presentism*: the projection of the past in terms of the (interactional) present, which fights against an unacknowledged paradox of not-being. Latour goes to great lengths to justify the necessity of Actor-Network Theory. As per one of his most famous maxims, "we have never been modern" (Latour, 1993). This is to say that the human being has *always* delegated its being to other entities (Latour, 1999: 190; 196-197). And yet, Latour's present world is defined by even more intricate networks of inter-relations between actants and actors; humanity's present condition demands that critical ontology acknowledges the symmetry between a non-existing human and non-human (1999: 190; 196-197). Although we have *always* been inter-relational beings (i.e. "nonmodern"), presently we have the chance to be *fully* inter-relational, namely to be what we were *always* meant to be:

> *as Latour has pre-projected the whole history of the human being in interactional terms, his own Present cannot but be utterly special as the return of Dasein's being-creative (Sein) to the Being (Seiendes) that human existence was always meant to be: full* Interactivity *of present 'blackboxes'. Latour's Present is the result of historical (mis)thinking, which fights against a difference of not-being between interactive* Form (Interactivity) *and present* Reality. *Alternatively, Latour is (mis)guided by the ever-recurring attempt to be-in the unachievable Present (i.e. presentism).*

Latour believes to be the heralder of a 'nonmodern' project of critical ontology: as opposed to his modern counterparts, Latour no longer mistheorizes the human subject as the center of all experience. And yet, Latour is oblivious to the epochal meaning of his own (un)truth about the 'blackbox': the interactional (mis)understanding of being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. Once again, this is the (un)truth of Interactivity, which has always already appropriated Latour's (mis)thinking about the 'blackbox':

> *the meaning of Latour's (mis)thinking is the* double *danger of Enframing, whereby humanity encounters itself everywhere as interactive master/creator of everything and yet, paradoxically enough, believes to have given up Modernity's pursuit of control over beings.*

The next section shows that the same paradox (mis)informs Donna Haraway's cyborg theory, along with its critique of the Informatics of Domination. The discussion allows the thesis to introduce the question concerning critical thinking (Chapter 7), which must be addressed in order to answer the original doubt:

> *do the concepts of 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity' enable the genealogists from Chapter 1 to critique present/'interactive' media technology?*

6.7. The ambiguity of Donna Haraway's 'cyborg interface': posthumanism and the critique of power

Donna Haraway has invented the cyborg concept to depict the present/"postmodern" condition (Haraway, 1991): a "hybrid of machine and organism", the result of "tight coupling", "joint kinship" or "potent fusions" between inter-related entities (1991: 149, 152, 154). Similarly to Latour's zone of 'interference', the cyborg seems to come into presence at the interface of networks between inter-related beings. However, what makes cyborg theory interesting is its theorisation of the cyborg as a "resource" of socialist/feminist resistance (1991: 150), as well as its unprecedent role in the history of humanity.

Haraway's 'Cyborg Manifesto' reads as a critique of the binary *not-* that used to define the Modern project of domination (1991: 155-161). Modern identity is traced back to the capitalist project of domination of the Other (not-male, not-white, not-Westerner, etc.); this is the outcome of the dichotomic boundaries between human and animal, mind and body, private and public life, male and female, etc. At the same time, the discussion of the Informatics of Domination reads as a critique of Haraway's present/ "postmodern" paradigm of social domination (1991: 161-165). Haraway notes the eradication of modern hierarchies into fluid networks, at which nodes cyborgs come into presence (1991: 161). As per Haraway's admission, the cyborg is an "ambiguous" entity: despite being the child of the Informatics of Domination, it is an "illegitimate offspring" that opens spaces for resistance (1991: 151).

The cyborg concept enables feminism to liberate itself from the modern dualisms inherited from Marxist humanism, in fact from the patriarchal project of the Enlightenment that Marx inadvertently reproduced in his dialectics (1991: 157). The power of the cyborg lies in opening spaces for the engineering of alternative identities: the cyborg breaks down the ontological boundaries that had been the expression of the hierarchies of modern power. It is not possible to return to modernist frameworks of critique because modern arguments have already ceased serving the ideological needs of the corporate executive (1991: 162).The emancipatory power of the cyborg, i.e. a hybrid that

comes into being at nodes of networks, is its programmability: the feminist can reappropriate practices of networking and re-engineer alternative identities (1991: 170). Haraway also refers to this practice of resistance as "recoupling", "disassembly and reassembly", "recrafting", and "*interfacing*" (1991: 154; 162; 163). Not unexpectedly, technology is an essential instrument for the re-engineering of the cyborg "interface".

In Modern times, the separation between human and machine was a "border war" that participated in the male-centred project of domination of the Other (1991: 150). Postmodern communications media and biotechnologies provide unparalleled opportunities to challenge these dichotomies upon blurring the boundaries between human and nonhuman, organic and machinic, body and mind (1991: 164). Cybernetics enables the transformation of the whole world into an assembly of codes that may be re-engineered to produce alternative identities (1991: 164). Understood as prosthetic devices for "recrafting our bodies" (1991: 164), technology *is* (mis)understood as an *interfacial boundary* that we *are* and that we can *set in order* or *command*:

> "The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; *they* do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they" (1991: 180).

We, postmodern humans, have no autonomous being as our existence comes into presence through technical interfacing with other beings. In fact, we *are* this interfacial boundary and we can control it at our will. Although it might have seemed counterintuitive at first:

> *Haraway's posthumanist de-centering of the Cartesian subject radicalizes Modern humanity's search for present control over everything. Given that the technological Interface (i.e. 'cyborg') allows us to* be *anything, there follows that we can be anything we wish. Haraway does not realize that the 'cyborg' has itself set up the bed for the union of sexist corporate executive and feminist: Haraways's (mis)thinking feeds on, in fact* is, *the same (Anti-)Event of Enframing that her 'cyborg' theory (mis)names interactively* as *network-based Informatics of Domination: a (mis)understanding*

of the Event of being-creative as humanly controllable 'cyborg interface' (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve).[26]

Heidegger had already gained the insight whereby Dasein lacks stable nature. Among the social constructivists, this (non)truth has become *the* silent (un)truth or Truth of 'ontological agnosticism'/'linguistic relativism'/'interpretative flexibility' (SCOT), 'nonmodern ontological symmetry' (Latour), 'postmodernism'/'posthumanism' (Haraway):

Interactivity is the hidden deity of the social constructivist 'relativisation' of modern Truth(s).

The Heideggerian (non)lesson whereby Dasein has no stable *humanitas* does not mean that the human *being is* a controllable 'cyborg', 'hybrid ensemble', 'narrative construct' or 'blackbox', namely a technological Interface (Standing Reserve). Instead, it means that only we, humans, can be appropriated by the epochal Event of presencing, whereby beings can come out concealment into unconcealment *as* ('interactional') beings. This is no return to the modern subject but a resolute acknowledgement that Dasein is no master of the being of beings - including its own existence. The social constructivists refuse to acknowledge that Dasein has no control over the discovery of 'interactional' beings such as 'cyborgs' (Haraway), 'hybrids' (Latour) and 'narrative constructs' (SCOT). Instead of interactively *creating* the being of these beings at the interface of language/thinking and reality (SCOT), Dasein's thinking is appropriated by the epochal Event of their presencing *as* 'interactional'. Similarly, the meaning of this Event is no endless exchange of inter-relations such as 'networks', 'ensembles', 'delegated (inter)actions' and 'inter-related meanings'. Instead, *in the social constructivists' own terms*, its meaning is the unsayable Event of Enframing whereby humanity challenges forth the being of everything *as* orderable Standing Reserve or Interface: a (mis)understanding of being in terms of the (un)truth of Interactivity.

Hence the double danger of social constructivist (mis)thinking: technological Dasein's unfreedom, i.e. its delegation of choice to artefacts, has been posited as the interactional Truth of Dasein's being-creative. As an *update*

[26] Borrowing (with some liberty) Katherine Hayles' iconic phrase (Hayles, 1999): humanity has become "posthuman", upon (mis)understanding/presentifying the meaning of being(-human) in terms of the same (un)truth of Enframing that present humanity is (misunderstood as): the Interactivity of the 'posthuman' concept.

of the modern paradox of (mis)thinking, this Truth hides an ever-powerful deity that, supposedly, one can control at its own pleasure, but to which in fact, one has delegated free thinking. Interface is a deity that *is* (meant to be) independently from human (mis)thinking about the being of beings in interactional terms and yet, paradoxically, what enables beings to come into presence as 'interactive' via endless inter-action with the subject. Interface is the silent reminder of an undestroyable gap of not-being to be fought at all costs via *endless* loops of interaction. Once again, the rejection of the modern subject-object relation has brought about no acknowledgment of humanity's lack of present control over beings. If anything, it has led these thinkers to the opposite conclusion: we, *present* humans, have the power to engineer our inter-relational/blackboxed Being through a technological 'interface'. As contended in the next chapter, the belief in this *power* prevents thinkers such as Haraway from critiquing the present regime of power.

There is indeed another problem with Haraway's critical genealogy of the 'postmodern'/present society of the Informatics of Domination. For the genealogical thinkers seen before (Latour; Bardini; Heim; Dreyfus), history is the repetition of the same abstract Form (i.e. Interactivity) that has come to overlap with the genealogist's present Reality (present/'interactive' technology). For this reason, Latour claims that humanity has *never* been modern. Instead, Haraway claims that present humanity and its technology are *different*: no longer modern but 'postmodern'/'posthuman' (i.e. cyborgs). For Haraway, being-creative (*Sein*) is *a* being (*Seiendes*) that changes over time until, in Haraways's own Present, reaches its interactional Being as 'cyborg-interface'. According to the first genealogical account (e.g. Latour), the past is different because of a difference of not-being between transhistorical Form and past Reality that is meant to be destroyed in the genealogist's Present (i.e. presentism). For Latour, past human beings (in fact some of his clueless contemporaries too) were simply not wise enough to bow before the Truth of Interactivity. Instead, Haraway's past is different because of a difference that separates *a* past being (i.e. a noncyborg being) from *a* present being (a cyborg-being). Albeit in different terms, Haraway also (mis)understands the meaning of epochal difference: unthinkable not-being between a past and present being (*Seiendes*) that is *meant to* be destroyed in Haraway's Present (presentism) as Interactivity of the present 'cyborg interface'.

The two brands of presentism are saying the *same* thing. Either way, the history of being-creative is projected in terms of the (genealogist's) present (self-concealment of being): in terms of the (un)truth that the 'interactive' technology of their own present *is* (misunderstood as): Interactivity as the (un)truth of Enframing. Either way, the genealogists (mis)interpret their Present as the *inevitabl*e destruction of a difference of not-being, which leads to the return of a Being to itself, namely the Interface of: 'cyborg' (Haraway), 'hybrid ensembles' (Latour), 'feedback loop'

(Bardini; Heim; HCI designers), ‘inter-relatedness’ (Dreyfus). Either way, the genealogists fail to gain an understanding of the history of technological development. Either way, the same vicious (un)truth silently brings together their different presentism(s):

> *the human being(-creative) was always meant to be as it presently is, i.e. interactive.*

As indirectly seen so far - and as discussed in the next chapter - the same vicious circle of presentism is responsible for the paradoxical (mis)thinking about the revolutionary future of technological development (HCI designers; Dreyfus Verbeek; Bardini; Latour; Haraway):

> *given that being-creative was always meant to be as it presently is, i.e. interactive, it must continue being-interactive. In order to be free, humanity and its technology must not be-different.*

In Haraway’s case, present/‘postmodern’ media technology embodies a power regime that has *never* been so efficient and pervasive. And yet, this technology opens paths of resistance as potentially, i.e. in its liberated form, it can escort our *future* being-creative (*Sein*) to the interfacial Being or ‘cyborg’ (*Seiende*) that we were always meant to be: uncorrupted Interface of endless Interactivity. Whether this future Being is a liberated ‘cyborg/‘blackbox’ (Haraway; Latour; SCOT), ‘feedback loop’ (Bardini; HCI designers) or ‘interrelatedness’ (Dreyfus), it does not matter. These are all concepts that presentify the *ambiguity* of the (Anti-)Event of Enframing as two *different* - yet the *same* - deities or Beings: corrupted (non-)Interactivity and uncorrupted/real/true Interactivity. As per the next chapter, these critical thinkers have (mis)understood the revolutionary future of technological development as an *unthinkable (non-)being* that is(-not) yet-to-come: a (mis)understanding of the future as unthinkable difference of not-being.

Upon discussing the Event of (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference, the next chapter destroys the origins of the critical concept of ‘subjectivity’. Although Haraway dismisses Michel Foucault’s theory of biopolitical subjectification as “flaccid” (1991: 150), it is precisely to Foucault’s thinking that Haraway’s interactional metaphysics of power in indebted. The next chapter begins with a problematisation of the relationship between ‘society’, ‘technology’ and ‘power’, which was postponed in order to introduce the question concerning (its) ‘critique’. Let us proceed establishing how to think about the present - and its technology – ‘critically’.

Chapter 7. Genealogical destruction of the 'subjectivity' concept: the Event of (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference

7.1. The early Heidegger on society and power

For the early Heidegger, society is not given by a multitude of objectively present Daseins (BT, 115) [118]. Sociality must be analysed in terms of individual Dasein's ek-sistential disclosedness to the openness of the Other's being (i.e. Dasein-with) as Dasein's *being-with*(-the-Other) (BT, 114-122) [117-125]. Being-with inherently belongs to Dasein's being-in-the-world, with the world always already being a *shared* one (BT, 115-116) [118]. Upon discovering worldy relevance, Dasein has always already disclosed itself to the Other's being (BT. 119-120) [123-124]. The worldly references are no present structures (e.g. Dreyfus' inter-related practices), but the existential upon-whichs of Dasein's circular (*self*-)understanding of (its) being (BT, 120) [123].

No matter the absence of the Other in the objective here and now, given that Dasein *is* being-in-the-(shared)world, it always already *is-with* the Other as ek-static understanding (BT, 117) [120]. Not for nothing, Heidegger refers to the ek-static concern that discovers the Other as de-distancing: being-with as bringing the Other into nearness (BT, 116-117) [119-120]. As being-with belongs to the very existence of individual Dasein, it must be a matter of care or concern[27] (BT, 118) [121].

In the same way in which Dasein (mis)understands (its) being in terms of the handy beings taken care of (e.g. hammer), so can Dasein (mis)understand (its) being in terms of other beings like itself (BT, 116) [119]. Heidegger distinguishes between two possibilities of being-with: the inauthentic leap-in for the Other and the authentic leap-ahead of the Other (BT, 118-119) [122]. Upon leaping-in for the Other, Dasein takes care away, hence displacing and *dominating* the Other: Dasein's concern takes over and disburdens the Other from taking care (BT, 118-119) [122]. In the leap-ahead, Dasein is authentically concerned for the Other: rather than depriving the Other of care, Dasein facilitates its taking care (BT, 119) [122]. Upon authentically being-with-the-Other, Dasein acknowledges the Other's freedom to exist for its ownmost potentiality of being, namely the Other's being as choice.

Upon dominating the Other, inauthentic Dasein discovers the Other as if it was *not* a Dasein but a thing to be taken care of (BT, 118-119) [122]. Inauthentic being-with is Dasein's pre-ontological attempt to control the Other's

[27] Heidegger uses the term 'concern' to distinguish the care of being-with from the taking care of handy beings (e.g. the hammer).

being (*Sein*) as *a* being (*Seiendes*). The Other's being is pre-ontologically misunderstood as *a* controllable being by the inauthentic Dasein that takes away the Other's potentiality of being (i.e. choice) upon making it present:

> *everyday Dasein (mis)understands the Other's being as an inhumane being or not-I that is incapable of choice.*

As the Other's being is (mis)understood in terms of the present, the difference between Dasein and the Other - henceforth *social* difference - is pre-ontologically forgotten. Like the Dasein that deals with the hammer inauthentically, so does the inauthentic Dasein who leaps-in for the Other forget the (social) difference (BT, 118) [121]:

> *in inauthentic being-with lies Dasein's pre-ontological making present of the Other's being. This is the pre-ontological forgetting of the social difference that theory reproduces: the Sociological (mis)understanding of the difference between Dasein and Other's being as empty not-being.*

Sociology overlooks the ek-sistential dimension of being-with (LH, 221). An illusion takes hold of the sociologist, whereby the social difference is a presentified relation between beings (BT, 121) [124]. Society is reduced to a cluster of objective entities and sociality (i.e. being-with) to an empty gap of not-being. Due to a pre-projection of (objective) meaning, this interpretation is not incorrect but untrue: the modern sociologist has forgotten the ek-sistential category of the They(-self) (LH, 221).

The They-self is no objectively present identity (e.g. Cartesian ego) but one and the same with the circularity of inauthentic existence: Dasein's projections into levelled-down possibilities (BT, 125) [129]. This is the everyday condition whereby Dasein does not appropriate factical possibilities for its ownmost potentiality-of-being, but for the sake of the They-self (BT, 122-126) [126-130]. The so-called "publicness" or "dictatorship" of the They-self pushes inauthentic Dasein to "read, see, and judge" *like They do* (BT, 123) [126-127]. This is the average intelligibility of everyday (mis)understanding that tranquilizes Dasein through a disburdenment of choice (BT, 123-26) [126-130]. Given that Dasein always already is (mis)understanding in terms of shared possibilities (i.e. being-with), *inauthentic power* is always already a possibility for individual Dasein:

> inauthentic power *lies in Dasein's inauthentic being(-with): Dasein's circular self-projection into everyday possibilities appropriated in terms of the They(-self). This is Dasein's everyday condition of* impotence *or* unfreedom. *Instead,* authentic power *lies in everyday Dasein's projection of (its) being for its ownmost* potentiality-*of-being: Dasein's* free willing *of everyday possibilities.*

It is important to understand that being-with is just a modality – so to speak - of Dasein's power. Power is one and the same with Dasein's circular projections of being, which can be either for one's ownmost potentiality of being (i.e. authentic power, freedom, or will) or for the sake of the They-self (i.e. inauthentic power, unfreedom or impotence/wishing). In other words, power or freedom - either authentic or inauthentic - is not limited to so-called sociality, but *is* Dasein's ek-static being:

> *for the early Heidegger, power is Dasein's own being or care: its capacity to relate to (its) being. The power or freedom of the human being lies in its being-ontological/hermeneutic or, alternatively, in its being-creative (i.e. social, technical, artistic, linguistic, thinking, etc.).*

The essence of inauthentic social power, i.e. the domination of the Other, lies in a (mis)understanding of the Other's being (Dasein-with), which is always *individual* Dasein's self-(mis)understanding in terms of the They-self. Dasein's Fall is due to Dasein's (mis)understanding, which is always a (mis)understanding in terms of the They-self ("being absorbed in being-with-one-another") (BT, 169) [175]. As per Chapters 3 and 4, the history of Falling Prey translates in Heidegger's post-*Kehre* philosophy as the epochal Event of being that, upon giving the gift of presence, always already conceals itself. Therefore, the question of power, including so-called social power, was already encountered in OWA (OWA, 43-7). As per the next section:

> *for the later Heidegger, the power of the human being lies in its capacity to relate to the presencing of beings* as *beings. Alternatively, the power of the human being lies in being appropriated by the epochal Event of being-creative or* techne.

7.2. The later Heidegger on society and power: the epochal Event of the Other's being

As per the *Kehre*, being-with is the epochal Event of the *world's worlding* (OWA, 43): Dasein's being-appropriated by the shared destiny of a historical people (OWA, 47). Alternatively, as per LH, being-with is the epochal Event of being-with or the giving of the gift of the Other's presence that conceals itself in terms of the present. In LH, Heidegger critiques the ever-recurring (mis)theorisation of the human being (i.e. Humanism) for presentifying Dasein's ek-sistence as *animal rationale* (LH, 232-33). As Dasein's existence is (mis)theorised in terms of the present, its ek-static belongingness to being (i.e. ontological difference) is forgotten (LH, 233). Contemporaneous to the concealment/forgetting of Dasein's essence must be the concealment/forgetting of the Other's being (i.e. social difference). Not for nothing, LH refers to the modern (mis)understanding of subjectivism as Modernity's "dictatorship of the public realm" (LH, 221).

With Modernity arises a separation between the private and public realms: an objective difference between subject and society, nation-state, corporation, etc. (AWP, 133-134). The subject, i.e. modern Dasein, is haunted by a dilemma: where does freedom reside, in private or social life? (AWP, 133-134). The question opens no essential choice as it is (mis)formulated: the distinction between 'private' and 'social' life is the metaphysical expression of the concealment of the (social) difference (LH, 221). The "public realm" of Modernity expresses the (mis)understanding of the presencing ("openness") of human beings *as* objectified subjects ("objectification") (LH, 221). In other words, Heidegger is thinking about Modernity as epochal Event of being(-with) that conceals itself, namely as inauthentic Event of being-with. The separation between individual *I* and social *we* belongs to Modernity's representational (mis)thinking about being(-with), whereby society is a *representation* of the subject and vice versa. This is the theoretical presentification of the self-concealment of being(-with) as Picture, whereby everything – including the Other - in order to *be*, must be brought to stand before the subject.

In Modernity an illusion takes hold of Dasein, whereby freedom lies in a choice between private and social life. Yet, both *are* only in relation to the subject: being-with-one-another as Modern Society is a Picture, namely a representation, of the subject. Freedom is (mis)understood as a (non-)choice between an individualised social realm and a socialised individual sphere:

> "Every nationalism is metaphysically an anthropologism, and as such subjectivism […] Nationalism is as little brought and raised to *humanitas* by internationalism as individualism is by an ahistorical collectivism. The latter is the subjectivity of man in totality" (LH, 244-245).

Modern Dasein discovers freedom in its belongingness to the *we* of the Nation-State. Yet, the Nation is an expression of individualism: the *we* (of my Nation) as the *not*-them (of a foreign Nation). Alternatively, Dasein believes to have found freedom at the individual level, for instance in the bourgeois institution of private property. Yet, the private is itself an offshoot of the public: my property as the not-yours. Upon forgetting the ontological difference as subject-object relation, modern Dasein has also forgotten the social difference as *objective negation* between "I and thou, we and you" (AWP, 152). The freedom of modern Dasein is compromised by a (mis)understanding of being-with as objective difference of not-being between I and *not*-I, we and *not*-we: the Other's being as objective *not*-I. Nationalism is just one example of modern concealment of the presencing of the Other's difference: modern Dasein believes to have found *power* in ("wills" or "empowers" itself as) the nation, race and in the technoscientific conquest of the Earth (AWP, 52). Ironically, this is a state of impotence or unfreedom, whereby modern Dasein (mis)understand the essence of power or freedom (i.e. ek-static disclosure to the being of beings) as objectification of everything, including the Other: Modernity as epochal return of the domination of the Other.

Modernity is the epochal (anti-)Event of Dasein's being or existence as subjectified *animal rationale* (LH, 245). And so, the Event of the Other's being conceals itself as the not-*animal rationale*: an *inhumane* being that is *objectively* incapable of choice. The Other's being is (mis)understood as the not-compatriot, not-white, not-rational, not-male, not owner of the means of production:

> *as the being of everything conceals itself as representable object, the modern giving of the gift of the Other's presence (i.e. Event of being-with) conceals itself as (non-)Objectivity. The belonging together of Dasein and the Other's being is forgotten, with the social difference concealing itself as an abyss of objective nothingness to be destroyed.*

Since the times of Ancient Greece, the Other has always been (mis)understood as the "inhumane *homo barbarus*" (LH, 224-225). Although in every epoch the Other's difference conceals itself as a *different* not-I, this is the return of

the *same* self-concealment of the (Other's) being in terms of the present. As soon as the Other's being is (mis)understood as *a* (non)being, the social difference conceals itself as an abyssal gap of nothingness (i.e. not-I) to be annihilated. The Other's difference must be fought at all costs in order to confirm the validity of the same epochal (un)truth that has (mis)understood the (social) difference as a not-being in the first place. Thus (mis)understood, being-with requires taking care away from the Other: to control the Other's existence as if it was *not* a human being capable of choice. Humanity recurrently fights a paradoxical fight against an abyssal difference of not-being. This is a fight amongst ourselves, human beings:

> *the history of being is the history of being-with-the-Other that closes off to or forgets the Other's being as* not-I*: a history of domination of the Other's existence or inauthentic power.*

In Modernity, the ever recurring (un)truth of inauthentic power has established itself. One might be tempted to argue that this is the (un)truth whereby a minority of individuals are entitled to a monopoly over truth itself. This is indeed how *aletheia* has recurrently concealed itself. For instance, in the Middle Ages this was the "infallibility" of the clergy's interpretation of the Scriptures, whereby to know meant accepting "the authoritative Word and the authorities proclaiming it" (AWP, 122). And so, AWP describes Modernity as the "aberration of individualism" and "subjective egoism" (AWP, 133; 152). Heidegger also criticizes the departmentalisation of the natural sciences, with the work of the individual scientist sucked up in "public anonymity" for the sake of the common good (AWP, 126). The institutions of Technoscience and the Nation-State are critiqued for their "organisation of public opinion and of men's everyday ideas", which dismisses the "individual's personal views and opinions" (WPF, 109-110). Similarly, the publishing industry subjects literary work to profit-making dynamics (AWP, 139), with the artistic standards of the writer predefined by the "organs for making public civilized opinions" (PMD, 211).

And yet, resisting the (un)truth of inauthentic power does not require redistributing truth to the whole of humanity. Was the meaning of Heidegger's critique (mis)interpreted in these terms, one would not contradict but *embrace* the modern (un)truth of inauthentic power. Alternatively, one's critique would be appropriated by the same modern (Anti-)Event of (mis)thinking about social power:

in Modernity the (un)truth of inauthentic power lies in the (mis)understanding whereby truth – i.e. the revealing of the real or the Event of being, including the Other's being - is an object *that the subject can represent. Alternatively, this is the ever-recurring (un)truth whereby truth* is *an instrument of the human World (e.g. an object of Modern society) or an* instrument *of social power: a weapon in humanity's fight against the Other's difference*.

When it comes to the epoch of Enframing, Heidegger's most iconic critique of power is the forester who gets sucked up in the industries of profit-making. QCT provides other examples whereby the Other is no longer dominated via the subjective setting upon of Picture, but via the challenging forth of Enframing. At the time of delivering QCT, the Other's difference is challenged forth as (social) resource or supply (*Bestand*):

> "If man is challenged, ordered, to do this, then does not man himself belong even more originally than nature within the standing-reserve? The current talk about human resources, about the supply of patients for a clinic, gives evidence of this" (QCT, 18).

At the time of Enframing, the Other's presence gives itself via a challenging order, whereby the Other's being must freeze off and always be available for further human ordering: *be* Standing Reserve. And yet, as per the ever-recurring (Anti-)Event of being, the giving of the gift of (social) presence has always already concealed itself in terms of the gift/present. As claimed by Heidegger in the 1950s (Section 4.9) and as unawarely confirmed by Heideggerian readers and STS (Chapters 5 and 6), the (Anti-)Event of Enframing appropriates epochal thinkers in terms of the 'interactional' present.

There is not enough space in this thesis to investigate whether present Sociology has been appropriated by the (anti-)Event of Enframing, namely by the interactional (un)truth of Interactivity. Chapter 9 analyses John Thompson's Sociology of media as well as Erving Goffman's symbolic interactionism, which has been highly influential among present CMC thinkers. In fact, Chapter 6 has already established that the social constructivist Sociology of technology has indeed fallen prey of the interactional (mis)understanding of being. In this respect, as further discussed in the next section, it can be explained why 'society' and 'technology' are 'mutually constituted':

both come into presence at the interface of inter-relations. However, it goes without saying that additional projects of research are required to trace the epochal Turn in sociological thinking. And yet, the objective here is different.

First and foremost, being-historical thinking is after the epochal meaning of the 'subjectivity' concept, which has inspired the Neo-Marxist genealogies of "corrupted/recuperated/blackboxed interactivity'. Therefore, the discussion of being-with at the time of Enframing serves the thesis to assess whether an interactional metaphysics of being-with might (mis)inform the critical concept of 'subjectivity'. Before proceeding with genealogical destruction, the next section clarifies the relationship between 'society', 'power' and 'technology'.

7.3. Heidegger on technology, society and power

BT tells us repeatedly that one of the ways in which Dasein discovers the Other's being is by dealing with equipment (BT, 68-71; 123) [69-71; 126]. The publicness or dictatorship of the They-self is also the condition whereby Dasein takes care of equipment *like They do*: Dasein discovers handy beings in terms of average interpretedness pre-defined by the They (BT, 125) [129]. As seen before, sociality is concernful de-distancing or, alternatively, ek-static bringing the Other into nearness. Similarly, the discovery of equipmental being lies in average de-distancing, i.e. *shared*, bringing-into-nearness that *discovers the Other*. Upon dealing with the hammer, Dasein is also bringing the Other into Nearness:

> *Dasein's being-creative is always already with-the Other.*

Consequently, upon dealing with the hammer inauthentically, i.e. upon making present its being-creative, Dasein is always already making present the Other's being too:

> *upon making present (its) being-creative, inauthentic Dasein makes present (its) being-with too. This is the pre-ontological source for the theoretical (mis)understanding of technology as an instrument that must destroy the empty difference between presentified subjects in a present here/now and there/then:* producer/designer *and* consumer/user. *The essence of technology is (mis)theorised as Dasein's weapon in the fight against the Other's difference.*

Heidegger's later treatment of the relationship between so-called society and technology was already encountered, albeit indirectly, in the discussion of reliability: the setting up of a *human World* that sets forth the *Earth*. This is the Event of Nearness/time-space Extending (*aletheia*) that appropriates Dasein's being-creative upon failing to set in place (*Gestell*) the rift between human World and Earth. The rift is the circular *difference* between human World and Earth. This is not a presentified relationship between beings but a belonging-together of Earth and World:

> *what everyday language and Sociology refer to as 'technology' and 'society' are abstract categories, i.e. thematisations or presentifications of the epochal Event of Nearness/being-creative. No presentified relation can be established between the two terms, with so-called 'technology' and 'society' in fact being no 'terms' (Seiende) but different gifts of the same Event of being-creative. Technology is socio-historical Nearness and society is techno-historical Nearness (ek-static de-distancing or epochal Event of time-space extending).*

The epochal self-concealment of the Event of being-creative is due to the dismissal of the Earth into a human World of usefulness. As the World that is set up by technology takes over the Earth, the theoretical illusion establishes itself that technology *is* an instrument under society's control or under social power. The belonging together (rift) of Earth and human World is theoretically forgotten, with the epochal Event of being-creative theoretically (mis)understood as a presentified relation between beings: 'Nature', 'Society' and 'Technology'. The essence of technology conceals itself as human/social instrument for the conquest of everything, not only the Earth but the Other too:

> *the essence of technology is forgotten as instrument of inauthentic social power, namely as a weapon to destroy the Other's difference.*

As per Chapter 4, modern thinking presentifies the ek-static here/there and there/then of dealings with the handy tool in objectivist terms, with technology (mis)understood as empty object or instrument connecting objective points in *time* and *space*. The essence of modern technology (i.e. circular Event of Picture) conceals itself as a weapon to fill the abyssal difference of objective not-being: the empty gap between objective points in space and time. Contemporaneously, technology conceals itself as instrument to fill the objective difference of not-being between

Dasein and Other (e.g. designer and user). Not for nothing, as seen before, Heidegger refers to the technoscientific conquest of time-space as *impotence* of will.

> *To modern (mis)thinking, the essence of technology conceals itself as* instrument *of inauthentic power: a weapon to fill the abyss of the Other's objective not-being.*

At this point, it would be a short step to critique technology for *being* an instrument of (inauthentic) power: a weapon used by a restricted number of people to dominate the Other. As seen in the previous chapter, this is how Winner's critique (mis)interpreted the essence of technology: an instrument that re-presents the objective intentionality of the powerful. However, as per the discussion of the (un)truth of inauthentic power from the previous section, this brand of critique fails to jump into the circle of questioning about the essence of technology:

> *the notion whereby technology* is *an instrument of social power, namely an instrument under human/social control, is an (un)truth that critical thinking must leap out of, not add to its repertoire of critique. Otherwise, one keeps (mis)thinking about the solution to the problem, i.e. technological Dasein's unfreedom, in terms of the problem itself: in terms of the (un)truth whereby humanity* must *use technology as an instrument to destroy the Other's difference.*

In this respect, the social constructivist thinkers of user blackboxing have repeated the same mistake as Winner, albeit in interactional terms. As seen in sections 1.4, 5.3 and throughout Chapter 6, social constructivist thinkers believe that user freedom resides in the possibility of constantly negotiating the designer's representations: freedom at the Interface of exchange between inter-related meanings. For instance, Bardini believes that an egalitarian relationship of power requires that HCI designer and user partake in "open dialogue" or "mutual engagement" (i.e. Interactivity) (Bardini 2000: 232). *Paradoxically*, upon presentifying the essence of being-with as endless exchange of meaning between designer and user (i.e. 'user blackboxing' as interactional presentification of Enframing), the social constructivists continue (mis)understanding the essence of technology in terms of the (Anti-)Event of Enframing, whereby the Other's being *must* be challenged forth as Standing Reserve. *Paradoxically*, (mis)understood as negotiable 'user model', the social constructivist user is as (un)free as the Heideggerian Other of QCT: the forester, whose difference is challenged

forth as *stockable energy* by the industries of profit-making. *Paradoxically*, the social constructivists continue (mis)thinking about the essence of technology as (interfacial) instrument of inauthentic power: in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing, whereby the Other's difference *must be* interactively destroyed via incessant exchanges between two beings. The next sections proceed to identify and destroy the meaning of this *paradoxical* Event, which the thesis has already encountered numerous times (SCOT/Bardini; Latour; Haraway; Winner; critical HCI designers; Dreyfus; Verbeek):

> *when thinkers attempt to think about a different future of freedom, they cannot help (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference in terms of humanity's present condition of unfreedom.*

The next sections address the question concerning critical thinking: what does it mean to 'think critically' about the present and its technology? Upon attempting to define the terms of critical thinking, it is necessary to understand how the critical thinkers of history have *meant* the critique. The next section begins from the greatest revolutionary thinker of Modernity, in fact of all times: Karl Marx. After destroying the meaning of his critique via being-historical thinking, it will then be possible to move on to the critical thinker who was first appropriated by the 'subjectivity' concept: Michel Foucault.

7.4. Karl Marx's communist revolution via the capitalist means of production

Like all the great thinkers of history, Marx's thought is not a unitary system. Whereas his early writings are dedicated to resolving his philosophical debt towards Hegel, his later political economy studies the laws of capitalism scientifically. Nevertheless, this is no break but a continuation of the same critical project: either via philosophical discussion or political economy, Marx is committed to demonstrating the inevitability of the Communist Revolution. The later Marx of *Capital* continues thinking about Communism dialectically as the inevitable resolution of a contradiction that is "immanent" in capitalism (Marx, 2013: 281).

Marx identifies several epochs that have defined human history (Marx, 1904: 13). Human beings recurrently establish between themselves social bonds (e.g. property relations and division of labour) that are organised after the material forces of production available at the time (e.g. technology and scientific knowledge) (1904: 11). The relations and forces of production constitute the material basis of a mode of production: the economic structure that

“determines” the superstructure of social epiphenomena such as culture, art, religion, politics, etc. (1904: 11). In each mode of production something recurs: the antagonism between social classes (1904: 11-13). A social revolution occurs every time an oppressed class has developed new forces of production that clash against the existing relations of production (1904: 12-13). The revolution is over as the old relations of production have been replaced with revolutionary ones (1904: 12).

For instance, the passage from Feudalism into Manufacture occurs as a formerly oppressed class, i.e. the English bourgeoisie, has developed revolutionary forces of production that are materially incompatible with the economic, political and legal relations of feudalism (Marx, 1976: 174-176). The revolution is over as the bourgeois relations of production (i.e. competition based on private property and wage system) have replaced the old birthrights of the nobility (1976: 175). At this point, the revolutionary class becomes reactionary (1976: 175). In order to maintain control over the mode of production, the bourgeoisie relies on a new class of exploited: the proletarianised peasants and artisans of its workshops (1976: 175-76). This is the dialectical movement of Marx’s historical materialism (1976: 195), henceforth dialectical materialism.

Within the capitalist mode of production born out of Manufacture, i.e. Modern Industry, the forces of production are gradually transforming into an antithetical form that will inevitably negate the capitalist relations of private property (Marx and Engels, 2015: 1-20). Something is utterly different about this transformation, which is *presently* unfolding at the time of writing the *Communist Manifesto* (2015: 10). The upcoming synthesis will put an end to the dialectics of class struggle: Modern Industry, i.e. Marx’s own present, is the last antagonistic mode of production (Marx, 1904: 13). Marx insists that the incumbent revolution of the Proletariat will be *different* (Marx and Engels, 2015: 17-19). This will not be a revolution carried out by the few against the many but a revolution “of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority” (2015: 19). The demise of the bourgeoisie is the “inevitable” outcome of a transformation that, paradoxically, the bourgeoisie itself has set in place (2015: 20).

The capitalists cannot resolve the inherent contradictions of a mode of production that, for the first time in history, falls into cyclical crises of overproduction (2015: 10-11). Paradoxically, Capital’s reaction merely sets the ground for more crises (2015: 11). Upon repeatedly resuscitating a moribund system, the bourgeoisie creates more and more of the same class of oppressed individuals that will put an end to its reign: the Proletariat (2015: 11-17). This goes on until the whole of humanity has been proletarianised (2015: 17-18). The revolutionary Proletariat is no

longer a class but the whole of humanity which, born out of Modern Industry, can reappropriate the capitalist forces of production outside the capitalist relations of production (2015: 17-18):

> *Communism will use capitalist technology, e.g. factory machinery, for the sake of humanity as a whole.*

Marx often describes factory machinery as brutal means of capitalist exploitation or power: an organic being that replaces the physical capabilities of the human body, turning the worker into "mere appendage" of technology (Marx, 2013: 267); a "competitor" or "inimical power" that makes the worker "superfluous" (2013: 300); an "independent" tool that controls the human being (Marx, 1973: 702); a weapon of the division of labour, which deskills the worker and leaves it "dismembered" (Marx, 1976: 188). And yet, factory machinery is contemporaneously a force of production that will partake in the *inevitable* demise of the bourgeoisie and in the Communist mode of production.

At the end of the 20th century, critical thinkers would discover that history had indeed ended, but not in the terms that Marx had envisioned more than a century before. Paradoxically, only insofar as the global transition into Communism had *not* occurred, could Marx's claim about the *end* of history (of the class struggle) hold true (Fukuyama, 1992). Paradoxically, Marx proudly flags up his (mis)understanding of history in his numerous declarations about the Communist Revolution as *inevitable*. The meaning of this mistake must be investigated in his philosophy of dialectical materialism.

7.5. Marx's dialectical materialism: the (mis)understanding of being as object of labour

In many respects, the *1844 Manuscripts* (Marx, 2000) read as the Marxian counterpart to BT. Not only because this is the earliest systematisation of the theory of dialectical materialism. Contained here are Marx's thoughts about the essence of the human being, along with the history of its alienation. Interestingly, the *Manuscripts* read as a presentification of nearly all the existential categories exposed by the early Heidegger.

Marx tells us that the essence of the human being lies in its "objective relation" to the world or in the "appropriation" of the object (2000: 100). This is so-called "objectification": the material activity of labour as the subject's creation of the object (2000: 86). Marx calls the "universal", i.e. objective, essence of the human being its "species-being" (2000: 89-91). Like other animals, the human being uses inorganic nature or matter to produce the

nourishment for its vital activity; differently from other animals, the human being is not immediately one with its physiological needs (2000: 90). What sets the human species aside from other animals, i.e. what makes it *different*, is the ability to relate to its vital activity consciously (2000: 90-91). This relation is no ek-static concern but the prerogative of the subject's conscious appropriation of his existence (i.e. "vital activity") as "object" (2000: 90). This is an objective presentification of the ontic difference, namely Dasein's capacity to make of its own being, and therefore being itself, a question or concern:

> *Marx (mis)understands human existence as the subject's objective co-presence to its objectified self. Marx (mis)understands the ontological difference as objective relation between an objectified subject and a subjectified object.*

Upon making of its productive activity an object, humanity distinguishes itself for its "power" to objectify Nature (2000: 88-91). Inorganic nature or matter is understood as "means of subsistence" (2000: 88): an instrument that the labourer uses not only for the satisfaction of physical needs but for the sake of intellectual and artistic production too (2000: 90). It is precisely the possibility of producing "freely" from vital needs that renders productive labour, i.e. objectification, the essence of human freedom and the freedom of human essence (2000: 90):

> *Marx (mis)understands the meaning of human power and freedom as objectification of everything.*

What distinguishes human labour from the production of other animals lies is the power to impose its own "standards" over the natural object (2000: 91). As per *Capital*, the human being is the only animal that can impose its "will" over matter via "a change of form", namely via reproduction of his ideas ("imagination") in inorganic matter (Marx, 2013: 120-121). The essence of Dasein's being-creative, i.e. *techne*, is (mis)understood as objectification of nature qua *re-presentation* of a mental form in objectified matter. Marx (mis)understands the Event of being-creative *instrumentally* as re-presentation of human will in a new form, i.e. objectified matter:

> *Marx (mis)understands the circular difference between Earth* (inorganic Nature or matter) *and World* (human needs or mental form) *that the human being sets into place upon being appropriated*

by the epochal call of being-creative. The Event of being-creative or techne *is (mis)understood in* instrumental *terms as the result of a human act of creation that* gives *objective being to everything.*

Marx displays a modern (mis)understanding of being-creative, whereby everything *is* only for the sake of the subject's power of objectification. Alternatively, Marx has forgotten the ontological difference as a subject-object relation. The belonging together of being and human being is posited as the unfillable gap of not-being between a presentified Earth and World. Unsurprisingly, Marx delegates the (impossible) task of filling the empty difference between subject and object to technology as (objective) "means of production":

> " […] in the broadest sense, every object, including those furnished purely by nature, e.g. a stone, must first be appropriated by some sort of activity before it can function as an instrument, as means of production" (Marx, 1973: 257).

Marx (mis)understands the essence of technology instrumentally *as* means *of production that must fill the difference of not-being between subject and object, Society and Nature, form and matter. Marx displays a Modern (mis)understanding of technology as objective instrument of power: a weapon in humanity's fight against the objective difference of not-being.*

Marx's writings abound with grand statements on the instrumental essence of technology (Marx, 1973: 699-700; Marx, 2000: 92; Marx, 2013: 292, 294, 295, 304-05):

> " […] the way in which machinery is utilised is totally distinct from the machinery itself. Powder is powder whether used to wound a man or to dress his wounds" (Marx, 1978: 139-40).

Marx is saying that what factory machinery *is*, is not the same as what it is used *for*: the essence of technology lies in *being-used* by the human being for something. The essence of technology is (mis)understood instrumentally as the re-presentation/objectification of human will in matter. Marx's philosophy has forgotten the unsayable truth of technology, i.e. *aletheia*, and presentified it in terms of the modern (un)truth of the (Anti-)Event of Picture of his own

present epoch. Hence Marx's (mis)understanding , whereby everything, in order to be, must be brought to stand before the almighty subject via technology:

> "Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules etc. These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are organs of the human brain, created by the human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified" (Marx, 1973: 706).

Industrial machinery may be put at the service of communist, i.e. *different*, needs because technology *is* the mere instrument for the objectification or re-presentation of human will. Although under bourgeois rule industrial technology is used to exploit the worker, a Communist Society will no longer deploy the means of production for the "wrong use" (Marx, 2013: 292). As per the next section, this wrong/dehumanising use is an expression of the reversed subject-object relation that (mis)informs the dialectical history of alienated labour.

7.6. Marx's dialectical materialism: alienation and the paradox of not-being

For Marx everything *is* only as object of human labour. There follows that humanity's alienation from its essence, species-being or power occurs as the subject is deprived or expropriated of its object (Marx, 2000: 87). As soon as the object *is* no longer for the subject, so the subject *cannot be*:

> "A being that has no object outside itself is not an objective being […] A non-objective being is a non-being […] But a non-objective being is an unreal, non-sensuous being that is only thought of, i.e. an imaginary being, a being of abstraction" (2000: 113).

Here Marx is tormented by the paradox of the modern re-presentation. The alienated labourer is not a human *being* (i.e. Objectifivity) because of a *difference* of not-being that separates it from its objective being. Whereas Heidegger understands alienation/unfreedom ek-statically as Dasein's circular (self)projections of being *not*-for-its-ownmost-potentiality-of-being, Marx presentifies alienation as an *empty difference* between two presentified beings: *a* being (Objectivity) and unthinkable ("imaginary") non-being (non-Objectivity) (2000: 113).

Marx (mis)understands alienation in presentified terms as abyss of not-being.

Marx's alienation is the presentified *negation* of the *positive* subject-object relation or, alternatively, its reversal (2000: 90). The *Manuscripts* outline four sides of the labourer's alienation from the object *as*: product of labour; labouring activity; other human beings; species-being (2000: 91). The object stands before the expropriated labourer as something external or *alien*: the object no longer belongs to the subject but has turned into a quasi-subject that *enslaves* the subject. The subject is thus alienated from its human essence or power: productive species-being or labour as objectification of human will. To the alienated subject, labour has become a mere means to satisfy one's immediate physiological needs. The human subject is thus alienated from (its) nature, which has *ceased being* the object of a labour directed at the satisfaction of higher needs (i.e. objectification of human will). The alienated labourer has lost its power over other animals as it is itself degraded to an animalistic state.

Marx wonders who or what is responsible for alienating the labourer from its objective being (2000: 91-93). This cannot be a higher being (i.e. God) but another human being to whom the labourer relates during production. This is insofar as the material production of human existence is always shared objectification of nature, with the species-being of humanity lying in sociality (2000: 98). During the shared production of the object of subsistence, the labourer is also alienated from other human beings as the master (e.g. capitalist owner) has appropriated what is not theirs: the objective being of the slave (e.g. factory worker) (2000: 92).

The master *negates* the objective essence or power of a majority of expropriated slaves; in the bourgeois mode of production, this occurs through the wage relations of private property (2000: 93-5). Like the alien object that masters the Proletariat, so the bourgeois thief masters the worker. First and foremost, the unfolding of the class struggle across the modes of production is the history of a reversed subject-object relation: the history of dialectics as the alienation of the human being from its positive essence (i.e. power as objectification of everything). At the roots of the unequal relations of production or class struggle is alienation as the reversal of the subject-object relation. For Marx, class power is alienated power as the *negation* of the very being of the worker as a (*non*)*being*:

> "A being only counts itself as independent and it stands on its own feet as long as it owes its existence to itself. A man who lives by grace of another considers himself a dependent being. But I live completely by the grace of another when I owe him not only the maintenance of my life but when he has also created my life, when he is the source of my life" (2000: 103).

Once already gets a sense of the unthinkable/vicious circle we find ourselves in, given that Marx's master *creates* the slave's (*non*)being.

> *Marx (mis)understands the social difference as unthinkable abyss of not-being: an objective (non)relation between master* (subject) *and slave* (alienated subject or object).

The Marxian history of being(-with) as class struggle is the history of a class that has stolen (objective) (non)*being* from another. The human *being* or power is (mis)understood as *a* being (i.e. Objectivity) that can be the object of a theft, whereby some individuals have it and others do not. As per the next section, Communism will put an end to the class struggle because under its rule the whole of humanity will be allowed to *be* human or to have power.

7.7. Marx's dialectical materialism: Communism and the technological fight against the abyss of not-being

In Communism there will no longer be a *difference* between thesis and antithesis to be negatively resolved by a further synthesis (2000: 104). The Communist Revolution is the last dialectical negation or the "negation of the negation" (2000: 104). Communism will put an end to the history of dialectics and *return* the human being back to its positive relation to the object:

> "[Communism] is the genuine solution of the antagonism between man and nature and between man and man. It is the true solution of the struggle between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. The whole movement of history, therefore, both as regards the real engendering of this communism, the birth of its empirical existence, and also as regards its consciousness and thought, is the consciously comprehended process of its becoming"
> (2000: 97).

The history of dialectics is the history of the progressive closure of the synthetic difference between subject and object (de-alienation). Communism is the final and complete destruction of the (unthinkable) difference of not-being: the metaphysical triumph of a being (Objectivity) over a non-being (non-Objectivity). In Communism, the difference

between form and reality has disappeared, hence allowing the return of (a) being to itself as the inevitable return of Objectivity to itself (metaphysical identity):

> *the Communist Revolution is* inevitable *only insofar Marx has pre-projected the whole of history of being in terms of the (objective) present (self-concealment of being as Picture). Marx's history is affected by a deep-seated form of presentism: a desperate fight against the objective gap of not-being between transhistorical Form and (Marx's) present Reality.*

In each mode of production, the gradual closure of the synthetic difference occurs via destruction of the difference between new forces of production (antithesis) and pre-existing relations of production (thesis). The history of technological development *is* the dialectical movement of the reverted subject-object relation back to its positive/original state. This is because Marx (mis)understands the essence of technology as instrument that *must* fill the objective *difference* of not-being between subject and object, Society and Nature, form and matter:

> *Marx's technology is the dialectical medium that must annihilate the synthetic difference between subject and object, society and nature, thesis and antithesis. Marx (mis)understands the essence of technology as human* instrument *for the fight against the objective abyss of not-being.*

Capitalism will be the last antagonistic mode of production as the very end of the dialectics and return to the positive subject-object relation. This is the theoretical expression of a the ever-recurring desire for a truth that ceases revealing and *is* (objective) Truth. Hence Marx's (mis)interpretation of the technology of his present, i.e. factory machinery, as a technology that *overlaps with* the objective relation between subject and object: the return of the *instrumental* Truth of technology back to itself: Objectivity. This is the mythical return of Marx's present technology to the ideal Form that Technology *was always meant to be*, i.e. the Instrument of humanity's absolute objectification of Nature:

> "No longer does the worker insert a modified natural thing as middle link between the object and himself; rather, he inserts the process of nature, transformed into an industrial process, as a means between himself and inorganic nature, mastering it. […] In this transformation, it is neither the direct human labour he himself

> performs, nor the time during which he works, but rather the appropriation of his own general productive power, his understanding of nature and his mastery over it […]" (Marx, 1973: 705).

The bourgeoisie has inadvertently developed the material conditions for the human return to its species-being: "communism as completed naturalism is humanism and as completed humanism is naturalism" (Marx, 2000: 97). Capitalist technoscience enables humanity to relate to Nature no longer as something alien that stands before the worker as a means of mere self-subsistence. Modern Industry re-establishes a genuine relationship to Nature as the *object* for the cultivation of those higher needs that makes humanity's species-being human. This is the return to humanity's appropriation of matter as true/real *objectification* of human will and consciousness:

> "But natural science by means of industry has penetrated human life all the more effectively, changed its form and prepared for human emancipation, even though in the first place it lead to complete dehumanization. Industry is the real historical relationship of nature, and therefore of natural science, to man" (2000: 102).

Although under bourgeois rule factory machinery is an instrument of alienated power, it can be re-deployed for the sake of a Communist society. Given that the essence of technology *is* instrumental Objectivity or objective Instrumentality, the same technology can *objectively* be used for *different* uses. Marx's critical political economy explains this as a detachment of machinery's use-value from exchange value (Marx, 1973: 699-709; Marx, 2013: 278-282). As soon as factory machinery is no longer *used for* the accumulation of relative surplus value, humanity will benefit from a technology that has the potential of reducing labour time to a minimum (Marx, 1973: 700-06). Human beings will be able to dedicate themselves to the satisfaction of higher needs any time they wish ("in the time set free") (1973: 706). What *Grundrisse* describes as humanity's "appropriation of [its] own general productive power" (1973: 705) is a return from alienated utility, i.e. technological production for the sake of a non-need (i.e. accumulation of surplus value), into objective utility "for its own sake" (Marx, 2000: 100):

> " [communist society] makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic" (Marx and Engels, 1974: 54).

One cannot but celebrate Marx's *attempt* to think about a future world in which human beings will be free. Yet, the freedom of Communism gives voice to Marx's (mis)understanding of Dasein's power or *perfectio*, i.e. existing for its *ownmost* potentiality-of-being. Marx (mis)thinks about freedom as *objectification* of everything in *objectified* time.

> *Marx (mis)understands the meaning of freedom or human* perfectio *as objectification for objectification's sake: the absolute imposition of human will over everything, including the uncontrollable Event of time-space extending. Paradoxically, Marx's materialism has delegated human freedom to a* deity*: Objectivity. For Marx, freedom is the condition whereby the Event of time-space extending has become an* object *under human control: Marx (mis)understands the essence of freedom in terms of the present self-concealment of the Event of Picture. Paradoxically, Marx continues (mis)thinking about the revolutionary future of Communism in terms of his present world, hence failing to think differently in the first place: the Communist Revolution continues (mis)thinking about the revolutionary future in terms of humanity's present condition of unfreedom.*

Upon turning to Heidegger's critique of Marxism, the task ahead is to establish, once and for all, how to think differently: independently from the (un)truths of the present.

7.8. The possibility of a "productive dialogue" with Marxism

Marx had the merit of giving philosophical dignity to the one desire that has recurrently appropriated the revolutionary thinkers of history: a desire for a *different* world. What has defined Critical Theory since its heyday is an attempt to change the *present* world. Contemporaneous with the critique is the proposal of a different world or future, which must resolve humanity's present state of unfreedom or impotence. This is a *difference* to be realised through a revolution of sorts, henceforth *revolutionary difference*:

> "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it" (Marx, 1974: 123).

Heidegger shares admiration for Marx's critical project, whose account of history is "superior" to others (LH, 243). Despite Jean-Paul Sartre's failure, Heidegger concedes the possibility of a "productive dialogue" with Marxism (LH, 243). Communism does give voice to an "elemental experience" of the destining of being (LH, 244). Alternatively, Marx had the merit of criticizing the "estrangement" experienced by the humanity of his present (LH, 243).

The roots of modern estrangement lie in humanity's ever-recurring "homelessness" (LH, 243). This is Dasein's forgetting of its "homeland", which should not be (mis)understood "patriotically or nationalistically", but as Dasein's shared belonging to the Event of being (LH, 241). Upon criticizing the Proletariat's estrangement, Marx gave voice to an epochal experience of homelessness: "an elemental experience of what is world-historical speaks out in it" (LH, 244). However, Marx's conceptualisation of homelessness *as* alienation has "covered up" the essence of the same homelessness that historical materialism attempted to overcome (LH, 243). Via Hegelian dialectics, Marx has (mis)interpreted the meaning of homelessness in terms of its present/modern (self-concealment): "evoked from the destiny of being in the form of metaphysics" (LH, 243). In other words, Heidegger is informing us of the same mistake that the previous section has already outlined:

> *Marx (mis)understands the history of Dasein's homelessness in terms of the present, i.e. modern, self-concealment of being(-with),* as *dialectical alienation (presentism).*

The productive dialogue with Marxism is possible only insofar as one interprets Marx's philosophy itself as modern Event of (mis)thinking that conceals itself in Marx's objectivist language:

> "For such dialogue it is certainly also necessary to free oneself from naive notions about materialism […] The essence of materialism does not consist in the assertion that everything is simply matter but rather in a metaphysical determination according to which every being appears as the material of labor. The modern metaphysical essence of labor is anticipated in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* […]" (LH , 243).

Via Hegel, Marx (mis)understands the history of being in the (dialectical) terms of (his) present, i.e. in the objectivist terms of Modernity: "objectification of the actual through man experienced as subjectivity" (LH, 243). As seen in the previous section, the Marxian appropriation of the Hegelian lesson whereby history repeats itself is quite at odds with the Heideggerian return of the same difference (Marx, 2010: 103). The proletarian revolution will realise the classless

future of Communism upon putting an end to the synthetic *difference* of the dialectics. Whereas in Hegel this used to be the abstraction of thinking from itself, in Marx it has become the material condition of human *alienation* as metaphysical difference between subject and object (Marx, 2000: 104-118). Upon (mis)understanding the whole history of being in terms of his present (self-concealment of being), Marx cannot but (mis)understand the revolutionary future in terms of the present as well:

> *Marx (mis)thinks about the revolutionary difference in terms of the present (un)truth of his epoch or, alternatively, in terms of the present self-concealment of the ontological difference. The meaning of the 'alienation' concept is itself the problem that Marx fails to critique: the (Anti-)Event of Picture that has always already appropriated Marx's (mis)thinking about an* unthinkable *difference of not-being as (non-)Objectivity. The same goes for his attempt to theorise a revolutionary stage of technological development. Marx has (mis)understood the essence of technology in terms of the present (Anti-)Event of being-creative as Picture: in terms of the present (un)truth that the technology of his own present* is *(misunderstood as): Objectivity. Upon gaining a presentified (un)truth or transhistorical Truth about being-creative from the technology of his present (i.e. factory machinery), Marx cannot but think about the revolutionary future of technological development in terms of present technology: in terms of the same (Anti)Event of Picture that makes industrialised humanity unfree.*

The productive dialogue with the critical project of Marxism is possible only insofar as thinking liberates itself from the metaphysical (un)truths of the present. Heidegger's philosophy provides all the necessary tools to think freely/differently. In LH, Heidegger refers to being-historical thinking as the "healing" of historical humanity from "evil" (LH, 260). Heidegger does not subscribe to a simplistic view of sociality as eternal fight of good versus evil. The binary view that evil and good need each other in order to *be* implies that evil *is* not-good and that good *is* not-evil. Evil is thus (mis)understood *negatively* ("baseness of human action") as *a* non-being that *is*-not(good) (LH, 260). In this (mis)understanding of good and evil lies the forgetting of the essence of nothingness ("the essential provenance of nihilation") (LH, 260). Nothingness should not be (mis)understood as a presentified *non*-being; this is the paradox of traditional metaphysics *par excellence*. For the early Heidegger, nothingness belongs to the ek-static being of

Dasein (i.e. not-yet). Ek-static nihilation is precisely what enables Dasein to *be*, i.e. to disclose to the openness of its there. And so, for the later Heidegger, nihilation is a gift of the epochal Event whereby beings can come out of concealment into unconcealment. As seen before, metaphysical humanity (mis)understands nothingness as a non-being; in modern times, this is the result of a subject-activated (presentified) *negation* of being:

> "Dasein in no way nihilates as a human subject who carries out nihilation in the sense of denial […] the "not" appears in the absolute Idealism of Hegel and Schelling as the negativity of negation in the essence of Being" (LH, 261).

Heidegger is saying that Hegel's dialectics has fallen prey to the modern (mis)understanding of nihilation as negative denial of the Other's (not-)being. Marx has inherited this mistake: the class struggle is precisely the synthetic present whereby a subject (i.e. the bourgeoisie) *negates* an objectified subject (i.e. the alienated Proletariat). Marx forgets the social difference through a binary opposition between good (Proletariat) and evil (Bourgeoisie), which opens the possibility of (mis)thinking about the revolution as an unthinkable difference of not-being.

The proletarian revolution is the reversal of the negative synthesis by hand of the Proletariat: Marx's revolution is still dependent on a presentified form of negation. Communism returns humanity to a pristine condition because *a* being has eventually prevailed over the negation of an objective (non-)being. Once again, Marx has forgotten the social difference in terms of its present self-concealment. The proletarian revolution is expected to deliver a different/original future upon filling in the abstract difference of the synthesis. But this revolutionary difference is not or, more correctly, it is(-not) only for the sake of Marx's objectivist pre-projection of being:

> *instead of revolting against the metaphysics of the modern representation, Marx implemented it in his revolutionary project of de-alienation. Rather than critiquing the inauthentic power of the modern epoch, Marx (mis)understood the essence of power in terms of its present self-concealment (i.e. objectification of everything). Marx (mis)thought about the revolutionary difference in the same terms of the modern self-concealment of being(-with).*

The Proletariat is asked to join the same pointless fight against the abyssal difference of not-being opened by the modern representation[28]. Using the language of *CP*, Marx's revolution is a re-volution or "re-active":

> " […] all attempts that react against metaphysics […] persist in being *re-active* and thus are in principle dependent upon metaphysics and thereby remain themselves metaphysics" (CP, 122 italics my emphasis).

Marx can only think about a world that is re-evolutionary*:* essentially *not-different* from his present world because its difference continues being (mis)thought in terms of the *present* self-concealment of the ontological difference (e.g. the revolutionary future of technological development as full Objectification of Nature). Even before the wasteland brought about by the fall of the wall, Neo-Marxism attempted to liberate Marx from his metaphysical error and pose a *true* or *real* alternative to the present world of Capitalism. Before engaging with Michel Foucault's attempt to liberate critical thinking from Marxian metaphysics, the next section proceeds to define the meaning of so-called critical thinking. As one attempts to think about a revolutionary world, a question begs to be answered: what is the essence of the revolution or, alternatively, what does 'revolution' mean?

7.9. For a critique of the present via Heidegger: the rebellious Event of genealogical destruction

The meaning of the epochal revolution is no human act of destruction and re-construction (e.g. Marx's dialectical negation) but the Event of *being-creative* or *techne* that appropriates historical Dasein's setting in place of the strife between World and Earth:

> "At each time a new and essential world arose. At each time the openness of what is had to be established in beings themselves, by the fixing in place of truth in figure. At each time there happened unconcealedness of what is […] a thrust enters history, history either begins or starts over again. History means here not a sequence in time of events of whatever sort, however important. History is the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entrance into that people's endowment" (OWA, 74).

[28] Here the re- of the representation is the result of the dialectical antithesis.

First and foremost, the revolution is the Turn from one epoch to another or a different *return* of the same, i.e. ever-recurring, epochal sending of being:

> *the meaning of 'revolution' is the epochal giving of the gift of a different world that appropriates humanity's being-creative. And yet, upon giving a different gift of presence, the revolutionary giving of the (different) gift of presence conceals itself in the same terms of the (different) gift or present.*

Ambiguity belongs to so-called social revolutions[29], which are always carried out in the name of a different world, which will be inhabited by a *humanitas* that is finally free. And yet, the enlightened *animale rationale* promptly turns into guillotine executioner, the Proletariat into People's Party, the Folk community into Superior Race, the revolutionary student into hipster corporate executive. As the revolutionary giving of the gift of a different world has always already denied itself, its meaning may also conceal itself to metaphysical thinkers. Theorists of the social revolution fail to think about the epochal Turn that *appropriates* humanity, hence (mis)understanding the essence of the revolution as a presentified event under humanity's control. Albeit unknowingly, so-called 'critical' thinkers (e.g. Marx) have recurrently (mis)theorised the Anti-Event or self-concealment of the revolutionary Event as the presentified essence of the revolution. The essence of the revolution is (mis)understood as the (Anti-)Event whereby the formerly dominated Other *turns into* dominator (e.g. Marx's Proletariat). Thus (mis)theorised, the revolution *must* re-turn the human World to a different, yet the same, inauthentic mode of being-with-the-Other. This is the same critique raised by LH against metaphysical forms of humanism, including Marx's (mis)thinking about revolutionary humanity as modern subject (LH, 224):

> "The highest determinations of the essence of man in humanism still do not realize the proper dignity of man. To that extent the thinking in Being and Time is against humanism. But this opposition does not mean that such

[29] As indirectly seen before, the same ambiguity belongs to the Event of revolutionary (mis)thinking (e.g. Descartes). Upon being appropriated by the giving of a different gift of presence, i.e. Modern Objectivity, Descartes has always already put into words the self-concealment of the Modern Turn: the revolutionary Event whereby the giving of the different gift of objective presence (i.e. Event of Picture) conceals itself in terms of the 'objective' present (i.e. Anti-Event of Picture).

> thinking aligns itself against the humane and advocates the inhuman, that it promotes the inhumane and deprecates the dignity of man. Humanism is opposed because it does not set the *humanitas* of man high enough" (LH, 233-234).

Dasein's highest dignity or power lies in its lack of present *humanitas* or in being the only being that can make of (its) being a question. Freedom is *always already* a possibility for the only being that has the choice to take authentic care of (its own and the Other's) being. Instead, in the name of *different* metaphysical concepts of revolutionary humanity, critical thinkers have recurrently (mis)theorised the revolution in the *same* metaphysical terms of universally uniform *humanitas*[30].

> *Via presentified definitions of different/revolutionary* humanitas*, the critical thinker (mis)understands the revolutionary difference in the same terms of the present (self-concealment of being).*

Paradoxically, Heidegger's refusal to be humanist confirms his desire to lend his ontology to a project of human freedom: being-historical thinking can help us to think about a different world. Although LH refuses to provide ethical lessons for our everyday conduct (LH, 259-262), this is because Heidegger's philosophy bypasses altogether the categories of *praxis* and theory (LH, 262). [31] Heidegger is not denying that being-historical thinking can change things for the better. The possibility of thinking about being as *Event* is precisely what keeps alive his hopes in a *different* future (PI, 37; OCM, 52; TT, 41-2). The only "saving power" that may help humanity overcome the double danger of Enframing is its ability to relate to the essence of technology as *Event* of appropriation (QCT, 32). When it comes to free thinking, being-historical thinking enables the thinker to *surmount* Enframing upon inhabiting a mysterious

[30] For instance, Marx can justify the Proletariat Revolution only insofar as his theory of capital accumulation has posited the eventual polarisation of society into an overwhelming majority of dispossessed proletarians and an increasingly small minority of capitalists: the universal Proletarianisation of the human *being*.

[31] Both theory and praxis belong to the same Event of being or, in the language of the early Heidegger, they are different gifts of the same ek-static condition that defines Dasein: care.

"realm" (TT, 34-41). The only authentic revolution (i.e. saving power) at our disposal is the embracing of the ontological difference: the realm of our belonging-together to the being of beings. A different world, one in which Dasein is free, must be thought about via a (being-historical) thinking that enables "in-turning" (TT, 43): a leap into the other beginning (CP). This is the different world that the critical/revolutionary thinker has recurrently failed to think about:

> "When the danger is as the danger, with the turning about of oblivion, the safekeeping of Being comes to pass; world comes to pass. That world comes to pass as world, that the thing things, this is the distant advent of the coming to presence of Being itself" (TT, 43).

Here the later Heidegger has rephrased his earlier insights about Dasein's being-in revolt (Section 2.8). A different world is not to be pursued in the not-yet-present future of Marx's post-synthetic de-alienated world. Authentic freedom can only be obtained in the ek-static there (*Da-*) of everyday life. This is the authentic moment of everyday existence that Dasein inhabits upon embracing the existential rebellion of anxious resolution. Dasein can authentically *negate* its present world (i.e. They-world) via anxiety/existential *nihilism*: upon looking into and accepting the nothingness that pervades its ek-sistence.

Authentic Dasein *returns* to its everyday world and *repeats* (i.e. authentically appropriates) the everyday possibilities of a traditional "heritage" that it has inherited *not* of its own accord (BT, 365-66) [383-84]. This is the condition of being free for one's "fate" (i.e. Dasein's thrown occurrence or circular ek-sistence) (BT, 365-366) [384]. Upon accepting its circular fate, Dasein achieves the authentic power of authentic being-in revolt (i.e. rebellion) that authentically negates or rebels against the They-world:

> "If Dasein, anticipating, lets death become powerful in itself, then, as free for death, it understands itself in its own *higher power* of its finite freedom. In this way it takes over the *powerlessness* of being abandoned to itself in that freedom, which always only is in having chosen the choice […]" (BT, 366 italics original) [384].

Only via *circular repetition* of its fate may Dasein live in a world that is truly meaningful. A different world *is* the *repotentialisation* of everyday possibilities for one's ownmost potentiality-of-being, rather than for the sake of the dictatorial They-self. Only in the circular present of the moment, may Dasein and its world *be-different*:

> *existentially, the authentic leap-in the other beginning or the Event of* being-different *corresponds to the Moment of the everyday Dasein that has resolutely embraced or mastered the circularity of its ek-static condition (i.e. existential rebellion). Upon repotentialising the everyday possibilities of a traditional world or heritage that Dasein has inherited not of its own accord, rebellious Dasein and its world may* be-different.

Only in the authentic moment, may Dasein make a free choice about "the struggle over what is to follow" (BT, 367) [385]. In fact, the free moment of rebellious Dasein is always already a *shared* struggle: the fate of individual Dasein, which is always already being-with, belongs to the "destiny" of a historical "generation" (BT, 366) [384-85]. The rebellious Dasein that is "in the Moment for its time" (BT, 366) [385], partakes in a struggle that claims or appropriates the destiny of its generation. As indirectly seen before in Section 7.1, this is always already a struggle *against the domination of the Other*.

It is important to remember that inauthentic being-with or the domination of the Other is the (mis)understanding of being that individual Dasein always already *is*: a (mis)understanding of the Other's and individual Dasein's own *being*[32]. Upon leaping-in for the Other or upon making present the Other's being, inauthentic Dasein fails to project *its own* being for its ownmost potentiality-of-being. In other words, Dasein *itself* is failing to be free. *Existentially*, upon dominating the Other, Dasein is in fact the dominated.

The dominator gains no authentic power over the Other but the illusionary control that defines inauthentic existence. This is the tranquillising and comfortable immersion in everyday possibilities of domination: an escape from the choice of authentic power that stands before the dominator/dominated. Upon taking away the Other's choice, the dominator fails to fulfill *its own* potentiality of being: inauthentic being-with is always a matter of inauthentic power, impotence of will, or unfreedom. *Existentially*, the Dasein that dominates the Other is not existing for its ownmost potentiality-of-being. The one that we usually call master is by no means freer than the slave.

[32] One should be careful about distinguishing between the being of individual Dasein and the Other's. *Existentially*, the two are not separable: the Other's being, i.e. Dasein-with, is discovered by Dasein's being-with as circular self-projection into possibilities opened up by the Other.

Instead of freeing the Other's being for its ownmost potentiality-of-being, the so-called master (mis)understands *itself* in terms of the immediate possibilities enabled by the Other: in terms of its success or failure in dominating the Other. Dasein has delegated its potentiality of being or freedom to the Other:

> "[…] as everyday being-with-one-another, Dasein stands in subservience to others. It itself is not; the others have taken its being away from it. The everyday possibilities of being of Dasein are at the disposal of the whims of others" (BT, 122) [126].

Existentially, the distinction between master and slave is an illusionary one: the master gains no authentic power or freedom upon (mis)understanding itself as enslaver. The dominator gains no *authentic* mastery or power because human existence cannot be controlled as if it was *a* being. The only way in which Dasein can be *authentic* master of the Other (and itself) is by acknowledging the Other's potentiality-of-being. This is the uncontrollable condition that defines the being of individual Dasein as much as the Other's: *choice*. As per the *Kehre*, Dasein must acknowledge that it has no present control over the epochal Event of the Other's presencing but that it can only be its shepherd.

It goes without saying that human freedom cannot tolerate any chains. And yet, the *essence* of freedom cannot be (mis)understood as *absence* of chains:

> "Freedom is not mere absence of constraint with respect to what we can or cannot do. Nor is it on the other hand mere readiness for what is required and necessary (and so somehow a being)" (ET, 126).

Freedom is not something *presently* available or missing, i.e. something to be obtained in a not-yet-present re-volutionary future. Freedom is *always already* a possibility contained in Dasein's ek-static present. The only *authentic* freedom or power available to the human being is the possibility of resolute anticipation, which embraces and masters the burdensome not-yet of existence. Upon answering the call of resolution, individual Dasein silently comes to grips with the *meaninglessness* of the They-world: a world *not* projected for one's ownmost potentiality-of-being. This is contemporaneously the realization of the *meaninglessness of the everyday possibilities of domination* in which one finds itself thrown since its birth. Once again:

Dasein's existence is always already an act of revolt, either authentic (existential rebellion) or inauthentic (re-volution). Existential rebellion comes with the choice of defying *inauthentic social power. This is the possibility open before the Dasein that is free for choice: the possibility of authentically negating the (mis)understanding of being-with as domination of the Other.*

It is necessary to stop thinking about the revolutionary difference as a project to be practically realised in a future that is not-yet-present. No matter how the revolution is thought about (e.g. politically or religiously), lying here is a disburdenment of responsibility, choice or freedom to a re-volutionary They-self (CP, 29). This precludes the possibility of a "genuine struggle" in the ek-static present of the Moment (CP, 29).[33] A different 'society' (i.e. Event of being-with-the-Other) can only be the unplannable end point of a process of *creative struggle* that starts from the individual level of existential resolution (CP, 29). There is no authentic freedom in a broken chain without *existential* freedom. Only by acknowledging and cultivating the individual level of freedom, may a different world arise, one in which being-with-the-Other ceases being (mis)understood as a matter of domination. Otherwise, Dasein shall continue experiencing more of the *same* difference: re-volutions that enchain individual ek-sistence via different, yet the same ever-recurring, chains.

This is the same paradoxical Event that has recurrently appropriated 'critical' thinking. As extensively seen before, Marx continues (mis)thinking about the revolution in the same terms of Modernity's (Anti-)Event of being, hence failing to think differently. Instead, different or free thinking demands that the thinker is appropriated by the epochal Event of free thinking. As already seen - albeit indirectly - in section 3.9, the essence of free thinking *is* the moment of being-historical thinking:

being-historical thinking is the theoretical continuation of everyday Dasein's possibility of being-free: hermeneutic destruction *of epochal (mis)thinking is the theoretical translation of the moment of existential* nihilism*. This is theoretical Dasein's refusal to ontologically (mis)understand (its) being in terms of its present world, hence being able to think differently or freely. Hermeneutic*

[33] Free life is indeed "elsewhere" (Kundera, 1986: 175): not in a Communist future that is yet-to-come but in the ek-static present of the Moment, wherein the They-world and its truths have become meaningless.

destruction is the Event of free/different thinking: the Event of being-different that appropriates the free thinker. In the thesis' terms, genealogical destruction is the rebellious Event of free thinking about the present, which is achieved via destruction of the present (un)truths about being(-human): genealogical destruction as creative repotentialisation *of a traditional heritage of language and thinking that the genealogist has inherited not of their own accord.*

The section has established the terms of free thinking, as opposed to the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference that has (mis)appropriated critical thinkers. In Marx's case, this occurred in terms of the objective present of the World Picture. Let us proceed to see how this Event appropriated Michel Foucault's turn from Marxism.

7.10. Michel Foucault's critical genealogy of the human being

Two years before his death, the philosopher of power *par excellence* claims that the subject of his work has not been power *per se* (Foucault, 1982: 781). First and foremost, Foucault's genealogy is a history of the human being or a "critical ontology of ourselves" (Foucault, 1997b: 316). Power has been studied exclusively as the historical locus of the process whereby the human being is objectified into a subjugated subject or subjectivity (Foucault, 1982: 777-78).

Even when the subject seems to have exerted control over itself autonomously (i.e. self-subjugation), Foucault maintains that power is always a "relation" wherein individual autonomy is subjugated to someone else's influence (1982: 786). Power is not a centralised system controlled by a few individuals, nor a negative force descending vertically upon the rest of society (Foucault, 1998: 92-3). Power is a positive force that is immanent in the social bond: "power is everywhere" as a dispersed network of micro-conflicts that pervade society (1998: 93-4). The task of genealogy is to discern the "general line of force", "rationality", "logic" or "complex strategic situation" that the power relationships form at a given time (1998: 93-4). This rationality is no master plan of a central brain nor an objective intentionality that individuals follow consciously (1998: 94-5). Only retrospectively, i.e. with the hindsight of the *present*, can Foucault's genealogy identify the "logic of a great strategy" that brings together the historical micro-conflicts under the same regime of power (1998: 97).

Foucault believes that his strategical model has overcome a misunderstanding that political theory has suffered from for a long time: the reduction of power to the rule of the monarch's law (1998: 97). This is the

theorisation of power as a repressive force that remains concentrated in a central point: a power that achieves domination negatively via repression, interdiction and blind obedience (1998: 85). Among others, here Foucault wants to distance himself from Marx's dialectical critique of the class struggle. Foucault always refused to reinsert his critique within the Marxist tradition of critical thinking (Foucault, 1997d: 113-115). In a deliberate attempt to escape the "communistological" power games of Neo-Marxism (Foucault, 1980a: 53), Foucault seldom quotes or references Marx, even when he is indeed building on his texts (1980a: 52-54). Although not immediately discernible, Foucault's criticism of Marx can be traced back to the metaphysical bias of his humanism, which continues affecting Sartre existentialist Neo-Marxism.

Foucault takes issue with the objective self-presence of the Marxian subject (Foucault, 1997b: 314; Foucault, 1997c: 262), hence rejecting the notion of human essence as objective production of nature (Foucault, 2015: 232). Similarly, Foucault cannot uptake Marx's concept of class struggle, whereby the bourgeoisie maintains a monopoly over power and exerts it negatively against the alienated proletariat (Foucault, 2015*:* 228). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault re-interprets the history of Capitalism through the strategic notion of war (i.e. micro-conflict) (Foucault, 1991: 135-195). The concept of class struggle is positivised via strategic concepts such as disciplinary power, surveillance and subjectification (1991: 163; 164; 169; 175). As Marx's subject is replaced with historical subjectivities that arise out of clashes of power, there cannot be a de-alienated or liberated human nature to return to (Foucault, 1997a: 282).

A similar lesson can already be found in Heidegger's conceptualisation of the human being and its ek-static power as ambiguous. In fact, Foucault claimed that his philosophy started from his reading of Heidegger, even though eventually Friedrich Nietzsche prevailed (Foucault, 1996a: 470). And so, it is precisely from Nietzsche that Foucault seems to have borrowed a presentified (un)truth or atemporal Truth about the human *being*.

7.11. Foucault's presentism: the turn from sovereignty into biopolitics

Foucault applies his genealogical method to the theory of power as a negative force and traces it back to the monarchical regime (Foucault, 1998: 87-8). This theorisation of power misinterprets how power worked in Medieval times *and* at the present time of writing in the mid-1970s. Even in the Middle Ages, when power seemed brutally repressive and centralised, it worked as a network of positive power relations: the repressive interdiction of the

sovereign was only the form in which the relations of power "presented themselves" or their "mode of manifestation" (1998: 86-7).

Even in the Middle Ages the juridical model of the law misrepresented the way in which power was exercised (1998: 87-8). However, back then this theoretical misunderstanding was somehow justifiable given that the negative rule of law was the historical form taken up by power (1998: 89). When it comes to the *present* failure to theoretically "cut off the head of the king" Foucault finds no excuses: political thinkers continue misrepresenting power in terms of a long-gone regime (1998: 89). The representation of power as negative law is "utterly incongruous" with the *present* form or regime of power, i.e. the disciplinary model of biopower (1998: 89).

The biopolitical regime emerged at the end of the seventeenth century and is still operative at the present time of writing (1998: 135-50). The novelty of the biopolitical regime lies in the political recuperation of those techniques of pastoral power that had been the prerogative of the Church (e.g. confession and monastic techniques of bodily disciplinisation). With the emergence of the institutions and techniques that will give life to the Modern State (e.g. prison, school, army, factory, psychiatric asylum, demography, etc.), political power takes into explicit calculation the collective and individual dimension of the human *bios* (1998: 143).

Foucault identifies two complementary strategies of biopolitical power (1998: 139-145). At one end of the spectrum, there are *disciplines* aimed at controlling individual bodies: micro-techniques of "anatomo-politics" that no longer repress the subject as a property of the sovereign or as sinful (1998: 139). The disciplines *normalise* the individual as a physiological organism whose health and reproduction have become explicit concerns for the modern State. Contemporaneously, the subject is disciplined as a member of the "species body": a physiological organism to be kept alive through a "biopolitics of the population" (1998: 139).

As the modern institutions co-opt the techniques of pastoral power, Foucault notices their transition into a *different* form or strategy (1998: 142-43). The monarch's rule manifested itself as the *negative* power to take life away from the subject who had threatened the rule and existence of the sovereign ("deduction") (1998: 89). Instead, biopolitical power gives itself as the power to *manage* individual lives, hence guaranteeing the survival of the social organism. The biopolitical regime is no longer based on the *negative* rule of the sovereign but on the normalising force of the disciplines, which subjugate the individual *positively* (1998: 136) .

It is clear why Foucault cannot justify the political thinkers of his present for misrepresenting power negatively. Power has *always* been a positive relation. Nevertheless, the present regime of biopolitical power has

organised itself around the *positivity* that the power relationship has always been. Here one gets more than a doubt that *realised* as biopolitical regime is the *Truth* of Power. That Foucault has pre-projected the genealogy of power in terms of his *present* is an inadvertent self-admission. As per the historical necessity of his strategical theory of power:

> "And this, not out of a speculative choice or theoretical preference, but because in fact it is one of the essential traits of Western societies that the force relationships which for a long time had found expression in war, in every form of warfare, gradually became invested in the order of political power" (1998: 102).

The strategical theory of power is a response to the present world in which Foucault finds himself thrown into. Unsurprisingly, the present regime of biopower is utterly unique or *different*:

> "In a society such as ours, where the devices of power are so numerous, its rituals so visible, and its instruments ultimately so reliable, in this society that has been more imaginative, probably, than any other in creating devious and supple mechanisms of power, what explains this tendency not to recognize the latter except in the negative and emaciated form of prohibition?" (1998: 86).

Through the Modern State, the regime of biopower has achieved something unprecedented or different. The present regime has realised qua reality (biopolitics) the Truth that Power was *always* meant to be (biohistory):

> "If one can apply the term bio-history to the pressures through which the movements of life and the processes of history interfere with one another, one would have to speak of bio-power to designate what brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of transformation of human life" (1998: 143).

Foucault's genealogy seems grounded in a deep-seated form of presentism:

> *Foucault's present is the apex of a history of power whereby an abstract Form realizes itself as social Reality.*

Foucault insists that the rationality of a regime of power is no abstract form: the power relationship or micro-conflict is not the "representation" of the wider strategy and vice versa but, instead, their relationship is a matter of "*double conditioning*" (1998: 100). The doubt is not appeased but, if anything, it is getting stronger.

7.12. Foucault's interactional metaphysics of power

Foucault insists that power is no entity or metaphysical ground of the human being (Foucault, 1982: 785-86). Alternatively, critique should not attempt to define the essence of "Power", i.e. what power *is* (1982: 788) or how it "manifests itself" (1982: 786). This is a silent criticism of Sartre's existentialism, which elsewhere Foucault criticizes for theorising a metaphysical subject that is invited to rediscover its true self (Foucault, 1997c: 262). Albeit in different terms, Heidegger also criticizes Sartre's subjectification of Dasein (LH). However, Foucault labels *all* essentialist talk as "fraudulent metaphysics" (Foucault, 1982: 786). As a corrective, Foucault insists that critical ontology should focus on *how* power is exercised:

> "Power exists only when it is put into action […] In effect, what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future" (1982: 788).

Foucault rejects metaphysical definitions of what power *means* but upon doing so he has pre-projected one: power *is* ("exists") only when it is activated ("put into action") as "an action upon an action" (1982: 788). Foucault seems to be fighting an unfightable fight against human thinking itself, given that thinking is always already metaphysical:

> *power manifests itself to Foucault's thinking as an action acting upon another (re-)action ad infinitum or, alternatively as* Interface *of endless interactions. Hidden behind Foucault's genealogy of power is a (mis)understanding of the Event of being(-with) in terms of the interactional (un)truth of Enframing: Interactivity.*

Foucault seems to (mis)understand the whole history of power or being(-with) in terms of its present self-concealment as Standing Reserve. As per Foucault's inadvertent admission, this is a (mis)understanding of being(-with) in terms of the *interactional* present:

> "Power relations are rooted in the system of social networks. This is not to say, however, that there is a primary and fundamental principle of power which dominates society down to the smallest detail; but *taking as a point of departure* the possibility of action upon the action of others (which is coextensive with every social relationship) […] one can define different forms of power" (1982: 793 italics my emphasis).

Foucault makes a dangerous assumption, which pre-defines his genealogy. Upon taking for granted a "possibility", he has unknowingly posited a metaphysical ("fundamental") principle: reality is a matter of "an action [acting] upon the action of others", i.e. *Interactivity* (1982: 79). The relation is not created by one individual *ex novo*: it does not fall onto the Other vertically, leaving one's own self unaffected. Instead, both individuals are subjectified by the power relationship. For Foucault, power and freedom need each other to *be* and so, it is not possible to distinguish between the "recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom" (1982: 790). The Foucauldian relation of power looks like a line that runs from an individual to another in both directions at the same time.

Power/freedom arises out of the same agonistic relationship between contrasting *wills to power*. Power unfolds as I attempt to impose my will, i.e. a predetermined course of actions, over the Other (1982: 788-90). The power relation can *be* only insofar as the Other can strategically re-act and re-impose its will over mine. The power game occurs only insofar as the Other and I are *free* to *re*-impose our will over one another. The Foucauldian relationship of power is in fact an (*inter*-)relationship, as power/freedom can *be* only insofar as individuals are *free to interact* at the Interface *of inter-actions:*

> *in Foucault's thinking, the human being comes into presence* as *subjectivity at the Interface of interrelated wills to power. Foucault displays an interactional (mis)understanding of being(-with) or power as* a *being: Interactivity.*

As soon as the fight for power appears to be over, the power relationship has become a matter of domination (1982: 795). An individual has succeeded in imposing its will over the Other for an extended period (e.g. capital's exploitation of the proletariat). As the field of actions of the dominated individual is minutiously pre-determined, its freedom/power is reduced to the bare minimum. And yet, even here the dominated is still free to defy power, for example by killing the dominator or committing suicide (Foucault, 1997a: 292). Beyond domination is the step of coercion, in which the

Other's actions are completely controlled (e.g. a slave chained to the wall) (Foucault, 1982: 790). In fact, Foucault clarifies that now the power relation *is no longer* for the Other's freedom is *not* either (1982, 790). The Other's *being* is no longer because it cannot re-impose its will. With a lack of re-action, in fact of inter-action, is also a lack of power, freedom and therefore a paradoxical lack of (human) being:

> *as soon as the inter-related game of power is over, Foucault falls into the unresolvable paradox of not-being. Hence the return of another, yet the same, abyssal difference to be fought at all costs: the metaphysical in-ter of the interfacial difference between inter-related wills to power.*

When asked about the source of the human desire to control the Other, i.e. the *meaning* of (the will to) power, Foucault can only provide a tautological answer, which is the inevitable endpoint of vicious (mis)thinking:

> " […] the freer people are with respect to each other, the more they want to control each other's 'conduct" (Foucault, 1997a: 300).

Here Foucault is not saying 'things are as they are' but 'things are as they *must* be'. The desire to control the other *must* be, for otherwise one would fall into the unresolvable problem of not-being: lack of will to power equals unthinkable (lack of) being. For this reason, Foucault wants *nothing* to do with the possibility of *not* willing power (i.e. coercion). Otherwise, he would be reminded of the unresolvable impossibility of not-being opened up by his metaphysical (mis)thinking:

> "The crucial problem of power is not that of voluntary servitude *(how could we seek to be slaves?)"* (Foucault, 1982: 790, italics my emphasis)

Despite Foucault's rejection of metaphysical definitions of power, freedom and human nature, he has pre-projected all these concepts for the sake of a metaphysical unity: the Interface of inter-related wills to power. The meaning of the history of the regimes of power is the antagonism between human beings: the human will to control the Other's actions (Foucault, 1980b: 114). This is therefore the (metaphysical) meaning of the history of the human being according to Foucault:

Foucault pre-projects the whole history of the human being in terms of the interactional present of Enframing (presentism): the meaning of Foucault's history is Interactivity as the hidden deity of the 'power relation'. Foucault is driven by a desire to cut off the monarch's head, but paradoxically, he (mis)understands the whole history of humanity as a network of conflicts between a myriad of (inter-related) mini monarchs that must *will power in order to exist.*

The power (inter)relation is grounded on the human desire to control or *govern* the Other's actions, intended as the *structuring* of the Other's possible field of actions (Foucault, 1982: 789). Power is not only determined by the will to govern the other's field of *possible* actions but by the *possibility of actualising* willed actions (i.e. "putting in order the possible outcome") (1982: 789). To will power means imposing certain courses of actions over the Other so that one's potential objectives are actualised. The willed (inter-)actions must occur or be *present* for power to *be* (1982: 788). These possibilities are not objectively present but present "*in potentia*" (1982: 794).

Contra Marx, Foucault does not conceptualise the power causality (i.e. truth) as objective re-presentation of human will. The causal link of power is an *interactive* potentiality (i.e. open field of possible actions) standing frozen before Foucault's gaze and ready for further activation via critical interpretation. Foucault (mis)thinks about power or the Event of being(-with) as a controllable *resource* (Standing Reserve) to be set into order (challenged forth):

Foucault (mis)understands the presentified essence of power as (Anti-)Event of being as Standing Reserve, whereby the being of everything, including the human being, conceals itself as a humanly controllable *resource:* governable *subjectivity. Foucault fails to think about the circular Event of Enframing that has appropriated his own (mis)thinking about power, hence presentifying it in terms of the interactional present as 'power relation'.*

Foucault tells us that freedom is inherent in the power (inter-)relation: it depends on the *potential presence* of (inter-)actions. When these inter-actions are *not* potentialisable - like for the enchained slave whose field of possible actions is *null* - power, freedom and in fact the human being, are *not* either. Hence Foucault's fight against the metaphysical difference of not-being. Once again, Foucault wants *nothing* to do with the possibility of *not* willing power:

> " […] to live in society is to live in such a way that action upon other actions is possible - and in fact *ongoing*. A society without power relations can only be an abstraction" (1982: 791 italics my emphasis).

Power and freedom, in fact being itself, are dependent on the *endless* ("ongoing") *presence* of interactions (1982: 791). As per the other (un)truths of Interactivity seen so far, were the inter-relations to stop, Foucault would fall into the unresolvable problem of not-being:

> *Foucault (mis)understands the truth of power as Interactivity: endless challenging back-and-forth of interactive potentialities of being (Standing Reserves).*

The Event of being as Standing Reserve is presentified by Foucault's language in practical/interactional terms: everyday possibilities are one and the same with practical inter-actions, with the actuality of freedom lying in the possibility of re-willing (possible) inter-actions. Freedom means "being capable of action" (1982: 789) and *not* doing what others want us to do (Foucault, 1997e: 167). Foucault's power/freedom is the potentialisable actuality and actualisable potentiality of modifying an inter-relation of power. However, the undefinable essence of freedom/power does not lie in the (potential/interactive) *presence* of possibilities, i.e. in a choice among possible courses of (inter)actions. Paradoxically, Foucault's concept of will to power describes Dasein's inauthentic *wishing* of everyday possibilities, whereby one delegates its potentiality of being to the Other:

> *the Foucauldian concept of power/freedom is a presentified essentialisation of inauthentic power or unfreedom: the everyday condition of impotence whereby Dasein measures power/freedom in terms of its success to control/be controlled by the Other.*

Ironically, Foucault is looking for a theory of power that can emancipate itself from the contingent truths of his present:

> "Since a theory assumes a prior objectification it cannot be asserted as a basis for analytical work. But this analytical work cannot proceed without an ongoing conceptualization. And this conceptualization implies critical thought -a constant checking […] We have to know the historical conditions which motivate our

> conceptualization. We need a historical awareness of our *present* circumstance" (Foucault, 1982: 778 italics my emphasis).

Foucault comes close to a critique of the circular pre-projection of meaning that appropriates human (mis)thinking ("*prior* objectification) (1982: 778), hence leading to the ever-recurring Event of (mis)thinking about history in terms of the thinker's present. Yet, this is restricted to the *modern* pre-projection of being ("prior *objectification*") (1982: 778). In the attempt to gain a historical understanding of the human being, Foucault has obtained the exact opposite: a (mis)thinking about power that is utterly oblivious to the epochality of its own conceptualisations.

The (pre-)taken for granted possibility of Interactivity is the present ground from which Foucault pre-projects his genealogy. The *different* regimes that Foucault identifies are (mis)interpreted in the *same* terms of Foucault's present: in terms of the interactional present of Enframing. The history of power cannot but be the necessary *inter-realisation* - "double conditioning" (Foucault, 1998: 100) of the Form that power regimes were *always meant to be* (i.e. metaphysical identity): the positive realisation of Interactivity as the subjectification process of the biopolitical regime of Foucault's own Present. This is a corrective to Marx's theorisation of the mode of production as a re-presentation of the objective relationship between subject and object. Inadvertently, Foucault repeats Marx's same mistake, albeit in different, i.e. interactional, terms:

> *biopower gives itself to Foucault's (mis)thinking as the* inter-*realisation of the Form that power regimes were always meant to be: the destruction of the metaphysical* difference *between two beings and return of the Interactivity of the power inter-relation to itself (metaphysical identity).*

Upon deciding to have *nothing* to do with Marx's modern metaphysics, Foucault reproduced its mistake, albeit in different terms. Foucault's genealogy posits power as *a* being that must recurrently fight against a nonbeing, i.e. lack of Interactivity or coercion. Foucault's positivisation of power remains rooted in a presentified *negation* of nothingness: endless fight against the interfacial difference between inter-related wills to power. As per the next sections, the Foucauldian subjectivity finds itself everywhere as interactive master of everything, including its own being as a technologically governable Interface.

7.13. Foucault's interactional metaphysics of truth and technology

Foucault is determined to overcome the modern metaphysics of truth as objective correspondence, along with its critical counterpart: ideology as false consciousness[34] (Foucault, 1980b: 118). This concept is rooted in Marx's objective correspondence between (i.e. re-presentation) the economic structure and superstructure of a mode of production, whereby the former "determines" the latter (Marx, 1904: 11-2). Marx's concept of ideology reveals a twofold (mis)understanding of truth in objectivist terms. Ideology as false *consciousness* posits thinking as a mere re-presentation (determination)[35] of the economic structure or material conditions of life. Contemporaneously, ideology as *false* consciousness is *alienated* thinking. Given that ideas are re-presentations of the material conditions of life defined by the class struggle, ideology is an instrument of power or an object in the hands of the ruling class that is negated from the proletariat (Marx and Engels, 2003: 61).

Foucault rejects the Marxian concept of false consciousness (Foucault, 1980b: 118)[36] and replaces it with the concept of truth game (1997a: 297). Truth is political as a regime of truth wherein the truthness and falseness of discourses is predetermined by historical strategies of power (1980b: 131). The analyst's job is not to establish if a statement corresponds to the (objectively) true state of affairs, i.e. whether it is "valid or invalid" (1997a: 297). Foucault's critique of Modernity's techno-scientific truths (e.g. the psychiatric discourse that creates/normalizes the Normal and Abnormal) comes close to Heidegger's treatment of science as a pre-projection of (objective) meaning.

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[34] The term "false consciousness" was coined by Friedrich Engels (Engels, 1978: 766).

[35] A heated debate has divided readers of Marx regarding the meaning of the relationship of *determination* between material structure and ideological superstructure. When applied to technology, the issue has centred on the question of technological determinism, both within Media Studies (e.g. Williams VS McLuhan) (Jones, 1998) and STS (e.g. MacKenzie VS Winner) (MacKenzie, 1996: 24).

[36] A separate genealogical project is needed to destroy the concept of ideology since the early times of Marx's false consciousness up until its post-Structuralist manifestation at the time of Foucault's critique. Among many other neo-Marxist thinkers, this would require analysing its transformation via Georg Lukács' notion of reification (Lukacs, 1967); its re-definition via Theodor Adorno's identity thinking (Adorno, 2004) and Alfred Sohn-Rethel's real abstraction (Sohn-Rethel, 1978); Antonio Gramsci's cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1992); Louis Althusser's ideological interpellation (Althusser, 2014).

However, similarly to the social constructivist criticism of Winner's modern metaphysics of truth (Sections 6.5, 6.6), Foucault is not formulating a critique of the vicious circularity that defines historical (un)truths.

Foucault understands truth strategically as the will to impose one's truth over the Other (i.e. "*will to knowledge"* or "*power-knowledge*") (Foucault, 1998: 12, 98-9). Truth is not the prerogative of a group of individuals but contestable by the subjects partaking in the power game: "its production is thoroughly imbued with relations of power" (Foucault, 1998: 60). The coming-into-presence ("production") of historical truths, i.e. the Event of revealing (*aletheia*), is thus re-inserted in networks of power inter-relations (Foucault, 1980b: 114). For Foucault, "history has no 'meaning'" in the sense that it has no *objective* meaning (1980b: 114). The meaning of truth is not the objective correspondence between statement and reality but the very "intelligibility of conflicts" (1980b: 114). The objective correspondence of Marx's false consciousness is replaced with a truth game in which all participants can interactively bring meaning into presence:

> *Foucauldian meaning comes into presence at the interface of endless interaction between inter-related wills to power-knowledge: Foucault (mis)understands the essence of meaning as Interactivity. The meaning of Foucault's truth about history is the presentified (un)truth or transhistorical Truth of Interactivity: the ever-recurring meaning of the social agonism between inter-related wills to power-knowledge.*

Via the concept of truth game Foucault gives voice to an interactional (mis)understanding of *aletheia* (i.e. truth as epochal revealing) as interfacial instrument or *resource* of social power. The objective correspondence of Modernity turns into Interactivity between agonistic discourses, with meaning (mis)understood as freezable resource ready for strategic activation via genealogical analysis:

> *rather than rejecting the (un)truth of Enframing, whereby truth is a freezable resource available to human ordering, Foucault implemented it in his critical genealogy.*

Given that the truth of meaning and the meaning of truth are pre-projected as *an* interactive Being (i.e. Interactivity), the same fate must await technology: *aletheia* as the epochal revealing or coming into-presence of beings. Similarly

to Heidegger, Foucault does not restrict the term 'technology' to equipment such as factory machinery (Foucault, 1997f: 224-25). *Differently* from Heidegger, Foucault defines technology as the network of devices or "apparatus" ("*dispositif*") that organizes the subjectification process within a power regime (Foucault, 1980c: 194). Understood as power apparatus, the essence of technology is governmentality itself as the historical resource that brings subjugated subjects into presence:

> " […] the forms of rationality that organize their ways of doing things (this might be called the technological aspect) […] " (Foucault, 1997b: 317).

As seen before, during the regime of sovereignty (i.e. the Middle Ages), the monarch's rule is applied as a right over death. The very *existence* of Medieval Dasein belongs by right to the representative of God on Earth, i.e. the monarch. Hence a technology or apparatus of punishment (e.g. public execution) that however is no mere instrument of the sovereign's will (Foucault, 1991: 57-69). Foucault argues that the spectators of the public execution were not passively inscribed by a power that repressed them in terror. The individual who witnessed the execution was actively objectified as monarch's subject: upon participating in the flamboyant ritual of the execution, the crowd interacted with the spectacle. Through a theatrical display of brute violence, the apparatus of public execution made the monarch "present" before the curious crowd (1991: 53). Alternatively, the apparatus "reactivated" the monarch's power (1991: 49). This did not occur via re-presentation of the monarch's will: the public execution did not "re-establish justice" (1991: 49). Instead, the apparatus of public executions made present the sovereign's will *interactively*: at the "anchoring point" or "articulation" of power forces (1991: 55).

> *Foucault (mis)understands technology as Interface of interaction between inter-related wills to power (e.g. the monarch's and the spectator's). Technology is (mis)understood as a resource of power, with its presentified essence lying in the interactive Truth of governmentality (Interactivity).*

Foucault's technology is no Marxian means of production, i.e. an objective instrument of power that re-presents the objective will of the ruling class. Nevertheless, Foucault highlights that the apparatus of medieval power remained "inscribed" in a network of power relations that manifested themselves in the negative form of the sovereign's law

(1991: 49; 53). Hence the "atrocity" of the monarchical apparatus of punishment (1991: 56-7). As seen before, Foucault's history leads to the (inter-)realisation of Interactivity as identity between micro-conflict and strategy or Form and Reality. Even before Foucault addresses the transition into the biopolitical regime of his present, one already gets a doubt that the same extraordinary fate *must* await biopolitical technology:

> "We shall see later that the truth-power relation remains at the heart of all mechanisms of punishment and that it is still to be found in contemporary penal practice - but in a quite different form and with very different effects" (1991: 55).

The "different" technologies of biopolitical punishment are born out of the eighteenth-century reform of the penal system (1991: 73-103). With the help of the natural sciences, a new regime of truth emerges, wherein the delinquent is subjugated as the Abnormal who threatens the survival of the societal organism (1991: 100-103). A different technique of subjugation is born: a "micro-physics" of power that minutiously controls and channels the physiological functions of the punished subject (1991: 137-39). The disciplines are born as the techniques of the monastic model are applied not only to the prison but to the school, factory, army, factory, etc. (1991: 141-44). The techniques of biopolical power no longer repress the body via torture or public execution; upon targeting the subject as a natural body, they positively channel its movements in *time* and *space* (1991: 144-156).

Foucault has distanced himself from Marx's theorisation of factory machinery as instrument of power. Nevertheless, there is a commonality here. Marx (mis)interprets factory machinery as the *necessary* apex of a process of technological development, which is (mis)understood as humanity's complete objectification of Nature. In Marx, the Event of being-creative, *techne* or time-space extending is nothing more than an objective relation between subject and object or Society and Nature. The truth of Modern technology, i.e. the fixing in place of the strife between World and Earth, is (mis)understood in terms of its present self-concealment, i.e. objectively.

For Foucault, space and time have *always* been interactive *resources* available for technological ordering: the Event of Enframing has always already appropriated Foucault's interactional (mis)thinking about the essence of technology (i.e. Event of time-space extending or being-creative). The devices of biopower have created the *perfect Interface* between human body and tool upon *overlapping* with the Interactivity that technology was always meant to be:

> "Over the whole surface of contact between the body and the object it handles, power is introduced, fastening them to one another. It constitutes a body-weapon, body-tool, body-machine complex. One is as far as possible from those forms of subjection that demanded of the body only signs or products, forms of expression. or the result of labour. The regulation imposed by power is at the same time the law of construction of the operation. Thus disciplinary power appears to have the function not so much of deduction as of synthesis, not so much of exploitation of the product as of coercive link with the apparatus of production" (1991: 153).

Being-creative is no longer (mis)understood as objective instrument (Marx) but as Interface between human and machine ("surface of contact between body and object" or human-tool "complex") (1991: 153). The biopolitical apparatus no longer works negatively (i.e. via "deduction") but positively: the power Form ("the law") has overlapped with ("is at the same time") the present Reality ("regulation") of Power (1991: 153). The technological apparatus of biopolitical power is *different* from its monarchical counterpart because it has fully realised the Interactivity between human and tool that technology was *always* meant to be:

> *the history of technological development gives itself to Foucault's (mis)thinking as the necessary return of the technological Interface to itself (presentism): the essence of technology is (mis)understood as a weapon in the fight against the interfacial difference of not-being.*

As per the next section, the same presentism cannot but affect Foucault's (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference.

7.14. Foucault's interactional (mis)understanding of the revolutionary difference

Despite Foucault's refusal to lend his critical ontology to a communist revolution, he did consider it a resource of social change:

> "What I am trying to do is provoke an interference between our reality and the knowledge of our past history. If I succeed, this will have real effects in our present history" (Foucault, 1996b: 301).

Although Foucault refuses to think about a liberated or de-alienated humanity, his critique is driven by a desire for a different world of individual freedom. The task of critical ontology is to reject who we are today or, alternatively, what we are told we should *be* (1982: 785). Foucault describes resistance as a process of "desubjugation", which allows the subjugated subject to rediscover the principle of individual autonomy (Foucault, 2007: 47-50).

Foucault celebrates the social upheavals of the 1960s/1970s as anarchist struggles against the "government of individualisation" and the "privileges of knowledge" (Foucault, 1982: 780-81). The social revolution is interpreted as the codification of an individual level resistance that is always inherent in individual micro conflicts (Foucault, 1998: 96). Foucault sees nothing wrong with the power relation *per se*. What must be avoided is the passage from power game into state of domination or, even worse, coercion/slavery (1997a: 299). The point at stake is to play a power game with "as little domination as possible" (1997a: 299). Alternatively, in Foucault's revolutionary world the individual is not governed "quite so much" (Foucault, 2007: 45).

An iconic example is the knowledgeable teacher who governs the actions of the inexperienced students (Foucault, 1997a: 298-99). There is nothing wrong with this power relationship, insofar as the teacher does not exert a degree of authority that is "arbitrary and unnecessary" (1997a: 299). When asked to motivate or justify why and when one should resist power, Foucault would recur to the concept of "hyper- and pessimistic activism" (Foucault, 1997c: 256). This expression helps us to unlock Foucault's theorisation of the revolutionary difference. First and foremost, his activism is 'hyper-' because one must be-(inter)active at all times in order to *be* (free) and resist the Other's will to power:

> " […] I refuse to reply to the question I am sometimes asked: "But if power is everywhere, there is no freedom." I answer that if there are relations of power in every social field, this is because there is freedom everywhere" (Foucault, 1997a: 292).

Foucault claims that freedom/resistance is always a possibility but in fact, this is the case only insofar as Interactivity *is* or, more precisely, only because Interactivity *must* be:

> "[…] in power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance (of violent resistance, flight, deception, strategies capable of reversing the situation), there would be no power relations at all" (Foucault, 1997a: 292).

As freedom is subordinated to the presence of inter-relations, freedom is (pre-)projected *for the sake of* a being: Interactivity. Foucault can only justify resistance not to fall into the unresolvable step of not-being that follows domination: coercion as lack of Interactivity. It is only to avoid the interactional paradox of not-being that Foucault must be pessimistic and reject the possibility of a society without power relations:

> "My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we *always* have something to do" (Foucault, 1997c: 256, italics my emphasis).

In the last phase of his work, Foucault seems to come close to Heidegger once again. Foucault openly disagrees with Neo-Marxist ideology, which dismisses the principle of "taking care of one's self" as a symptom of toxic individualism (Foucault, 1997a: 284; Foucault, 1997f: 228). Resistance is conceptualised as a "creative process" that must start from the individual level of everyday existence (Foucault, 1997e: 168). Upon drawing from the Greek practices of the hermeneutic of the self (1997a: 284-89; 1997f), Foucault theorises resistance as endless process of creativity: treating one's daily life like an artwork (Foucault, 1997c: 271).

As seen in Section 4.2, Heidegger also compares Dasein's *perfectio* to the self-sufficiency or *energeia* of the artwork. Given that Foucault acknowledged his philosophical debt toward Heidegger (Foucault, 1996a: 470), it seems surprising that he traced the concept of creative resistance (i.e. *taking care* of oneself as "*tekhne"*) back to Nietzsche (Foucault, 1997c: 262). However, this makes sense: Foucault's conceptualisation of the revolutionary difference differs profoundly from Heidegger's concept of authentic care.

For Heidegger, freedom/power lies in Dasein's authentic taking care or willing of everyday possibilities as being free for death. Alternatively, this is Dasein's mastering of its ek-static, i.e. *circular*, being as project into everyday possibilities. Instead, Foucault interprets care as a practice of self-exerted subjectification or governmentality, whereby a subject constantly "constitutes itself" (Foucault, 1997a: 291). This act of self-creation is (mis)understood interactively*:* as a "mode of action that an individual exercises upon himself" (Foucault, 1997f: 225). Contemporaneously, these practices are social modes of (self-)governmentality or cultural "models" (i.e. resources*)* at one's disposal (Foucault, 1997a: 291). Foucault's concept of care of the self presentifies Dasein's ekstatic/circular

care as inter-relation, with one's self coming into presence at the *interface* of endless inter-relationship ("relationship of the self to itself") (1997a: 300):

> *Foucault's subject has the power to* create itself *at the interface of endless interaction with its practical existence. Foucault (mis)understands the essence of human freedom as interfacial resource under human control (Standing Reserve).*

The lesson whereby the self is "not given to us" (Foucault, 1997c: 262), means that the self is not *objectively* present but only present in *interactive potentia* as a socio-cultural model (i.e. Standing Reserve) awaiting self-(inter-)activation. The human *being* or care is no longer (mis)understood in modern terms as representational self-relation (e.g. Descartes' cogito; Marx's objectification). Foucault's concept of care as self-knowledge is an orderable *resource* that must always be available for the subject's will to *govern* (i.e. *challenge forth*) its own self:

> *Foucault's freedom is a resource (Standing Reserve) that must be ready at all times for individual (inter-)activation. Foucault thinks about Dasein's care, i.e. human ek-sistence, as endless process of (self-)challenging back-and-forth: an interactional presentification of the Event of human* being.

Foucault's critique is based on the principle that we must *endlessly* create our lives like an artwork or, alternatively, that we *always* have something to do. This means that we must be *interacting at all times* (with ourselves and the Other) in order to be (free). Was the interaction to stop, one would fall into the paradox of not-being:

> *if Interactivity were to stop, one's self would fall into the paradoxical not-being of the infrathin inter-face. Foucault subscribes to the metaphysical truth of his present epoch:* 'ego interago, ergo ego sum*'.*

Foucault's thinking is oblivious to the (pre-)projected meaning of the copula '*sum*'. The autonomy, freedom, or *perfectio* of the human being is presentified as the constant (inter-)relation with the self or with the Other (Interactivity):

> *Foucault (mis)understands the revolutionary difference in terms of the present self-concealment of the ontological difference: from within the in-ter of an inter-relation of power. Alternatively, Foucault (mis)understands the revolutionary future in terms of the present (un)truth of Enframing: Interactivity. Hence Foucault's inability to think freely or independently from his present world.*

Whether Marx expected the Proletariat to join the metaphysical ground of the modern representation, Foucault demands that his fellow humanity fight a pointless fight against the inter-facial abyss of not-being. Foucault has repeated Marx's mistake, albeit in interactional terms:

> *Foucault has delegated human freedom to a different, yet the same, metaphysical deity that the human being is (misunderstood as): Interactivity. Marx's (mis)understanding of the revolution as Objectification for Objectification's sake has returned as* Interactivity for Interactivity's sake ('hyper and pessimistic activism'). *Marx's social animal as the objectifier of everything has turned into interactive subjectivity: Foucault's own brand of presentified humanism.*

That we humans *are* inter-relational or interactive beings is an (un)truth that the present generation should reject with all its might in order to gain autonomy or freedom. Instead, the critical genealogists from Chapter 1 have inherited this (un)truth from Foucault and posited it as a *resource* for their social revolution.

PART 4. FOR GENEALOGICAL DESTRUCTION OF THE 'INTERACTIONAL' PRESENT

Chapter 8. Destroying the doubt about the critical genealogies of 'corrupted interactivity'

8.1. The presentism of Foucauldian-informed genealogies of interactive media technology

According to Jacques Deleuze, in the early 1980s Foucault had sensed the end of the disciplinarian regime of biopower and its transition into the *society of control* (Deleuze, 1992: 4). This process begins at the end of World War II and is complete at the present time of Deleuze's writing in 1992 (1992: 3-4).

As noticed by Poster (2010: 6), Deleuze provides no proof that Foucault had already thought about the passage from biopolitics into control. This controversy has translated in a debate among the critical students of our *present* society (and its interactive media technology): have we moved into the society of control or are we still within the biopolitical realm of the disciplines? Either via or *contra* Deleuze, the present regime of power has been critiqued in Foucauldian terms as Empire (Hardt and Negri, 2000), Superpanopticon (Poster, 1995), Info-liberalism (Banning, 2015), Emotional Capitalism (Illouz, 2007), Cognitive Capitalism (Thrift, 2005), Attention Economy (Terranova, 2012), Cinematic Mode of Production (Beller, 1994), etc. The objective here is not to join this debate, which has similarly informed the discussion of interactivity among the critical genealogists from Chapter 1. Instead, the genealogical debate about interactive media technology must be understood in epochal terms.

Foucault's genealogy had already applied an interactional (mis)understanding of being to the genealogy of the power regimes. Deleuze merely extended to his own present the interactional *presentism* of Foucault's genealogy, which had already (mis)thought about Foucault's Present as overlap between power-Reality and power-Form (presentism). In Deleuze's society of control, the human being and its Reality have overlapped with the Foucauldian Truth of Power, i.e. interface of endless inter-relations as Interactivity:

> "In the disciplinary societies one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory), while in the societies of control one is *never finished* with anything" (1992: 5 italics my emphasis).

Or again:

> "The disciplinary man was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, *in a continuous network*" (1992: 6 italics my emphasis).

Therefore:

> *even when the critical genealogists disagree with Deleuze and they understand their present regime of power – along with its interactive media technology - as biopower/disciplinary society, they are nevertheless reproducing Foucault's mistake: a (mis)theorisation of the revolutionary difference in terms of the (interactional) present of Enframing.*

As seen in Chapter 1 (1.1 – 1.3), the critical genealogists have criticized present media technology in Foucauldian terms as a *dispositif* that exploits the interactive user as subjectivity, either via Foucauldian disciplinisation or Deleuzian control. Essentially, *it does not matter* if interactive media technology continues the biopolitical paradigm of Foucault's disciplines (Poster; Beller; Andrejevic) or escorts us to the Deleuzian society (Barry; Hardt and Negri; Thrift). Similarly, it does not matter whether the genealogists argue that the interactive user is: a self-disciplined subjectivity (Cranny-Francis); a subjectivity disciplined by a corporate designer (Barry; Manovich); an interpassive subjectivity (Pfaller; Žižek); a surveilled subjectivity (Andrejevic; Berry; Poster); a subjectivity deprived of attention (Fuchs; Fisher; Terranova); a subjectivity deprived of its sensorial faculties at large (Beller; Crary; Hayles; Jagodzinski; Stiegler; Thrift). Via the concept of subjectivity, the critical genealogists have always already pre-projected the meaning of the human being and its being-creative *as* Interactivity (i.e. presentification of Enframing). And so, the critical genealogists have always already inherited Foucault's presentism: the pre-projection of the history of being-creative in terms of the interactional present of Enframing (presentism).

Given that Foucault's concept of subjectivity *means* Interactivity, the problem with the present subjectivity of the interactive user cannot but be that its present interactivity is illusionary, ideological, recuperated, blackboxed, etc. The critical solution, i.e. desubjugation, cannot but be more of the same difference: true or real Interactivity via 'critical' negation of a non-being (corrupt Interactivity of exploited subjectivity) and return of a being to itself (uncorrupted Interactivity of free inter-relationship of power). As it already (mis)occurred to Foucault, that the human being may be something other than interactive remains *unthinkable* to the critical genealogists.

The same failure (mis)informs the genealogies that do not explicitly claim that the interactivity of present media technology is corrupt. This is Barry's case, who critiques 'interactivity' as the very embodiment or diagram of the present power regime (Section 1.1). Paradoxically, via the Foucauldian concept of power regime, Barry has unknowingly embraced the (un)truth whereby the human being is *Interactivity*. Hence the hidden meaning of his critical insight whereby the present regime of 'interactivity' makes humanity unfree: freedom resides in the true or real Interactivity of the Foucauldian inter-relationship of power. However, Interactivity *is* not or, more precisely, Interactivity is(-not) only for the sake of human (mis)thinking, which (mis)thinks about the being of everything – including the future of technological development – in terms of the present (anti-)Event of Enframing that present media technology *is* (misunderstood as). Albeit unknowingly, the genealogical thinkers share the vicious circularity of Foucault's (mis)thinking, including the circularity of his presentism:

given that the human being was always meant to be-interactive, it must continue being-interactive.

As Section 10.1 returns to and summarises the arguments of the Foucauldian-inspired genealogies from Chapter 1, for now let us proceed to focus on a case study: Hard and Negri's genealogy of Empire. As per Section 1.2, this is one of the most popularised genealogies of interactive media technology. Let us take this opportunity to destroy, once and for, all the Neo-Marxist myth of corrupted/recuperated 'interactivity', and its faith in the Foucauldian process of de-subjugation.

8.2. Destroying the Neo-Marxist myths of recuperated interactivity and interfacial desubjugation

Hardt and Negri adopt the concept of "regime of the production of subjectivity" as a corrective to the Marxian mode of production (2000: 285-303). The passage from a mode of production to the next one is understood as a formal transition in productive subjectivities: Marx's objective production of labour as the drive of history is replaced with the Foucauldian antagonism between wills to power. Hardt and Negri acknowledge that modern power (i.e. disciplinisation) was already immanent to the subjectivities created by micro-conflicts: power has *always* resided in the positive force of the will to govern the Other (2000: 329). And yet, the institutions of Modernity were not fully integrated in networks but isolated from each other, with their subjectivities being rigid, mass-produced and standardised (2000: 329-31).

Unsurprisingly, the present regime of disciplinisation (i.e. Deleuzian control) is somewhat more immanent, in fact *fully* immanent to the post-Fordist subjectivity (2000: 325-32). This is a repetition of Foucault's presentism, which Foucault had applied to the passage from Monarchy into Biopolitics (i.e. Modernity). As per the precious section, *via Deleuze*, Hardt and Negri have simply applied the same presentism to their own present of Control, pos-Fordism, post-Modernity, or Empire. In Hardt and Negri's present, as the social factory tears down the barriers between social institutions, the rules of subjectification have spread across the whole network of the society of control (2000: 329). The present diagram of power has fully realised the positive Truth of Power, hence fully operating at the level of immanence (2000: 329-331):

> "The immanent production of subjectivity in the society of control *corresponds to* the axiomatic logic of capital, and their resemblance indicates a new and *more complete compatibility* between sovereignty and capital" (2000: 330-331 italics my emphasis).

Empire/post-Fordism fully realizes, i.e. makes present, the Foucauldian dimension of power as a *positive* force. This is the metaphysical identity ("more complete compatibility") of power form ("logic of capital") and reality (immanent production of subjectivity) qua hybrid subjectivity of the social factory (2000: 330-31). The hybrid subjectivity is "constituted simultaneously" by multiple identities at the same time (2000: 332). This is nothing but the *fully* interactive subjectivity as the interfacial Being or Interface that the human being (*Sein*) was always meant to be: Hardt and Negri's (mis)understanding of the human being in terms of the present (un)truth of Interactivity.

Processes of value extraction are no longer activated by vertical structures of power (as per the disciplinary system of Fordism) but horizontally by spontaneous social networks (2000: 329). As cooperation is presently immanent to networks of immaterial labour, the extraction of value originates spontaneously from within (interactive) cooperation (2000: 294). Social relations themselves have become productive, with exploitation tapping on the entirety of our cognitive, affective and social skills: the extraction of value has *turned inward* toward the process of subjectification itself (2000: 294). Via capital's *real* subsumption of society (2000: 332), the postmodern law of value extraction and the power relation of subjectification have *overlapped*:

> "In the biopolitical context of Empire, however, the production of capital *converges ever more with* the production and reproduction of social life itself" (2000: 402 italics my emphasis).

Via Deleuze, Foucault's presentism returns in Hardt and Negri's thinking as the belief that the capital (inter-)relation of power has *overlapped* with the (interactive) "event" of *being* (i.e. metaphysical identity):

> "What Foucault constructed implicitly (and Deleuze and Guattari made explicit) is therefore the paradox of a power that, while it unifies and envelops within itself every element of social life (thus losing its capacity effectively to mediate different social forces), at that very moment reveals a new context, a new milieu of maximum plurality and uncontainable singularization—a milieu of the event" (2000: 25).

Similarly to Dreyfus (Section 5.1), Hardt and Negri are alarmed by the realisation that the power (inter-)relationship has merged with the human *being* or alternatively, that there is no longer an outside of the capitalist relations of power (2000: 195-198). As per Hardt and Negri's inadvertent admission, this is indeed a "paradox" (2000: 25), but a metaphysical one of their own (mis)thinking. Rather than critiquing the Event of Enframing, whereby the human being gives itself as a *resource* of value extraction, Hardt and Negri unknowingly embrace it - albeit critically via interactive negation. Rather than questioning their own pre-projection of power/being-with as inter-relationship, the authors point their finger at post-Fordist Capital for *recuperating* the revolutionary practices and discourses of critical thinkers. As further discussed below:

> *behind so-called 'recuperation' is the ever-recurring failure of critical thinking to think differently. The meaning of the power paradigm of* "differential inclusion" *(2000: 194) is the Event of the Other's being as Standing Reserve, which conceals itself in Hardt and Negri's language as interactive not-I (forgetting of the ontological difference). Via Deleuze's Foucault, their critical thinking is appropriated by the same (Anti-)Event of Enframing that they fail to contradict.*

The concept of recuperation informs Hardt and Negri's assessment of the 1968 season of civil disobedience. This is interpreted as a widespread rejection of the Fordist/disciplinary mode of production in favour of alternative, i.e. immaterial, forms of production (2000: 274). The revolutionary youth and working class protested against the mass-standardised subjectivities of the Fordist/disciplinarian mode of production (factory worker, commodity consumer,

nuclear family member, etc.) (2000: 274). Similarly to Boltanski and Chiapello (Section 1.3), the alternative subjectivities pursued by the rebels were *different* because no longer objectified but interactional:

> "The youth who refused the deadening repetition of the factory-society invented new forms of *mobility* and *flexibility*, new styles of living" (2000: 274, italics my emphasis).

As per the (inter-)reactive nature of the antagonism between capital and workers, the post-Fordist mode of production is born as capital recuperates ("integrates") the alternative subjectivities in its new mode of production (2000: 268). Capital has recuperated the revolutionary potential of the interactive subjectivity via "negative mirroring" (2000: 276). Resulting from this negative event are the "corrupt" subjectivities of Empire (2000: 195-98; 389-92). Corruption, understood as the negation of "generation" (i.e. autonomous production of subjectivity), has replaced the Foucauldian notion of coercion as a different, yet the same, paradox of not-being to be fought and destroyed at all costs:

> "[Corruption] constructs *black holes* and *ontological vacuums* in the life of the multitude that not even the most perverse political science manages to camouflage. Corruption, contrary to desire, is not an ontological motor but simply the *lack of ontological foundation* of the biopolitical practices of being" (2000: 389, italics my emphasis).

The blackhole opened by corruption is an interfacial gap of not-being: "corruption breaks the chain of desire and interrupts its extension across the biopolitical horizon of production" (2000: 389). The duty of the revolutionary subject consists in re-appropriating the Interactivity that capital has negated, hence restoring its revolutionary potential or positivity via interactive negation of the negation. The revolution advocated by Hardt and Negri follows the Foucauldian principle that there is *always* something to (inter)act against (2000: 91-2). Given that capital has colonised the whole social fabric of immaterial labour, it has reached a point of no return wherein crises are potentially ubiquitous (2000: 385-89). In a repetition of Marx's argument, albeit in interactional terms, the revolution is incumbent and in fact inevitable:

> "Empire creates a greater potential for revolution than did the modern regimes of power because it presents us, alongside the machine of command, with an alternative: the set of all the exploited and the subjugated, a multitude that is directly opposed to Empire, with no mediation between them" (2000: 393).

The human being is interpreted as a resource (i.e. "multitude") that can be (re-)engineered (i.e. set in order or challenged forth) via "alternative production of subjectivity" (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 126-7). As opposed to the "power emptiness" or "lack of being" of corrupt subjectivities (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 390), the revolutionary subjectivity will have fully achieved its interfacial potentiality. This is the metaphysical return of the human Being, i.e. Interactivity, to itself:

> "Once we recognize our posthuman bodies and minds, once we see ourselves for the simians and cyborgs we are, we then need to explore the vis viva, the creative powers that animate us as they do all of nature and actualize our potentialities. This is humanism after the death of Man: what Foucault calls ''le travail de soi sur soi,'' the continuous constituent project to create and re-create ourselves and our world" (2000: 91-2).

Hardt and Negri share Haraway's argument that the present form of corrupt Interactivity opens unprecedented opportunities of emancipation. It is precisely by fighting the interactive fight that occurs in every sphere of our daily lives that we may regain the alternative, i.e. *true* or *real*, Interactivity that capital presently *negates* from us. Unsurprisingly, a resource or interfacial instrument for our liberation is technology (2000: 217-218). However, in its *present* form, the interactive machine is a capitalist resource for the production corrupt subjectivities:

> "Today we increasingly think like computers, while communication technologies and their model of interaction are becoming more and more central to laboring activities. Interactive and cybernetic machines become a new prosthesis integrated into our bodies and minds and a lens through which to redefine our bodies and minds themselves" (2000: 291).

Elsewhere, we are told that tools have *always* been human "prostheses": *interfaces* between human being and outside world (2000: 217): an interactional presentification of the strife between World and Earth. The emancipation of the multitude demands that our present tools, i.e. the interactive machine, is purged of Capital's presence and returned to

its liberated, i.e. full interfacial potentiality (2000: 217-218). Via revolutionary action, new media technology enables us to realise the posthuman/cyborg/interfacial Being that being-creative (*Sein*) was always meant to be, i.e. Interactivity:

> "With this passage the deconstructive phase of critical thought, which from Heidegger and Adorno to Derrida provided a powerful instrument for the exit from modernity, has lost its effectiveness […] The force that must instead drive forward theoretical practice to actualize these terrains of potential metamorphosis is still (and ever more intensely) the common experience of the new productive practices and the concentration of productive labor on the plastic and fluid terrain of the new communicative, biological, and mechanical technologies" (2000: 218).

Hardt and Negri acknowledge Heidegger as critical thinker, and yet, they reduce him to a critic of Modernity. Elsewhere, Hardt and Negri criticize modern critiques of power for theorising the revolution from within the same terms of the Modern system of power (2000: 183- 190). Here it is difficult to ignore the bittersweet paradox of this observation, for Hardt and Negri themselves have failed fail to think about a different world or, in their own terms, to think "beyond the given conditions of existence" (2000: 185). This is no longer Marx's failure to think beyond the modern epoch of Picture but beyond Hardt and Negri's epoch of Enframing.

Marx's factory machinery would enable the transition into Communism upon achieving the full objectification of Nature and return of Technology to the Objective Truth that being-creative was always meant to be. The same mistake has been repeated by Hardt and Negri's assessment of the interactive machine as a doorway into the Interfacial Being that the human being was always meant to be:

> *the Autonomist revolution is the same (Anti-)Event of Enframing that Hardt and Negri misname/presentify in interactional terms as 'Empire'.*

Hardt and Negri are the honourable victims of a Truth that must be dropped in order to be free: "*ego interago, ergo ego sum*". Neo-Marxism fails to think about a different world of freedom for its *difference* is thought about in terms of the *same* world inhabited by the present generation. In the revolutionary world of the multitude, the human being has "reappropriated" space and "taken hold of" time (2000: 398; 401): the revolutionary human being finds itself

everywhere as interactive master of everything. It seems appropriate to summarise with an iconic Punk phrase: *there is no (different) future* in a world where the being of everything has been interactively mastered by the human being. No different future is being thought, insofar as one (mis)thinks that humanity's being-creative is a corrupted Being (i.e. non-Interactivity) awaiting interfacial desubjugation. Hardt and Negri continue (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference of technological development in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing that present media technology is (misunderstood as): Interactivity. At this point, as the Neo-Marxist myth of corrupted/recuperated Interactivity has been destroyed - along with the faith in technological processes of interfacial desubjugation - let us return to Bardini's genealogy and destroy, once and for all, the myth of blackboxed interactivity.

8.3. Destroying the STS myth of blackboxed interactivity

By this point, it should have become apparent that the genealogies of corrupted interactivity are founded on a dangerous myth: the genealogists ignore that there is no such thing as an original or uncorrupted form of Interactivity that has gone corrupted, recuperated, predetermined, or blackboxed. As anticipated in the introduction and already seen in Sections 1.5 and 5.3, Bardini's genealogy of the Macintosh Graphical User Interface (GUI) has served the thesis as an ideal case study. Bardini shares the Neo-Marxist premise that present interactivity has been recuperated/corrupted/blackboxed by Capital (i.e. Apple), as well as a critical faith in a different form of interactivity to be obtained via alternative practices of user configuration/modelling/social construction/blackboxing. Besides Engelbart, Leroi-Gourhan, Heim and (a misread) Heidegger, Bardini has inherited his faith in uncorrupted interactivity from Trevor Pinch and Bruno Latour (Chapter 7).

As seen in Section 1.5, Bardini interprets the historical development of the first GUI as a process of social construction/blackboxing of the user. The user, and along with it the interface, are the product of endless negotiation or Interactivity between the representations of the user in the designer's mind and the real user's reactions in the laboratory. Like the social constructivist thinkers from Chapter 6, Bardini (mis)understands the Event of being-creative as *a* being that comes into presence at the Interface of a network of inter-related meanings: frozen potentialities or Standing Reserves. Similarly to the alternative HCI designers (Section 5.2), Bardini (mis)understands the Event of being-creative or 'Human-Computer Interaction design' as a presentified exchange of challenging forths between two inter-related subjects: designer and user. The mutual call of Nearness or the shared Event of being-creative that

appropriates ‘designer’ and ‘user’ alike is (mis)understood in interactional terms as ‘Human-Computer interface’ of incessant inter-relations.

Similarly to the other social constructivists students of ‘user modelling’ from Section 2.6, power is (mis)understood as meaning exchange between inter-related writings and readings. Similarly to the Foucauldian concept of power relation, user freedom depends on endless Interactivity between designer and user, as opposed to the exploitative/corrupted blackbox of mainstream design, which abstracts from the full/real/true Interactivity of ‘feedback loop’. This is therefore the meaning of Bardini’s critique of mainstream design, which calls for “open dialogue” and “mutual engagement” between designer and user (Bardini, 2000: 232): an interactional (mis)understanding of power in terms of the interactional present of Enframing.

What remains unquestioned about mainstream design and in fact continues appropriating Bardini’s critique, is the (Anti-)Event of Enframing, whereby the human being gives itself as a technologically configurable ‘user model’ (i.e. presentification of Standing Reserve). Similarly to the Foucauldian concept of subjectivity, Bardini continues (mis)thinking about the human being as a freezable resource that must always be available for the future needs of the human world. Albeit in the negative terms of critique, Bardini continues (mis)thinking about the meaning of technology, power, freedom and human being in terms of the interactional (un)truth of Enframing. Similarly to the Neo-Marxist genealogists, the social constructivist sociologists of technology, the alternative HCI designers, and Heidegger students:

> *Bardini is incapable of thinking that the human being may be something other than an ‘interactive user’.*

Let us finally summarise the same problem that (mis)informs the different critiques of corrupted/recuperated/blackboxed Interactivity:

> *albeit via metaphysical negation, the critical genealogists of ‘interactive’ media technology cannot help but think about the solution to the problem in terms of the same problem that ‘interactive’ media technology is (misunderstood as): the (un)truth of Enframing. Their critical argument - whereby the interactive user is a blackboxed narrative construct/hybrid ensemble/cyborg awaiting* re-configuration *(STS) or a governed subjectivity awaiting interfacial* de-subjugation *(Neo-*

Marxism) - fails to think about a different future of freedom for the interactive user. This is insofar as the meaning of power, freedom and technology (i.e. Event of being-creative) conceals itself to their (mis)thinking in terms of the present (Anti-)Event of Enframing: as the technologically configurable Interface of the 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity' concepts.

The critical genealogists from Chapter 1 *cannot* think about a different future for the human being, given that they have always already pre-projected the history of being-creative in terms of the present (un)truth of Enframing. These thinkers believe to have gained a historical understanding of technological development, but they have always already pre-projected it in terms of a silent (un)truth that they have derived from the technology of their present epoch: Interactivity. Hence the unbearable order that silently transpires through their critical (mis)thinking: given that being-creative was always meant to be at it presently it, the human being and its technology must not be-different in the future. Alternatively:

given that humanity was always meant to be-interactive, it must continue being-interactive. In order to be free, humanity must not be-different.

As the thesis has destroyed the myth of recuperated/corrupt/blackboxed Interactivity in its social constructivist and Neo-Marxist manifestations, now it is worth addressing the popularisation of the same myth among present thinkers of communication (i.e. Media Studies). The focus of destruction are the genealogists from Chapter 1 who, so far, have been left out from the discussion. For these genealogists, the interactivity of present media technology is indeed a corrupted/blackboxed form that has been recuperated by Capital: closed branch interactivity (Manovich); network transactivity (Barney); reactivity (Schultz; Holmes). However, upon formulating this critique, they also contend that presently missing from interactive media technology is a technical requirement of proper, i.e. 'interactive', communication. Before proceeding with the analysis, the next section provides a reminder concerning the essence of communication. Albeit partially, the question concerning communication was already addressed in sections 3.10 and 3.11, which discussed the modern Event of (mis)thinking about communication in representational terms (De Saussure; Peirce).

CHAPTER 9. Destroying the doubt about the critical genealogies of 'communication feedback'

9.1. Media technology and the fight against the communicative difference

The thesis is ready to problematise the very concept of 'interactive *media* technology'. It should be clear that the everyday and academic distinction between 'technology' and 'media/communication' bespeaks of a forgetful (mis)understanding that must be avoided. As per Section 3.10, communication is a gift of the same ek-static condition that makes Dasein *different*, along with technics, art, sociality, etc (early Heidegger). All of them are *different* gifts of the *same* Event whereby Dasein can stand before the presencing of beings *as* beings (later Heidegger). In other words, the essence of communication is the *same difference* of the epochal Event of being creative, *techne* or technology:

> *the essence of 'media technology' is the epochal Event of being that appropriates humanity in a mutual call of Nearness. This is the Event whereby a historical humanity can stand in shared appropriation before the presencing of beings* as *beings: the sharing of meaning via 'media', 'sociality', 'technics', 'art', etc. These terms are abstract categories: thematisations or presentifications of the epochal Event of Nearness, time-space extending, being-creative, techne, technology. 'Media technology' is socio-historical Nearness and 'society' is techno-historical Nearness.*

As per Section 3.10, communication is about the sharing of meaning: Dasein's sharing of ek-static being-toward the being of beings (early Heidegger). Like equipment, everyday communication (i.e. idle talk) provide Dasein with the possibility of pre-ontologically making meaning present. For the later Heidegger, communication is the epochal Event of time-space extending that, upon appropriating humanity in a mutual call of Nearness, conceals itself. This is the furthest human saying can go when referring to so-called signification: the mysterious Event whereby a historical humanity can communicate about (i.e. relate to the being of) beings despite their absence in the here and now:

> *being-historical thinking understands the history of media technologies as different repetitions of the same epochal giving of the gift of presence that conceals itself in terms of the present.*

Theory is a continuation of the pre-ontological (mis)understanding of being in terms of the present (early Heidegger), or the epochal Event of (mis)thinking that conceals itself (later Heidegger). Theorists of technology recurrently forget the Event of Nearness and (mis)understand/presentify the essence of technology in terms of the present (un)truth/(Anti-)Event that the technology of the thinker's present *is* (misunderstood as): an instrument that must fill the empty gap of not-being between Earth and World. This is the same forgetful (mis)understanding of the ontological difference that appropriates thinkers of communication, who have recurrently (mis)understood the *communicative* difference in terms of the present (self-concealment of being).

As per Section 3.10, according to modern thinkers, to communicate means destroying an objectively quantifiable spatio-temporal difference of not-being between subjects occupying objective points in time and space. The communicative difference or *medium* is theorised as objective reference (e.g. de Saussure and Peirce) or channel (e.g. Shannon's transmission theory of communication)[37] that re-presents objective meaning (signified or information) from one point to another. The communicative difference of not-being must be erased at all costs as it is the constant reminder of the metaphysical abyss of the subject-object relation (e.g. Shannon's noise elimination). The essence of media technology is (mis)understood as a weapon in humanity's fight against the objective difference of not-being.

Modern theorists have presentified the essence of communication in terms of the (un)truth of Objectivity: in terms of the (Anti-)Event of Picture that the technology of their own present *is* (misunderstood as) (Section 4.6). What are presently referred to as 'traditional' media technologies (e.g. photography, radio, cinema, TV) belong to the Event whereby everything, in order to be, must be brought to stand before the subject *as* Picture. The Event of Nearness as Picture that modern 'media technology' *is*, conceals itself as human annihilation of spatio-temporal distances: modern Dasein uses 'media technology' as a fight against difference/Nearness. Modern thinkers of communication (mis)understand/presentify the essence of communication in terms of the modern (Anti-)Event that the 'media technology' of their own present *is*: as instrumental destruction of *objectively* quantifiable spatio-temporal distances

[37] Shannon treats the medium as a channel (i.e. referential in-between) that enables the linear transmission (i.e. communication) of a signal (i.e. abstract information) from the information source (i.e. objective point in space and time) of an encoding sender (i.e. subject 1) to the receiving terminal (i.e. objective point in space and time) of a decoding receiver (i.e. subject 2) (Shannon, 1964: 31-34). The presencing element of communication comes to Shannont's attention only insofar as it might produce noise that perturbs the transmission of the signal (1964: 34).

(i.e. objective presentification of Event of Nearness *as Picture*). Thus (mis)thought, the communicative difference has concealed itself as objective 'medium'.

Present thinkers have maintained the term 'medium' (Guillory, 2010) to refer to the communicative difference. However, as per the next sections, the meaning of 'medium' (i.e. communicative difference) is no longer (mis)understood as objectivity. Similarly, meaning is no longer (mis)understood as objective signified/information. And yet, upon returning to the critical genealogists from Chapter 1, it seems that the same fight against the communicative difference has returned, albeit differently.

9.2. Back to the critical genealogists: the communicative fight against the interfacial abyss of "feedback"

Although Barney does not draw from any technical definitions of communication, he argues that "robust interactivity" demands more than a mere medium in-between two communicators, but a set of elements that are shared by both participants (Barney, 2000: 165). Schultz provides specific guidelines for "interactive communication" as he deploys Sheizaf Rafaeli's highly influential definition of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC):

> "Interactivity is feedback that relates both to previous messages and to the way previous messages related to those preceding them" (Rafaeli, 1988: 120).

One already gets a doubt that the "ideal type" of "interactive communication" (i.e. "feedback") pursued by Rafaeli (mis)understands the essence of communication in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing (Rafaeli, 1998: 121). According to Rafaeli, meaning comes into presence as "feedback" at the interface of inter-relations between communicators and technical medium:

> "Interactivity describes and prescribes the manner in which conversational interaction as an iterative process leads to jointly produced meaning" (Rafaeli and Sudweeks, 1997, unnumbered page).

Meaning is no longer (mis)understood as objective, but as interfacial: meaning comes into presence at the Interface of endless inter-relations (i.e. "iterative process") between interactive communicators and interactive medium as "jointly produced" (Rafaeli and Sudweeks, 1997). Similarly to the other 'feedback' concepts encountered before, the exchange of inter-relations must be endless because, otherwise, one would fall into the paradox of not-being: lack of Interactivity

as a (non)being to be fought at all costs via destruction of the interfacial difference between communicators. Hence Rafaeli's fight against "reactive" or, even worse, "noninteractive" media technologies (Rafaeli, 1988: 121):

> *the meaning of Rafaeli's "interactive communication" or "feedback" is Interactivity as the Event of Enframing, whereby the human being challenges forth the being of beings as controllable resource, supply, or Interface. Meaning is challenged forth as endless exchange of inter-relations between inter-related senders/receivers and medium, which the designer must set in place via technological interfacing (Enframing).*

As seen in Section 1.1, Rafaeli's definition of communication has been influential among the critical genealogists. Holmes combines Rafaeli's argument that the communication enabled by present media technology is not necessarily interactive with John Thompson's insight that traditional media (e.g. radio and TV) can *be* interactive (Holmes, 2007: 26).[38] Thompson's sociology distinguishes between three modes of communication, which resemble Rafaeli's classification (Rafaeli, 1988: 118-119):[39] face-to-face interaction, mediated interaction (e.g. telephone and live TV) and mediated quasi-interaction (e.g. newspapers; novels) (Thompson, 1995: 82-87). Starting from speech, media have always involved "time-space distanciation",[40] i.e. the production of stimuli despite the lack of co-presence between

[38] Holmes' position resonates with Manovich, who believes that meida have always been interactive (Section 1.1). As noticed by Gane and Beer, Manovich distinguishes himself from Marshall McLuhan, who argued that new media are unprecedentedly interactive (Gane and Beer, 2008: 12). In this respect, Manovich's position comes closer to Rafaeli and Thompson: potentially, traditional media can be even more interactive than our present media, as they invite us to fill-in even more information. As explained in Section 10.1, these are different forms of the same (interactional) presentism.

[39] Thompson and Rafaeli derive this model from Erving Goffman's theory of impression management, which is interpreted in Section 9.4.

[40] Alternatively, James Carey refers to "time-space distanciation" as the "displacement" function of symbolic systems (Carey, 1989: 22). Semiosis unveils a mysterious *difference*, despite which the human being can use symbols to be in the *presence* of spatially and temporally absent beings. These are attempts to name the Event of communicative difference or Nearness.

communicators (1995: 21). And yet, modern media technology is somewhat unique for it has radicalised this process through the "uncoupling of space and time" (1995: 32), hence privileging mediated interaction over face-to-face interaction (1995: 87). Drawing from Joshua Meyrowitz, Thompson tells us that the experience of temporal simultaneity is presently detached from the here and now of one's locality (1995: 8).

Meyrowitz's theory of glocality builds on McLuhan and argues that media technology extends humanity's perceptual field in space and time (Meyrowitz, 1985; 2005). Media technology dissociates the "physical place" of media usage and the "experiential space" with which the medium connects us (1985: 4). Electronic media have further detached physical presence from perceived presence, hence extending our perception of the "generalised elsewhere" beyond the immediate locale of physical interaction (Meyrowitz, 2005: 21-3). Electronic media have escorted us to the Deleuzian society of control upon tearing down spatio-temporal barriers between social institutions (Meyrowitz, 1985: 310), with alienated or "glocal" subjectivities born out of the conflation of the here and now of usage and there and then of reception (Meyrowitz, 2005: 23-5).[41] Although Meyrowitz has redefined McLuhan's theory of the sensorium via Erving Goffman (Section 9.4), the conclusion he draws regarding our current "sense" of presence brings him back to his maestro: electronic media have returned humanity to a primitive state of sorts, which has reinstated simultaneity of symbolic transmission *in absentia of* human co-presence (Meyrowitz, 1994: 57).

9.3. Marshall McLuhan's interactional metaphysics of communication and the presentism of Media Studies

McLuhan's famous maxims inform us that "the medium is the message" or alternatively that "the content of any medium is always another medium" (McLuhan, 1994: 7-21). Media technologies are no representations of an objective signified (e.g. de Saussure) (McLuhan, 1994: 8) nor empty channels or instruments (e.g. Shannon and Weaver) (McLuhan and McLuhan, 1992: 86-9) but participative in, i.e. interactive with, signification. Upon "translating" previous human experience (McLuhan, 1994: 56-61), media technologies extend humanity's perceptual reach in space and time (McLuhan and Powers, 1989: 87). Media are, in fact have always been, interfacial extensions of the human being, with *being* (Sein) (mis)understood as the totality of our sensorial "interplay" (McLuhan, 1962: 5). After three

[41] A similar analysis of electronically-induced displacement has informed Gary Gumpert and Susan Drucker's concept of a-location (Gumpert and Drucker, 2007: 9), Paddy Scannel's "power of being in two places at once" (Scannell, 1996: 91), and Paul Virilio's work on the speed of electronic media (Virilio, 1995; 1997).

thousand years of technological expansion in time and space, whereby humanity has fragmented its sensorial ratio/interplay, the computer (i.e. the new medium of McLuhan's present) brings about an implosion that abolishes spatial and temporal barriers (McLuhan, 1994: 3). Electronic media have *reversed* the process of perceptual expansion (McLuhan, 1962: 45), *interrupted* the historical fragmentation of the senses (McLuhan and Powers, 1989: 94) and *restored* a primordial or tribal state of sensorial wholeness (McLuhan, 1994: 24):

> "Any process that approaches instant *interrelation* of a total field tends to raise itself to the level of conscious awareness, so that computers seem to "think. In fact, they are highly specialized at present, and quite lacking in the full process of *interrelation* that makes for consciousness" (1994: 351 italics my emphasis).

As anticipated by the invention of electricity, the computer has truly or really realised the Truth or Reality of the "full process of interrelation" that human consciousness was always meant to *be* (again) (1994: 351). This is the re-turn of the human *Being* to itself as "feedback" (1994: 354). Electronic media return present humanity to a tribal state of sensorial immediacy or full interplay of the senses (i.e. "feedback"): the "final phase" of mediatic extension (1994: 3-4), the "second phase of the original creation" (McLuhan and Powers, 1989, 93), a "state of original awareness" (1989: 93-94). This is the "great paradox" of McLuhan's present world (McLuhan, 1962: 127): a process of sensorial expansion in time and space that moves backwards inside the human being and *overlaps with* the sensorial inter-play that the human Being is (misunderstood as). Alternatively, this is the condition whereby, "paradoxically", history has folded back into itself (McLuhan and Powers, 1989: 101).

McLuhan is correct: following the premises of *his own* thinking, the interactivity of present media technology is paradoxical. However, this is a paradox with *no* solution because it is trapped in the vicious circularity of historical (mis)thinking. McLuhan has pre-projected an interactional (un)truth or transhistorical Truth about the human being, communication, and the history of communications technology: the Interactivity of "feedback". Inevitably, McLuhan cannot but struggle to make the media technology of his own present epoch *overlap* with an original form of Communication that his own theory has projected in interactional terms to begin with ("feedback"):

> *McLuhan's history of retribilisation is compromised by a deep-seated form of presentism: the (mis)understanding of the history of being-creative in terms of the interactional present of*

Enframing. McLuhan (mis)understands the history of media technology is terms of the present (un)truth of Interactivity ("feedback"; "interrelation"; "sensorial interplay") that the new technology of his own present is (misunderstood as): endless fight against the interfacial not-being of the sensorial inter-play that the human Being is (misunderstood as).

McLuhan's (mis)thinking is (mis)appropriated by humanity's ever-recurring desire to make its theories of the Real overlap with present Reality: a desire for a technology of communication that *is* Communication as full Interactivity of "feedback". McLuhan (mis)understands the ever-recurring Event of Nearness/space-time in terms of its present self-concealment. Time and space are no longer (mis)understood in objectivist terms. Instead, time and space are (misunderstood as) interfacial resources (i.e. interactional presentification of Standing Reserve) for humanity's endless process of technological expansion into/*interactive conquest* of time and space (i.e. interactional presentification of Event of Enframing/rift between World and Earth).

Rather than questioning the (un)truth of Enframing, whereby humanity must challenge forth the Event of Nearness or time-space extending, McLuhan posited this (Anti-)Event as the presentified, i.e. interactional, essence of Communication: time and space have always *been interfacial resources under humanity's control.*

Hence the same paradox of presentism that inevitably affects the present theories of communication that have adopted the *same* interactional metaphysics of 'communicative feedback' (either via McLuhan or not):

only when the human being will have really/truly/fully mastered the Interface of space and time that its own being-communicative is, will our media technology provide us with real or true Communication. This requires fixing the corrupted (non)Interactivity of present/'interactive' media technology: "alienated/de-coupled [Interface] of space and time" (Meyrowitz; Thompson); "reactive"/noninteractive communication" as lack of Interactivity of "feedback" (Rafaeli; Schultz; Holmes); lack of "robust interactivity" (Barney); "closed interactivity" (Manovich).

The critical genealogists of 'interactive' media technology fail to think differently about the history of media technology: the revolutionary difference of technological development continues being (mis)thought in terms of the present-self concealment of being(-communicative): in terms of the present (un)truth of Interactivity, whereby communication involves the destruction of the spatio-temporal gap of interfacial not-being. The presentism that permeates the (non)debate about the novelty of interactive media technology is summarized in Section 10.1. For now, let us extend the doubt to a belief that is popular among present students of communication: media are very much *present* in our mediatic culture given that reality itself is mediatic or "mediated" (Couldry and Hepp, 2017). Alternatively, the human-being is inevitably "in *medias res*" (Gunkel and Taylor, 2014).[42]

An ideal case study is Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin's genealogy of "remediation" (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). Similarly to many other thinkers seen so far, Bolter and Grusin are convinced of having overcome metaphysics, in this case the modern metaphysics of "representational immediacy": given that reality *is* mediation, our capacity to communicate meaningfully can only be explained by a sense, feeling, illusion or impression of immediacy (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). And yet, the doubt is that this project of relativism and de-centering of modern truths conceals a different meaning.

9.4. The presentism of the genealogy of remediation and the interactional metaphysics of "telepresence"

The remediation argument tells us that new media - in fact the Human-Computer Interface - participate in humanity's ever-recurring pursuit of "immediacy" with the represented being via mediatic "transparency" (Bolter and Grusin, 2000: 31-3). However, immediacy is unachievable because every mediation is "always" a remediation of a previous medium (McLuhan) (2000: 59):

> "The pursuit of transparency is endless, because transparency is redefined with each new technology" (Bolter and Gramala, 2003: 52).

[42] Here the thesis must pass over Gunkel and Taylor's usage of Heidegger for the theorisation of ready-to-hand/invisible mediation. In light of the many (mis)readings seen so far, my doubt is that this is yet another presentification of Dasein's everyday references as a network of inter-related practices/mediations/meanings (Gunkel and Taylor, 2014: 16-17; 28; 31; 101-105).

It is precisely the dismissal of immediacy as utopian that seems to hide a (new) Truth about communication. Even more so, as Bolter and Grusin argue that the HCI designers' pursuit of a sense/feeling of presence is not metaphysical:

> "They are not striving for the real in any metaphysical sense. Instead, the real is defined in terms of the viewer's experience; it is that which would evoke an immediate (and therefore authentic) emotional response" (Bolter and Grusin, 2000: 53).

It is already clear that Bolter and Grusin are fighting an unfightable fight, given that human thinking is *inevitably* metaphysical. Once again:

> "The logic of remediation we describe here is similar to Derrida's (1981) account of mimesis, where mimesis is defined not ontologically or objectively in terms of the resemblance of a representation to its object bur rather *intersubjectively* in terms of the reproduction of the feeling of imitation or resemblance in the perceiving subject" (Bolter and Grusin: 2000: 53 italics my emphasis).

Whereas the Modern pursuit of objective correspondence ("resemblance of a representation to its object") was metaphysical, the present pursuit of perceptual 'intersubjectivity' or interactive sense of presence is not (2000: 53). Once again, Bolter and Grusin are fighting an unfightable fight, which is no longer an objectivist one – as per their silly predecessors, who knew no better. In this respect, it is no surprise that - besides McLuhan - Bolter and Grusin are influenced by Bruno Latour (2000: 57-58) and Donna Haraway:

> "McLuhan's notion that media are extensions of the human sensorium can even be regarded as an anticipation of Donna Haraway's cyborg. McLuhan did bring to our attention the fact that media take their meaning through *interactions* with the senses and the body […]" (2000: 77, italics my emphasis).

According to the theories from which Bolter and Grusin draw, the representation of Modernity unveils an unfillable abyss, hence the corrective notion whereby each mediation is *always already* the remediation of a previous medium. However, a new abyss, albeit infrathin, is betrayed by the meaning of the words used to define *mimesis* (i.e. Event of being-creative): "inter-subjectively" and "interactions" (2000: 53; 77). The history of being-creative is

(mis)understood in interactional terms: a new medium comes into presence at the Interface of inter-relations ('re-mediation') with previous ones. That each mediation is *always* a remediation of a previous medium, with the process unfolding *ad infinitum*, is not to fall into the paradox of not-being. The difference is no longer an objective gap, but an inter-facial difference that must be destroyed in order to establish the perceptual *sense* of presence.

Besides HCI design, Bolter and Grusin notice the same non-metaphysical desire for a sense of presence behind the concept of immersive "telepresence" that has been popular in the field of Computer-Mediated Communication since its heyday (2000: 213-216).[43] As per Jonathan Steuer, one of the first popularisers of the concept:

> "Telepresence is the extent to which one *feels* present in the mediated environment, rather than in the immediate physical environment" (Steuer, 1992: 76, italics my emphasis).

Steuer seems to maintain that face-to-face interaction is immediate. However, when he addresses face-to-face interaction, he acknowledges that it is mediated by mental processes (1992: 75). Even via face-to-face interaction communicators do not gain absolute presence but a perception, sense or feeling of presence. So, end of metaphysics among present thinkers of communication, as per Bolter and Grusin's claim?

If anything, the theorisation of communication as a *feeling* of immediate presence reveals the (inescapable) metaphysics that silently drives the CMC community. This is an interactional metaphysics of communication, which has replaced the objective meaning of Modernity with interactional (sense of) presence. Like in Rafaeli's CMC theory, Steuer's meaning comes into presence at the interface of inter-relations between a technical medium and two communicators who are simultaneously senders and receivers (Steuer, 1992: 78). The CMC community have inherited this interactional Truth about communication - among others - from the same thinker who inspired Bolter and Grusin, McLuhan. In Steuer's case, the objective is to reproduce the hot medium *par excellence*, the one that achieves *full* 'feedback loop' of the senses: face-to-face interaction (Steuer, 1992: 80-1). The CMC community is driven by a desire for a medium of communication that *overlaps with* the McLuhanesque interplay of the senses:

[43] Although Bolter and Grusin distinguish between technologies of telepresence and Virtual Reality the thinkers of CMC have applied the 'telepresence' concept to theorise the design of different interfaces, including online messaging systems, videoconferencing and indeed Virtual Reality systems.

> "It is generally believed that the greater the number of human senses for which a medium provides stimulation (i.e., media sensory outputs), the greater the capability of the medium to produce a sense of presence" (Lombard and Ditton, 1997, unnumbered page).

Another theoretical influence for the field of CMC – and some of the critical genealogists (Section 9.2) - is Irving Goffman's theory of symbolic *interactionism* (e.g. Rafaeli). According to the theory of impression management, the human being or "presence" is a perceptual "repertoire" of verbal and non-verbal cues (Goffman, 1990: 14). Goffman's meaning does not depend exclusively on the individual self, but comes into presence at the interface of interactions with other individuals and with the social "situation" as "feedback" of information exchange (Goffman, 1963: 15-18).[44] The 'situation' concept has replaced the empty spatio-temporal distances of modern thinking and, similarly to the McLuhanesque medium, has become (inter)facial: a backstage/stage that interacts with face-to-face interaction and the feeling or "impression" of presence (Goffman, 1990: 28-82). Despite its undeniable fascination, Goffman's theory is a paradigmatic instance of interactional (mis)understanding of the human being as a "manageable" *resource* (i.e. Standing Reserve). And so, the CMC thinkers who draw from Goffman believe that the designer's task is to achieve the same perceptual richness that mediates meaning during "immersive" face-to-face interaction (i.e. "para-social interaction") (Lombard and Ditton, 1997, unnumbered page).

Since the heyday of CMC, a (non)debate has arisen about the desirability of using face-to-face interaction as a design standard (Rafaeli, 1998: 117; 128). Even when thinkers of CMC reject this mission (e.g. Rafaeli), the objective remains the same: fullness of Interactivity via medium *transparency*, intended as one's (non-)awareness of the "presence" or "noise" of the technical medium during communication (Rafaeli 1998: 116). As per the popularisers of this concept:

[44] The present concept of 'interactive situation' – which was already encountered in Suchman's alternative theorisation of HCI design - is a (mis)understanding of the authentic moment. It replaces the objective here and now of the Modern present with the interactive present of our epoch.

> "An "illusion of nonmediation" occurs when a person fails to perceive or acknowledge the existence of a medium in his/her communication environment and responds as he/she would if the medium were not there […] the medium can appear to be invisible or transparent and function as would a large open window" (Lombard and Ditton, 1997, unnumbered page).

As seen before, the alternative HCI designers misread the ek-static discovery of the *invisible* hammer as a resource to be challenged forth via design (Section 5.2). It should not come as a surprise that the same passage from BT has been appropriated by an alternative branch of CMC, i.e. the ecological/cultural school (Ijsselsteijn and Riva, 2003: 11). Their Heideggerian definition of telepresence as "feeling of being-there" is nothing but an interactional presentification of Dasein's ekstatic (there-)being:

> " […] things in the world are instead incorporated into the system, or formalized according to their potentials for action/interaction with the system itself, their ''readiness-to-hand'' (Zahoric and Jenison, 1998: 85).

The everyday possibility of Dasein's unfreedom (i.e. immersion in invisible communication), whereby Dasein does not appropriate meaning for its ownmost potentiality-of-being, is (mis)theorised – once again - as a tool of user-friendly design. Once again via Dreyfus' practical (mis)reading of BT (Zahoric and Jenison, 1998: 85), readiness-to-hand is (mis)interpreted as an alternative resource for the design of *invisible* interfaces. Similarly to the alternative HCI designers, ready-to-hand presence or meaning has become a model or resource to be enframed via design: challenged forth as humanly controllable Interface.

Either via Heidegger (ecological/cultural school), McLuhan (Steuer), or Goffman (Rafaeli), the obsessive pursuit of the immersive feeling of being-there via invisible interfaces confirms Heidegger's concerns about a future where the human being itself will be sucked up in the Standing Reserve (QCT). Presently, Dasein's *presence* or ek-sistence is (mis)understood as a controllable resource to be technologically configured and optimised (i.e. challenged forth):

> "Presence research offers the possibility to *engineer a better user experience*, to optimize the effectivity, efficiency and pleasurability of the different applications" (Ijsselsteijn and Riva, 2003: 9, italics my emphasis).

Contra Bolter and Grusin, the present desire of the CMC and HCI communities to reproduce a sense, feeling, perceptual illusion of presence via technical invisibility/transparency bespeaks of a new metaphysical truth about communication. Meaningful communication or telepresence is theorised as a configurable (inter-)relationship between interactive communicators and interactive medium. Medium *invisibility* is instrumental for the destruction of the perceptual difference between sensory stimuli and mediated environment through 'feedback loop' of sorts. Present thinkers of communication remain committed to make meaning present, no longer as Object but as Interface of endless Interactivity: communication continues being (mis)theorised as weapon in humanity's fight against the difference of not-being.

Similarly to Bardini, who blindly believes in the revolutionary power of Engelbart's interface (Section 5.3; 8.3), Bolter and Grusin cannot but fail to understand the epochal meaning of the CMC/HCI enterprise, insofar as they share the *same* interactional metaphysics of communication. As further discussed in Section 10.1, this is the same paradox inherited by the genealogical accounts that have adopted an interactional (mis)understanding of communication. On one hand, they attempt to gain a historical understanding of present media technology. Yet, they have always already pre-projected the history of communication in terms of the (un)truth that present media technology is (misunderstood as): Interactivity. Like the other genealogists, when present media technology is critiqued, it is precisely because its design is not *truly* or *really* interactive but continues alienating us from full 'feedback loop' (i.e. Interactivity) of: information exchange (e.g. Schultz and Holmes via Rafaeli), interactive sense of temporality/spatiality (e.g. Thompson; second generation of medium theory), interplay of the senses (e.g. Manovich). The Event of Enframing has always already appropriated the genealogists' (mis)thinking about communication, hence their inability to think about 'interactive' media technology *differently*. These thinkers remain prey to ideal forms of Communication, whereby the technical medium must be one and the same with (i.e. invisibly merge with) the interfacial Being that being-creative was *always* meant to be: Interactivity. What remains unaddressed is the (Anti-)Event of Enframing, whereby space, time and meaning are (mis)understood as controllable resources or, as per Jacques Baudrillard's unaware realisation, technologically configurable "models" (Baudrillard, 1993).

9.5. The presentism of cyberspace theory VS the presentism of genealogies of return

Baudrillard divides the history of Western representation in three orders (Baudrillard, 1993: 50-86). During the Renaissance, the sign works via referentiality with the outside world: representation is aimed at imitating or

counterfeiting nature. With the Industrial Revolution, referentiality breaks down for the first time: the imitation of nature is abandoned for the *series*, mass-production of standardised things identical only to themselves. Starting with the 1929 financial crisis, humanity enters the present order of representation, i.e. the consumer society, which bespeaks of the very *end* of representation. Reality and representation have merged, with the represented no longer bound to any reality out there but only to models. Representations have become empty simulacra*:* copies without an original or simulations. As the signifier has liberated itself from the signified, the sign has taken over reality qua hyperreality.

Baudrillard's present order of simulatory representation/referentiality has *realised* McLuhan's maxim: the medium has effectively become the message, as the mediatic form determines what reality *is* (Baudrillard, 1994: 30). Electronic media have ceased re-presenting reality and realized a form of *immediacy* (1994: 82). Baudrillard's analysis of simulation widely resonates among the literature of virtual reality and cyberspace:

> "Cybernetic space does not augment the world; if abandons the world for one which can be fully realized and fully encompassed - a world of transparency and immediacy" (Nunes, 1997: 165).

Simulation works through a "transparent" Human-Computer interface that reproduces the dream of "immediate" communication or absolute presence (Nunes, 1997: 169). The invisible interface forces the hallucinated user to float in a virtual (hyper)reality that is always under control, free from the constraints of physical interaction (Manovich, 2001: 164-67). In this sense, immediacy and media invisibility are paradigmatic of the unprecedentedly new or *different* condition of the postmodern/posthuman subject/cyborg "interface":

> "In the era of terminal identity, the body has become a machine, a machine that no longer exists in dichotomous opposition to the "natural" and unmediated existence of the subject […] The dominant image is the cybernetic cyborg, a figure of indeterminate *interface*. The body is dissolved" (Bukatman, 1993: 244 italics my emphasis).

Differently from simulation theory, it was seen before that McLuhanesque genealogies tell us that electronic media *return* present humanity to an original state: Interactivity of full 'feedback loop'. As seen extensively, the same position has been embraced by STS and Neo-Marxist genealogies (i.e. return of the Interface to itself via liberated 'blackbox' and 'subjectivity), and in fact by new media students such as Katherine Hayles and Mark Hansen.

According to Hayles, upon enabling the virtual world to change along with the user's movements, virtual reality devices transform the human body into an inscribing mechanism, hence *converging toward* the original experience of human embodiment[45] (Hayles, 1993: 169). Similarly, Hansen argues that via mixed-reality technology humanity witnesses *the convergence between* present media technology and the transcendental experience of technological embodiment (Hansen, 2006: 5). Whereas modern media such as the cinema broke away with natural perception, mixed-reality technology *merges with* the transcendental condition of technogenesis: *interfacial exchange* between human being and external world (2006: 9). Unsurprisingly, here Hansen has drawn from Leroi-Gourhan's interactional metaphysics of the history of technological development, which similarly (mis)informed Bardini's genealogy of the Human-Computer Interface (Sections 5.3). As usual, the genealogist cannot but stand in awe before the "unprecedented" situation of their present stage of technological development (2006: 9). This is the condition whereby the Form and Reality of Technology have "paradoxically" overlapped with each other (2006: 8):

[45] 'Embodiment' is one of the many concepts that this thesis must pass over in silence. In order to destroy its present meaning in fields such as Media Studies and Body Studies, the concept must be traced back – among others - to Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Merleau-Ponty was already encountered in Dourish's metaphysics of embodied interaction (Section 1.6). In light of the many misreadings of Heidegger's philosophy (Bardini; Foucault; HCI and CMC community; Dreyfus; Verbeek; Latour; Hardt and Negri; Winner), only a doubt can be raised about Merleau-Ponty's redefinition of Section 15 of BT (i.e. dealings with invisible artefacts) as "corporeal habit" of the blind person that *practically uses* the invisible stick (1962: 143). Only future destruction may establish *if* Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception is appropriated by an interactional metaphysics of Dasein's being-creative as *Interface*. Presently, only a doubt can be raised about passages such as:

> "There is one particular cultural object which is destined to play a crucial role in the perception of other people: language. In the experience of dialogue, there is constituted between the other person and myself a *common ground*; my thoughts and his are *interwoven into a single fabric*, my words and those of my interlocutor are called forth by the state of discussion, and they are inserted into a *shared operation of which neither of us is the creator*. We have here *a dual being* […] in consummate *reciprocity*" (1962: 354)

> "We must struggle to comprehend, then, how mixed reality can be both a minimal condition for experience of and a concrete moment in the history of human technogenesis in which the constituting or ontological dimension of embodiment is incontrovertibly exposed" (2006: 9).

The answer to Hansen's theoretical ordeal is easily found. Only insofar as Hansen has pre-projected the history of being-creative in terms of the interactional present, can mixed reality be technological Form and present Reality of technological development at the same time (i.e. metaphysical identity). And yet, as usual, the undestroyable difference of not-being cannot but continue puzzling the genealogist. As per an update of the retribalization argument, Hansen stands in confused awe before the present re-turn of Dasein's being-creative to the interfacial Being that it was always meant to be (again). Baudrillard-inspired simulation theories distance themselves from this genealogical account: our present condition as interactive users is interpreted as the *end* of history of technological development or, at least, as an unprecedented break.

Baudrillard had sensed the end of the Modern epoch, whereby – in Heideggerian terms - truth no longer gave itself as Picture of the subject but as Standing Reserve. Yet, in *Baudrillard's own terms*, Baudrillard continued interpreting the essence of truth as objective referentiality between sign and referent/signifier and signified, hence his failure to understand the meaning of the epochal turn of his present world. In this respect, Baudrillard comes closer to genealogical accounts *a la* Winner (Chapter 6), who (mis)interpret the epoch of Enframing via the modern (un)truth of Picture.[46] Nevertheless, Baudrillard continues (mis)understanding reality as a *present being* that *is* independently from Dasein's projections of being (i.e. forgetting of the ontological difference): simulation or hyperreality as *lack of* referentiality (objective *not-being*). When applied to present media technology, simulation theory *must* interpret so-called cyberspace as the end of history: lack of referentiality as lack of being. For this reason, simulation theorists such as Vivian Sobchack *cannot* think about a future that may follow our present condition as cybernauts:

> "Its lack of specific interest and grounded investment in the human body and enworlded action, its saturation with the present instant, could well cost us all a future" (Sobchack, 1994: 104).

[46] In this respect, the present debate on so-called Post-Truth *seems* to bespeak of a similar clash between different worldviews. Presently, this is only a doubt.

Although the lesson of cyberspace theory is *different* from the genealogies of return, its outcome is the *same*: an inability to think beyond our present condition as interactive users.

> *What hides itself behind the "lack of referentiality" of "cyberspace" is no emptiness of (referential) not-being but the present Event of Enframing, whereby the human being challenges forth reality as a humanly controllable resource, or, in the own terms of cyberspace theory, as Interface.*[47]

Although expressed differently, Baudrillardian genealogies of 'interactive' media technology are nevertheless informed by a deep-seated form of presentism. Cyberspace theory is a different expression of the ever-recurring (un)truth that the thesis has problematised: the human inclination to escape from the not-yet of existence in the desperate attempt to be-in the unachievable *Present* (albeit negatively via critique).

No matter how the critical genealogists have formulated the solution to fix present media technology, there can be no different future in 'interactive' media technology. This is because their present concepts of 'interactive' media technology *are* only for the sake of the Event of (mis)thinking of *their present epoch*, which prevents them from gaining the historical understanding or critical genealogy advocated by Gane and Beer. At this point, genealogical destruction has gained a historical understanding of the meaning of the *critical genealogists'* 'interactional' present. Let us proceed to summarise the present argument of genealogical destruction (Section 10.1), and sketch an agenda for the future of genealogical destruction upon raising a reasonable doubt about the 'interactional' present (Section 10.3).

[47] In this respect, future research must destroy the meaning of "Artificial Intelligence" too. *Contra* Dreyfus (Section 2.10), the paradox of this enterprise does not *seem* to have anything to do with the impossibility of reproducing the Interactivity of Dasein's being-in-the world. Rather, the paradox *seems* to be the (Anti-)Event whereby Dasein challenges forth its own "intelligence", i.e. Dasein's ek-static understanding, as a supply or resource (i.e. Standing Reserve). Presently, this is only a doubt.

10. Conclusion: for genealogical destruction of the 'interactional' present

10.1. The present argument of genealogical destruction: the presentism of the critical genealogists

The critical genealogists of interactive media technology analysed in the thesis *seem* to have followed two irreconcilable paths: either present media technology is *different* from or the *same* as past/traditional media (e.g. photography, cinema, radio, TV, etc.). For some of the participants in this debate, the subject of contention is whether present media technology is more 'interactive' than its traditional predecessors (McLuhan-informed genealogies; Hardt and Negri; Latour; Bardini) or if traditional media were more 'interactive' than present ones (Thompson; Manovich; Rafaeli; Holmes). However, this is an unresolvable debate because it is *not* a debate.

Either way, the sameness of the ever-recurring Event of being-creative is misunderstood as transhistorical repetition of the *same* Form (i.e. Interactivity). The epochal difference between present and past media technology is (mis)understood in terms of two different gaps of *not-being* between: transhistorical interactive Form ←→ past technological Reality *and* transhistorical interactive Form ←→ present technological Reality. Either way, the genealogists expect that the gap *must* be destroyed in their own present as metaphysical identity between interactional Form and present 'interactive' media technology. In other words, present 'interactive' media technology is expected to return to the Truth that it was *always* meant to be: true Interactivity as 'open interactivity' (Manovich), 'robust interactivity' (Barney), 'interactive communication' of full 'feedback' (Holmes; Schultz). It does not matter if it is claimed that present media technology is more or less interactive than traditional ones: the history of being-creative is always already pre-projected in terms of genealogist's 'interactional' present of Enframing.

Alternatively, some genealogists have engaged in a debate as to whether past media *were* interactive at all. For instance, Holmes – who follows the dominant claim whereby past media were *already* interactive - is highly critical of Manuel Castells and Van Dijk, for whom interactivity is an unprecedented state of affairs that has been realised for the first time by the present technology of their/our Network Society (e.g. the Internet) (Holmes, 2007: 27-28). Ironically, Holmes dismisses this genealogical assessment as "presentism" (2007: 28). Arguments *a la* Castells and Van Dijk resonate with Donna Haraway's insights about the historical difference of our present cyborg-being (Section 6.7), as well as Schultz's claim that traditional broadcast media were *not* interactive (Section 1.1). Differently from Holmes, genealogists such as Schultz, Haraway, Castells and Van Dijk have pre-projected the history of being-creative (*Sein*) as return of a different being (*Seiendes*): an entity that changes from pre-interactional Being to the interactional Being of the present 'Cultural Industries' (Schultz), 'Network Society' (Castells; Van Dijk), 'Informatics

of Domination' (Haraway). Either way, the genealogists fail to gain a historical understanding of the present stage of technological development, for the history of being-creative is *differently* pre-projected in terms of the *same* meaning of the interactional present of Enframing. Ironically, upon *correctly* accusing Castells and Van Dijk of presentism, Holmes has fallen into the *same* problem, albeit via a *different* route. Once again, here is the vicious paradox of correctness that prevents the critical thinkers seen in this thesis from thinking differently: from each other and the present condition of unfreedom.

The critical genealogists do have the merit of questioning the enthusiastic believers in present media technology such as the prosumers (Section 1.2): the 'interactional' revolution has already taken place and made us all free (Bruns; Benkler; Jenkins; Tapscott and William). However, the critiques of this 'acritical' position fail to think about a different stage of technological development. Albeit via (metaphysical) negation, the critical genealogists continue (mis)thinking about the human being as (Anti-)Event of Standing Reserve: in terms of the (un)truth of Interactivity that lies hidden behind the concepts of 'blackbox', 'subjectivity' and 'communicative feedback' (Chapters 6-9). For this reason, the problem with present media is that it is *not truly* or *really* interactive: our present being-creative is a (non)being that awaits to be liberated and escorted back to its true/real/uncorrupted state. The problem with present media technology is always traced back to a mythical event of corruption that must be (re-)solved: digital Capital's recuperation of the 1968 revolutionary subjectivities/discourses (Hardt and Negri; Boltanski and Chiapello; Chun; Fisher; Fuchs); Apple's recuperation of Engelbart's revolutionary practices of HCI design (Bardini; Chun; Emerson); commercial corruption of HCI design/communicative feedback (Barney; Holmes; Manovich; Rafaeli; Schultz). In terms of the genealogists' own (mis)thinking about the revolutionary difference, these revolutionary events were indeed *re*-revolutionary: *essentially* not-different from the past history of humanity (Section 7.9). Paradoxically, the critical genealogists share the (un)truth whereby the human being *is* a controllable Interface (i.e. Standing Reserve) to be (re-)controlled, (re-)configured, (re-)interfaced, (de-)subjugated. Even *they*, 'critical' thinkers, share the (un)truth of 'acritical' thinkers such as the prosumers: 'given that reality is interactive, Interactivity is the revolutionary Real'.

In light of the work of interpretation carried out in the thesis, this is the present argument of genealogical destruction:

the meaning of the critical genealogists' *arguments about 'interactive' media technology is the same (un)truth of Enframing that Heidegger had already critiqued in the 1950s: Interactivity as the silent (un)truth that orders present humanity to challenge forth the being of everything as its controllable resource, Standing Reserve or Interface. That the human being may be something other than an 'interactive user' remains unthinkable for* these thinkers*: 'given that being-creative was always meant to be as it presently is, i.e. interactive, future humanity and its technology must continue being-interactive in order to be free; the future must not be-different.*

The thesis is nearly ready to raise its doubt about the 'interactional' present. As per the introduction, this doubt is inspired by genealogical destruction of the critical genealogists' arguments but is extended to present (critical) thinking. What appears to make the doubt reasonable is explained in Section 10.3. Before however, the next section must reckon with a past that genealogical destruction has inherited not of its own accord. Presently, two dark clouds hang over the thesis. *In their terms,* it is impossible to pursue freedom – for oneself and the Other - via a philosopher who was guilty of metaphysics of presence (Derrida, 1997; 1982) and ontological anti-Semitism (Di Cesare, 200).

10.2. The past of genealogical destruction: a reasonable doubt about the accusations of metaphysics of presence and ontological anti-Semitism

Jacques Derrida and Donatella Di Cesare accuse Heidegger on philosophical grounds, namely in Heidegger's own terms. Therefore, future projects of research *must* repeat the same work of circular critique carried out in Chapters 2-5 (i.e. genealogical destruction of the present readings of Heidegger's philosophy of technology). Due to lack of space, here these two thinkers can only be subjected to a reasonable doubt. In fact, their accusations *must* be doubted: the reasonability of the Heideggerian-informed doubt about the 'interactional' present depends on it.

Derrida contends that Heidegger's philosophy hides a "transcendental signified", namely *a* present being or Truth (Derrida, 1997). In *Sending and Representation*, Derrida excludes – *contra* Heidegger - the possibility of a history of "indivisible envois" but only "backreferences […] which would no longer be representatives" (1982: 324): *différance* itself as the "condition" for signification (1982: 324). Alternatively, Heidegger is guilty of avoiding the problem of "specular reiteration or infinite regress" (1982: 314), via a concept of sending of being ("*envoi*") that smells like a present being: the "indivisibility of what is destined" or the "being-together or with itself of the *envoi*"

(1982: 322). Essentially, Derrida argues that Heidegger's genealogy of modern representation (*Vorstellung*) fails to account for the gap of repetition that separates the re- of re-presentation (i.e. *différance*): the re-turn of presence that separates the re-turned being from its pre-re-turned absent presence (1982: 314- 326). Paradoxically, Derrida *seems* to (mis)interpret the meaning of Heidegger's philosophy from the viewpoint of the same abyss of not-being (i.e. "infinite regress") that Heidegger never avoided but always meant to *critique*.

The doubt gets stronger as Derrida repeatedly (mis)interprets the meaning of Heidegger's critique of the modern representation as *Vorstellung* (1982: 307; 309; 315): the Event of modern (mis)thinking about being as setting upon of Picture (Section 4.4). Heidegger does *not* use the word *Vorstellung* to claim that the modern subject *has* the power to re-present: i.e. to make an object present *again* (1982: 307; 309; 315). For Heidegger, the meaning of the modern '*re*-presentation' is the *unthinkable paradox* of vicious circularity that *(mis)*appropriates the modern thinker: the paradox of something that is meant to *be* objectively (i.e. independently from the subject), and yet something that can *be* only upon being brought to stand before the subject as its object (Section 4.4). Heidegger never escapes from the (*unthinkable*) circle of "*infinite*" reiteration of not-being (1982: 314). Instead, Heidegger provides us with the thinking (i.e. being-historical thinking) and terminology (i.e. *Vorstellung*) to understand that the modern 'representation', *in its own terms*, opens an unsolvable paradox of not-being that one must jump out of in order to think freely. Ironically, Derrida *seems* to be taking the very opposite turn:

> *what if Derrida had de-existentialised the ek-static nothingness that pervades the not-yet of Heidegger's Dasein? What if Derrida had presentified nothingness as the (un)thinkable deity of a paradoxical metaphysics of (non)presence that is meant to* (not-)be *independently from Derrida's (mis)thinking? What if the Derridean Event of signification concealed an interactional metaphysics, whereby meaning comes into presence at the interfacial difference/*différance *between "a multiplicity of renvois" that are endlessly "referring back to other traces and to traces of others" as Interactivity (Derrida, 1982: 324)? What if, upon overlooking Heidegger's insights about the* circularity *(not the self-presence!) of the envois, Derrida had jumped into the same vicious circle of "infinite regress" of Interactivity that Heidegger had meant to critique (not avoid!)? What if, Derrida had (mis)understood the meaning of Heidegger's philosophy in terms of the same problem that Heidegger had meant to critique: a (mis)understanding of (Heidegger's critique of the*

traditional misunderstanding of) nothingness in terms of the present as interfacial not-being of différance*?*

As per Derrida, the thesis can only raise a (reasonable) doubt about Di Cesare's accusations of ontological anti-Semitism (Di Cesare, 2018), which partake in the recent debate about the highly controversial black notebooks: a collection of private notes that Heidegger wrote between 1931 and 1941 (BN1; BN2; BN3). Di Cesare's twofold argument is that Heidegger's acquiescence with National Socialism as rector of Freiburg University (April 1933-1934) was no biographical mistake but fully consistent with the ontological anti-Semitism that pervades his philosophy: Heidegger's being-historical thinking excludes the possibility that the Jews and the non-Western Other, will be present in the future of being (Di Cesare, 2018). Di Cesare's argument is well-researched, well-informed, well-written and yet, *in its own terms – i.e. in terms of Heidegger's philosophy* - doubtful:

> *what if Di Cesare had (mis)understood the meaning of Heidegger's* self-admitted *philosophical mistake, whereby he "mistook" the epochal meaning of National Socialism as Turn, hence falling into "superficial, distracted, blind acquiescence" (BN2, 318-319)? What if Di Cesare had (mis)understood the* epochal *meaning of the Event of Heidegger's philosophical mistake in terms of the present, namely - as per Heidegger's own admission in 1936/1937 and 1398 (BN1, 253-254; BN2, 318-319) - in terms of his present stage of* uncomplete *philosophical development (1933-34)? What if one does not even need to know CP (1936-38) and only read the notes between 1934-136/37 (BN1, 144-253) to witness Heidegger developing the being-historical thinking to understand* why *his acquiescence with National Socialism had been a philosophical mistake – once judged in terms of a philosophy that, at the time of his acquiescence,* did not exist yet *(BN1, 253-254)? What if in (fully developed) Heideggerian terms, the meaning of Heidegger's rectorship and his "thoughtful" acquiescence with (Spiritual) National Socialism (BN2, 318) had been inauthentic/re-volutionary attempts at destroying the present (Section 7.9), which had contradicted – due to lack of this very insight - the meaning of free thinking as thinking "counter [of] its present epoch" (BN1, 253)?*

In Di Cesare's own terms, Heidegger's change of mind about National Socialism might have occurred *despite* his ontological anti-Semitism. However, this seems doubtful too.

What if the question of "world-Judaism" - which "is not a racial question but a metaphysical one" (BN3: 191) - referred to an epochal sending of being that belongs to the Western Event of (mis)thinking – i.e. the "Hellenic-Jewish world" or the "Christian-Hellenistic-Jewish" worldview (BN2: 264; 251) - that Heidegger's being-historical thinking desires to destroy along with Christianity and Objectivity? What if the present/modern Event of being-Jewish found itself at the "point of attachment" (BN3: 37) between seemingly opposite worldviews – e.g. Bolshevism and Americanism (BN3: 191) - and historically distinct ones – i.e. the Jewish and rationalist worldview of Picture - as "Jewish psychoanalysis" (BN2: 200)? What if, as demonstrated by the horrors of the 20th century, the epochal meaning of this Event was no harmonious co-existence between *different* worldviews, but the *same* technoscientific "world-historical task [of] the uprooting of all the beings from being" (BN3, 191)? What if Di Cesare had (mis)understood the epochal meaning of the (Anti-)Event of being as Picture - which had assimilated the modern return of the Jewish worldview - in terms of the present (Jews)? What if, paradoxically and yet consequently, Di Cesare had (mis)understood the meaning of the Heideggerian project of destruction of the modern (Anti-)Event of Picture – i.e. repotentialisation of subjectivist thinking via being-historical thinking (Sections 3.9; 7.9) - in terms of the modern/objective present as *objective non-presence* of the Jews in the history of being? In light of the work carried out in this thesis, Di Cesare's accusations of Anti-Semitism are *already* doubtful:

> *what if the meaning of Di Cesare's accusation of anti-Semitism was the same problem that Heidegger's being-historical thinking meant to critique (without being understood): Di Cesare's (mis)reading of the Jewish question as return of the same vicious (mis)understanding (of being in terms of the* present) *that led National Socialism to realise its epochal meaning as full "consummation of modernity" (BN2, 318) via the "worst evil"/"vile" technoscientific elimination/"persecutions" of* present *Jews (Heidegger, 2003: 185)? What if Heidegger's public silence on these matters meant to hide his being-"ashamed" (2003: 185) for the horrors he had contributed to during his acquiescence with National Socialism? What if Heidegger's being-historical thinking* cannot *exonerate Heidegger from his epochal mistake but it can help others not to fall into similar mistakes?*

Albeit silently, the next section continues doubting Di Cesare's accusations. As per the meaning of the doubt about the 'interactional' present, Heidegger's complete philosophy provides one with the means to pursue freedom, both for oneself and the Other.

10.3. The future of the genealogical fight against Interactivity: raising the doubt about the 'interactional' present

The thesis is ready to close a circle of doubt that was opened several years ago. Back then, it must have seemed unreasonable that the only possible answer to the question that had been haunting me – *what is it about interactive media technology that makes the interactive user unfree?* – would be a doubt about the present concept of 'interactive' media technology as a doubt about the 'interactional' present:

> *what if in* our *present epoch, the concept of 'interactive' media technology hindered a historical understanding or critical genealogy of* our *present world and its media technology? What if the meaning of* our *'interactional'/present world was the same (Anti)Event of being(-human) that makes technological Dasein unfree? What if so-called 'postmodern relativism(s)' concealed a hidden deity to whom present humanity has delegated free thinking: Interface? What if Interactivity was the hidden meaning of* our *present thinking about the world and - always already - the meaning of* our *present word: the Event of Enframing whereby present humanity challenges forth the being of everything as controllable resource, Standing Reserve, or Interface? What if in the 1950s, Heidegger had already critiqued the vicious circularity of Interactivity and yet, the meaning of his critique had been (mis)understood in terms of the same problem he had meant to critique: in terms of the interactional (un)truth of Enframing?*

Several clarifications about the *meaning* of this doubt are necessary. As I refer to *our* present world, *our* media technology and *our* (un)truth, am I asking the Other to subscribe to my Truth or Heidegger's? In this respect, it is necessary to clarify, once again, what the *Heideggerian-informed* method of genealogical destruction can tell us about the present.

In order to put into words the (un)sayable answer to the question concerning the meaning of 'being' (TB), Heidegger *must* destroy the Western tradition from which he has inherited – not of his own accord – the language and thinking to formulate the question in the first place. Heidegger does not exclude *different* ways of thinking about 'being'. Heidegger does not deny that non-Western thinkers may think about something like 'being', nor does he ban non-Western humanity from history. Via destruction of a different traditional heritage or worldview - i.e. *different* language and *different* thinking (i.e. not 'metaphysical') about the meaning of something that is not named 'being' - non-Western thinkers have the *same* power as Heidegger. This is the power to rebel against the *same* condition that Heidegger and non-Western thinker alike share: being-in-the-world not of one's own accord.

Heidegger does not expect the non-Western Other to obey his Western truth, given that his truth about *aletheia* is in fact a (non)truth aimed at destroying Western (un)truths. If anything, Heidegger invites us to destroy, i.e. appropriate authentically or *repotentialise* (Sections 3.9; 7.9), the traditional Western worldview that has recurrently used its (un)truth/technology as a weapon to destroy the Other's difference (Sections 7.2; 7.3). As it should be abundantly clear, so-called technoscientific 'progress' is no Heideggerian criterion to measure human freedom: upon providing humanity with the instrument to escape death and set the Earth into place, namely to *immerge itself in comfortable existence*, technology always already provides humanity with an instrument of unfreedom (Sections 2.9; 4.3). In light of the *Heideggerian-informed* work of meaning interpretation (Chapters 6-9), the present stage of technological development bespeaks of a radicalisation of humanity's inclination to delegate freedom to present artefacts or 'interfaces'. In fact, the present seems like a radicalisation of Western Dasein's inclination to destroy the non-Western Other's difference via technology.

The last doubt is not derived from Heidegger, nor from mere speculation. Instead, it is inspired by genealogical destruction of the arguments about the globalised spread of 'interactive' media technology *as*: 'Network Society' (Castells; Van Dijk), 'Empire' (Hardt and Negri), 'Society of Control' (Deleuzian-informed genealogies), 'Informatics of Domination' (Haraway) and the (mis)understood concept of Enframing as 'uncontrollable network' (Dreyfus; Verbeek; Latour; Winner). These 'critical' concepts betray an interactional metaphysics, which (mis)understands the solution to the global technological problem in terms of the same problem or (un)truth that present media technology *is*. Via genealogical destruction of present critical concepts such as 'subjectivity', 'blackbox' and 'communicative feedback', a (reasonable) doubt was raised about present critical thinking: so-called

‘postmodern relativism’ was not born in opposition to but *in continuation with* the Modern tradition of Western metaphysics, which pursues absolute/present control over beings (Chapters 6-9).

Hence the meaning of *my* doubt: in order to put into words the condition of unfreedom of the ‘interactive user’, I must destroy the *language* and *thinking* of the heritage/worldview of ‘relativism’ that I have inherited not of my own accord (e.g. STS; Neo-Marxism; Media Studies). In this respect, my present epoch/world is indeed the *same* as the critical genealogists’, insofar as we both share the same Western heritage of critical thinking and language. And yet, our epochal worlds are also different. This world-difference is not a spatio-temporal gap of not-being between my existence and theirs but a *willed* difference. Upon refusing to rebel against my present world in terms of my traditional heritage, my world will *be* different. Via genealogical destruction of the ‘interactional’ present I will repotentialise the language and thinking that *I have inherited not of my own accord*. In other words, my (shared) worldview wills to be-different upon refusing to (mis)understand its world in terms of the ‘interactional’ present of Enframing.

The last claim, whereby the meaning of the world that I share with the critical genealogists is Enframing, is not my claim but –unawarely – the genealogists’. First and foremost, ‘interactional’ is the critical genealogists’ *own* Present. *In the genealogists’ own terms*, the hidden meaning of their Present *is* the vicious circularity of the same (Anti)Event of Enframing that appropriates their historical (mis)thinking about the present in ‘interactional’ terms. Although I have acknowledged that the meaning of our shared world is Enframing, I have rebelled against their argument whereby Enframing has spread across the non-Western world *as* a network of inter-related practices (i.e. ‘Network Society’, ‘Empire’, ‘Society of Control’, ‘Informatics of Domination’, etc.). However, what I am doubting is the interactional presentification of Enframing, not the Event whereby present media technology challenges forth the non-Western Other’s world. And yet, I am not doubting that my world is different from the non-Western Other’s.

The difference between my world and the Other’s is not a spatio-temporal gap of not-being. Instead, our worlds are different insofar as the Other and I may be free only via rebellion against a different traditional heritage/worldview. In order to respect the Other’s difference and *facilitate* their struggle against present media technology, I must allow them to fight *their own* fight, which cannot but be different from mine. This is insofar as the problem to be fought and the fight itself bear different *meanings*: what *I* call ‘destruction’ may well need to be carried out against/*be projected in terms* of a different worldview. And yet, this is a fight against the *same* condition that the Other and I share: a different fight against the (same) being-in a (different) world not of our own accord. Therefore, when it comes to the rebellion against the ‘interactional’ present of Enframing and its ‘interactive’ media technology,

the Other may well be fighting a different fight. And yet, both the non-Western Other and I would be fighting against a technological world that we have both inherited not of our own accord. Both of us would be fighting a fight against traditional possibilities of critique that we *must* repotentialise in order to be free.

The same argument must be made about *any* Other, so to speak: the not-me as the not-white, not-male, not-middle class Other who might be reading these remarks right now, in our shared present. You and I, reader, *are* different: not because of a spatio-temporal gap of not-being but because of a difference that reveals our shared belongingness to the *same* unsayable condition, ek-sistence. Upon referring to you as the not-Western, not-white, not-male, not-middleclass Other, I am not inviting you to identify yourself with these terms, nor am I applying them to myself. Instead, I am encouraging you to rebel against these conceptualisations of being-human, which both you and I have inherited not of our own accord.

Upon raising the doubt as to whether Interactivity might be the (un)truth of *our* present epoch, I am not asking you to *obey* a (non)truth that has appropriated *me*. Upon asking you to join my genealogical fight against the Western tradition of critical thinking, I am not asking you to give up your own fight, language and thinking and subscribe to mine. What I am asking of you is the *benefit of the doubt* of which both you and I are capable, as beings that can *make of (our) being(-different) a question*. Hence my (non)request: to doubt whether, despite our differences, both of us might be rebelling against traditional heritages that we have both inherited not of our own accord. May our fights be different in their sameness and the same in their difference. May *our* generation come together in a fight that, in its sameness, cannot but bear different meanings and names, in my case: a genealogical fight against the 'interactional' present of Enframing.

Being-historical thinking is not always easy to follow – both for myself and the Other. This is not a limitation, but a necessary gift: free thinking cannot, in fact *must* not be easy. Like the anxious moment of everyday resolution, freedom *must* be a struggle. *Presently*, at this early stage of my fight, it would be arrogant of me to believe that I have not made mistakes. However, I shall give myself the benefit of the doubt, and add one more argument to my doubt about the 'interactional' present:

> *in order to liberate myself of the present (un)truths of a world wherein I have found myself not of my own accord, the task ahead demands further genealogical destruction of the 'interactional' present.*

The ‘interactional’ present is the precious gift of ‘interactive’ presence that my epochal world presented me with. And yet, in order to think freely, it seems to me that I must resist the temptation to (mis)understand the giving of this gift in terms of the gift, i.e. in terms of the (interactional) present of Enframing. In this respect, it is important to clarify that the issue at stake is not the ever-recurring word ‘inter-’ (Section 5.3), but the destruction/ repotentialisation of its *present* meaning: Interactivity as the challenging (un)truth of Enframing (Chapters 5-9). It was seen repeatedly that even when the terminology of ‘interactivity’ is not used - e.g. Foucault’s power ‘relation’ (Chapter 7) – the present (un)truth of Enframing, i.e. Interactivity, conceals itself behind the epochal thinker’s thinking. Hence my last addition to the doubt about the ‘interactional’ present:

> *first and foremost, the genealogical fight against the ‘interactional’ present is a fight against the (un)truth of Interactivity or the double danger of Enframing. Genealogical destruction is not a mere fight against the word ‘interactivity’ but a fight against the (un)truth of Interactivity/Enframing that seems to be (mis)informing present thinking.*

In light of this doubt, the genealogical fight against Interactivity cannot limit itself only to the present concept of ‘interactive’ media technology, nor in fact to the genealogies of present media. One may say that there are as may applications for genealogical destruction as there are present attempts at defining the undefinable human condition. The objective cannot but be inexhaustible, and yet worth pursuing: a historical understanding or critical genealogy of the present meaning of being(-human). Hence my present difficulties at sketching a comprehensive agenda for the future, which can only take the form of sparse concepts/subjects/debates.

First and foremost, genealogical destruction must continue interpreting (a)critical theorisations of present/‘interactive’ media technology. Not only did the thesis restrict destruction to a limited number of genealogists from three disciplines (Neo-Marxism; STS; Media Studies/CMC), but their thinking was limited to the concepts of ‘blackbox’, ‘subjectivity’, and ‘communicative feedback’. And yet, via destruction of the epochal thinkers who have influenced the three disciplines, the thesis has destroyed many *different* ‘postmodern relativism(s)’, which bear the *same* epochal meaning: a radicalisation of modern humanity’s obsessive pursuit of control over beings. In this respect,

it seems necessary to continue with the same work of destruction from Chapters 6, 7 and 9: genealogical destruction of the Turn undergone by 'modern' thinking.

On several occasions the thesis pointed out blind spots that could not be discussed due to lack of space. These already qualify as future objects of destruction: the evolution of the Marxian concept of 'ideology'; the present debate on 'Post-Truth'; the technoscientific enterprise of 'Artificial Intelligence'; the Merleau-Pontian redefinition of BT via 'embodiment'; the usage of Heidegger as a philosopher of mediation; the post-structuralist turn in linguistics; present conceptualisations of 'sense' of self via the concept of 'fluid' identity.

Genealogical destruction must not become a niche fight but must be accessible to the everyday Dasein that may have no interest in theoretical matters. Hermeneutic destruction of the language surrounding 'current affairs' may help (any)one to problematise the idle talk that hinders authentic appropriation of the being-said (Sections 3.10). For instance, what if, upon destroying the language and thinking of the participants in the debate about the *environmental crisis*, one would find out that:

> *the renewable energy enthusiast and oil executive are appropriated by the same Event, whereby the Earth gives itself as resource of the Human World, with its energy to be challenged forth, either via technologies of oil extraction or technologies of 'renewable energy' (?). Both 'climate change denier' and 'post-truth critics' have (mis)understood the meaning of their debate, which bespeaks of a turn in worldviews about the essence of truth: from Objectivity into Interactivity, whereby truth comes into presence at the inter-face of social inter-relations (?). The* different *ways in which 'environmental activist' and complicit 'environmental agency' perceive the meaning of the 'environmental crisis' are part of the* same *problem or (un)truth: humanity must survive at all costs because it is its duty to 'save the planet' and 'save the animals', as if the essence of the Earth and beings unlike Dasein was a resource (Standing Reserve) to be set in order by the undiscussed lord of all beings, i.e. Dasein (?).*

This is not to forbit one from rebelling against the technological challenging forth of the Earth. As per the discussion above, genealogical destruction always already gives the Other the benefit of the doubt. Assuming that this benefit is mutual, the meaning of my doubt about the 'environmental crisis' is to keep in mind that: one's 'practice' and

‘thinking’ are permeated by ambiguity, which is the same ambiguity that defines the Other’s existence; one’s revolt can easily turn into inauthentic re-volution, driven by dogma or Truths that one has comfortably inherited from a re-volutionary They-self; there can be no ready-made life lessons or solutions for one’s revolt, as if the *meaning* of freedom was the idle acronym “DIY”; only via the anxious realisation that the *essence* of the Earth is not *a controllable resource* may Dasein jump into a new beginning, wherein the human World no longer challenges forth the ‘environment’, either as something to be ‘exploited’ or ‘saved’. The (non)truth of the matter is that a different future is (un)theorisable, insofar as it is (mis)theorised as something that is-not-yet: a *different* future can only be thought as a creative process of rebellion in the ek-static moment. And so, the (non)truth of the matter is that one *cannot* prescribe future solutions, nor life lessons for the Other: whether one’s revolt is authentic or not *must* be a constant source of *doubt* for the only being that can make of (its) being(-free) a question.

In light of the discoveries made in this thesis, my present doubt is that the Event of freedom or the epochal giving of the gift of *being-different*, appropriates my generation as a rebellion against the (un)truth of Enframing: Interactivity. If any at all, the (non)lesson to be learned from my doubt is that you, so-called ‘interactive user’, should find the resolution to *be* the master of your own existence. Hence the doubt I feel comfortable sharing with you, ‘interactive user’, who might be reading these last remarks on a digital ‘interface’:

> *being-interactive is the present way in which humanity has always (mis)understood (its) being.*

Upon observing the present condition of technological Dasein, I refuse to perceive the problem in terms of the ‘interactional’ present: in terms of the (un)truth of Enframing. Presently, this is the furthest I can go as I attempt to repotentialise the language of the critical genealogists and put into words what makes present humanity unfree:

> *Dasein, whose presence is always comfortably available for social stockpiling, is today commanded by profit-making in the sociability industry. It is made subordinate to the orderability of its being-with-the-Other, which is challenged forth by the digital economy as supply of revenue for the advertising industry. The latter orders Dasein’s being-in-the-world to be always available to the gaze of a device that was extracted and assembled by a distant Other: manageable livestock for the material branch of the digital economy, which challenges forth the Earth as its supply of energy.*

All of this – according to a hipster executive who has challenged space and time to be available in 'real' time – for the sake of an unbearable order to 'think differently', so that even Dasein's being-creative may feed more of the same difference and be a weapon to destroy the Other's freedom.

This *seems* to occur with the unaware complicity of critical thinking, whose solution to the above problem(s) - i.e. the (Anti-)Event whereby Nearness conceals itself as humanly controllable resource – (mis)understands the meaning of freedom in terms of the problem(s): the re-volutionary gift of 're-configuration', 'de-subjectification' or 're-interfacing' by grace of Interface almighty, which shall make our lives (un)friendly *ad infinitum*.

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