Siby K. George

Heidegger and Development in the Global South

Springer

Contributions To Phenomenology

In Cooperation with The Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology

Volume 82

Scope

The purpose of the series is to serve as a vehicle for the pursuit of phenomenological research across a broad spectrum, including cross-over developments with other fields of inquiry such as the social sciences and cognitive science. Since its establishment in 1987, *Contributions To Phenomenology* has published nearly 80 titles on diverse themes of phenomenological philosophy. In addition to welcoming monographs and collections of papers in established areas of scholarship, the series encourages original work in phenomenology. The breadth and depth of the Series reflects the rich and varied significance of phenomenological thinking for seminal questions of human inquiry as well as the increasingly international reach of phenomenological research.

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/5811

Siby K. George

Heidegger and Development in the Global South

Siby K. George
Department of Humanities and Social
   Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay
   (IITB)
Mumbai
India

Printed on acid-free paper

To Sini and Mahima

Preface

*...to ponder the extent to which the human being today is sub-
jugated not only to technology, but the extent to which humans
must respond to the essence of technology, and the extent to
which more original possibilities of a free and open human
existence announce themselves in this response.*
—Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, 20.

How do the people of the global south respond to technological modernity and the logos that powers it? How shall they attain an open relationship to technologically driven modernity? Should they be fully engulfed in technological relationships, even as they are increasingly goaded, seduced and also coerced to embrace the miraculous ways of the technological society as offered to them in the ideology of development? Is the cultivation of technological society in the global south a non-negotiable moral 'truth'?

The most popular and, therefore, vulgar and commonsensical conception of development has been 'modernization'. Development, a story that began with President Truman's inaugural address of 20 January 1949, was conceived as transporting to the non-warring (read non-communist) peoples of the global south the technological vision of the good life. Technology transfer is no mere export of machinery; a whole gamut of changes and painful adjustments are visualized for the receiver society of technologically-aided development. In this format of development as modernization, which alone is of my interest in this book, what is envisaged is not a small change in the circumstances of a few individuals in a society, although this may be the actual outcome of development processes in terms of real material achievement. What in fact happens, on the other hand, is the transformation of the structure of the society in every imaginable way under the assumption that individual players of present and future generations may find in their society, envisaged as a scheme of cooperation, a field whereupon they can play the developmental game. If you are not already well-off, you can aim to become materially better-off only if there is already a 'developing' society, a society caught up in the momentum of 'progress'. These social processes affect and transform individuals in a variety of ways and produce them as 'developmental individuals.'

My argument in this book centres on the processes of development that, I shall argue, are fundamentally technological, calculative and efficiency-driven in their essence. These processes aim to transform the receiving society in terms of what can be called provisionally here as not merely a 'technological way to become modern' but a 'technological understanding of reality' as such. What this transformation means essentially in terms of its invisible and usually unthought metaphysical claims is the main argument of this book. They are social forces that impinge on your being, irrespective of whether you invite them, play along them, approach them, avoid them or obstruct them. The technological way of understanding reality, this book argues, has an agency of its own, outside full human mastery and control. How these forces, as if driven by their own will and agency, intrude upon the subjectivity of the most vulnerable sections of the global south, how they make them hapless onlookers on the social forces overwhelming them without their invitation or consent, how this violent technological will does not let them stand aside for the winds of change to pass them by, how their intersubjective being with others in their community is disrupted in this process—these are some of the concerns raised in this book's discussions.

What technological modernity does to human beings and to the natural habitat they share with all life forms is a crucial question that holds together the various threads of the argument of this book. This question is referred to in the phrases 'technologization of the human being' and 'devastation of the earth'. Hence, how we can live out our notions of the good life, given the limits of a crumbling planet, and how solutions to this question cannot be posed in terms of economic productivity, powered by the commodity-craze of a section of humanity, whether in the global north or south, but ought to be posed in terms of the egalitarianism of human needs—these concerns form a major line of this book's argument.

Even if only tentatively, suggestively and evocatively, an alternative picture emerges out of the book's concerns. What I can say of it here is only that in its bare outline this picture imagines a good life that may be considered meaningful rather than materially and technologically advanced. This picture is not of a good life monolithically imagined from the calculative and efficiency-driven vantage point of the technological understanding of reality, but at the same time, it does not deny that humans are technological beings from the start.

The German philosopher, Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), is the point of reference in this book. He paints a philosophical picture of western metaphysics as self-completing itself with technological modernity. In this sense, for Heidegger, technology is aggressively expansionistic and can come to a halt only by its own planetary consummation. I argue that development as modernization is the conspicuous concretion of the planetary expansion of the technological understanding of reality. Development, then, is the gigantic process of what is merely European and metaphysically Greek becoming planetary.

***

In writing this book I believe I am taking part in the much overdue wave of Heidegger research that does not get bogged down in the insular industry of interpretive quagmire that Heidegger research often is. I shall give a miss to the relentless quibbling over the right sense of the German terminological apparatus, and the war of words concerning the neologisms, but shall seek to understand him as a thinker dedicated to capture the essence of his time in thought, as Hegel demanded of philosophers to do, despite Heidegger's own claim that thought in itself has no practical effect ("Letter on 'Humanism'", 272). He always remained a concrete and practical thinker clearly concerned with the nature of his age. As a reader of Heidegger located in India and more generally the global south, I see an interesting path in his opus for understanding the world-dominating trail of western metaphysics in its concrete meaning. Hence, this book proposes Heidegger as a necessary thinker for all those concerned with the spirit of the times (*Zeitgeist*) of the global south. The question concerning western philosophies and philosophers in non-western contexts can become an interesting field of study on its own.

This book originated from a personal engagement. My career began with a short stint of development work associated with a collaborative project between the Government of India and the UNFPA for the tribal majority states of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland in the northeastern corner of India. This exposure let me see development, more than as a gigantic social process, as a step-by-step process of working with certain target communities for their all-round wellbeing. I was also involved in training grassroots level development workers of government departments and of NGOs. The ambivalences of constructing the developmental individual became clear to me during that very exciting and engrossing engagement with freeing others from what is conceived from outside as an inordinately burdened existence. Existential exigencies and dilemmas of people living in visibly destitute conditions are well known. But I began to notice that our interventions and new lessons in successful materially advanced living, despite their apparently desperate needs, were sometimes striking target peoples as alien, irrational and absurd. Our zest for inaugurating and instituting modernity once and for all in those tribal hamlets, cut off from mainstream India emotionally and physically, at least occasionally appeared to them misplaced and superfluous.

The tribes in these parts of India are rather uninhibited communities, frank and friendly, cheerful and straightforward, affectionate and carefree. What they thought was strange was also called so, except when the 'developmental' language of withdrawing funds and programmes from them if they did not cooperate was taken recourse to, not as a last resort in the face of extreme resistance but as the very central part of the narrative of development, for such 'cynical' attitudes are perceived to affect target-achievement and thus the very efficiency logic that drives development projects. The tribal sense of cultural pride is unimaginable. Before they got Christianized and somewhat modernized in the twentieth century, we are told, they were ferocious headhunters of enemy tribes. But it takes a careful study to lay bare their erstwhile cultural ethos of cooperation, a great deal of internal democracy and absolutely admirable intra-community loyalties. Elements of this cultural logic are still burning among them like not fully extinguished embers.

While they did surely desire the material wellbeing that our projects promised them, they were often surprised when we told them that development had to happen only in certain ways, only as a process of adjustment and change, only as a form of a new social imagination, and that they could not have parts of the development pie while other things remained the same. I got the impression that the big changes we advocated—not all of them about the importance of sending every child to school or about artificial birth control, but about wearing their own individual thinking cap, making themselves 'individuals' who alone could 'develop', the importance of the sense of money and the way to making it, the logic of efficiency and calculation that sustains the new market that they ought to cultivate, and so on—struck them as downright nonsense, morally reprehensible, selfish and unbecoming of their deep sense of communal living. It is no exaggeration to say that the more forthright among them literally cringed at these suggestions.

This stint in development work came after writing my doctoral thesis on Heidegger's notion of authenticity in *Being and Time*, and its existentialist-ethical import. In the meantime, I also began to immerse myself in the later Heidegger's history of Being and the philosophical-cultural critique of the technological understanding of reality. It, thus, began to dawn on me that development, projected as an innocent process of advancing the wellbeing of individuals, is also, at the same time—and even if the wellbeing project fails as it often does—about revolutionizing the community's sense of identity, its sense of the world and the good, its imagination about what it means to be human amidst the things of the world, its desires and wants, and about gifting it with an efficiency-driven view of the world and life, which had not been the dominant paradigm of meaning and good sense among them. This is not to say that I am now imagining the pristine, unsullied tribal, remaining forever in her state of innocence in the bosom of nature. Rather, what struck me as poignantly true is the absence of alternatives for the tribes to construct a different story of being modern somewhat in tune with their own cultural logic and sense of the good. The modern instrumental rationality appears to be radically totalizing and all-encompassing without any elbowroom for interpretive appropriation. Those who resist it are also sucked into its whirling orbit.

The same process is happening everywhere in the global south in a grander scale even if less intensely. The stringently humanistic ethical narrative and the instrumentalist project of developmentalism together established the logic of the technological society in the global south in the aftermath of the colonial period right after the war and in the midst of the cold war. The later Heidegger's understanding of these concretely historical processes as the world-dominating trajectory of the western understanding of Being or metaphysics makes possible a thoroughly critical view of developmentalism and the global technological society. Following his ontological critique of western metaphysical thinking, out of which, according to him, emerged the technological understanding of all that exists, my study critically takes stock of the global trail of this understanding of what-is, its dangers, the possibilities of arresting a monolithic technological modernity, and the feasibility of alternative imaginations of the good life. However, I neither think that the whole project of modernity is to be abandoned, nor that it is possible to do

so. How developmental modernity can be transformed, not abandoned, into a different notion of the good life is my preoccupation in this book. In relation to this aim, nonetheless, I think, my conclusions are not too optimistic.

<div align="center">***</div>

Now, a personal note of acknowledgements. *Heidegger and Development in the Global South* is made possible by the genuine interest and support of a number of friends, colleagues, institutions and family members. In the summer of 2010, I had spent two months in the Department of Philosophy, University of Guelph, owing to the Faculty Mobility Programme award of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI). The proposal for this award was in fact the first concept note of this book. I want to thank the SICI for the generous grant and the wonderful opportunity, and the Guelph philosophy faculty for allowing me to articulate the still undeveloped line of argument of this book and for the encouragement and support several members of the faculty and staff offered to me, especially Andrew Bailey, the then Department Chair, Jeff Mitscherling, John Russon and Karen Houle. Karen's warm hospitality during my stay there was remarkable, and her comments and queries were eye-openers to me in the writing of this book. The many comments, questions and suggestions of the other faculty members and research scholars who attended my seminars and talks at Guelph similarly came handy to me when I actually sat down to write. John Russon supported this project from the beginning and thoroughly engaged with it, when I was in Guelph, when he visited IIT Bombay twice since then, and over many emails throughout the period of the book's development. Two others who constructively commented on this book are Keith Crome (Department of History, Politics and Philosophy, Manchester Metropolitan University), and Andrew Mitchell (Department of Philosophy, Emory University). Without these solicitous involvements, the writing of this book would not have been possible.

Since the winter of 2010 I had fallen very ill for a long period when very little writing could actually take place. Several of my colleagues at HSS, IITB—Ramesh Bairy, Pravesh Jung, Kushal Deb and Sharmila Sreekumar, whom I cannot avoid naming here—selflessly encouraged me and this project during this difficult period. Rehana Ghadially and C.D. Sebastian are two of my colleagues who got involved with this book by way of making useful suggestions for its improvement. The generous encouragement of the administration of IIT Bombay and the HSS department, and of my philosophy colleagues, with whom I share courses and other academic responsibilities, is also thankfully acknowledged. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the doctoral students who work with me—Sindhu, Alem, Anoop, Shining, Deepak and Nisar—for their unstinting research assistance and every other possible help.

As I mentioned above, the initial inspiration for this book emerged out of my experiences while working at the State Resource Centre, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India, among the colourful tribes of that region of India. I am grateful to the remarkable people I met on job, to those provocative experiences, and to the wonderful team of the Centre.

The fifth section of Chap. 6 was published in the paper "Imagining Postscience: Heidegger and Development Communication" in *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*, 7:4 (2013), of the Taylor & Francis Group (www.tandfonline.com/ DOI:10.1080/17524032.2013.820206). I am obliged to the journal and the publishing house for the necessary permissions.

Working with Shinjini Chatterjee, Senior Editor, Human Sciences, Springer, and her team, was a very pleasant experience. She was prompt, concerned and fully committed to seeing in print the best possible form of this book.

This book is dedicated to Sini and to our 10-year-old daughter Mahima. Without exaggeration, Sini alone made this book fully possible. Even during the dark period of the illness she made me believe that it was important to get on with doing philosophy. Having occasionally to satisfy Mahima's curiosity about what was going on uninterrupted for so long helped me make my views clear to myself. She seemed to make sense of at least some of my arguments, and immediately accepted as intuitively forceful the idea that too technocratic and efficient an approach to things took away from our endeavours the element of play and letting go.

Contents

About the Author

Siby K. George is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai, India. A Master's degree graduate from the University of Madras, Chennai, he holds a doctorate in philosophy from the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India. He has previously been Lecturer at the National Institute of Technology, Silchar, and before that, Coordinator of the UNFPA supported Population and Development Education project of the Government of India at the State Resource Centre, NEHU, Shillong. His area of research is twentieth-century Continental Philosophy and he studies development, pain, community, environment, subjectivity and so on from a phenomenological point of view, which is not inattentive to non-western contexts. His papers include "Birth of the subject: The ethics of monitoring development programmes" in *Journal of Global Ethics* (2008); "Development and the other: On the bearing of egalitarian sensibility on development" in *Economic and Political Weekly* (2010); and "Imagining postscience: Heidegger and development communication" in *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* (2013).

Abbreviations for Frequently Used Heidegger Works

Note: *Year given in bracket after the title is the year of composition or first publication of the work. Works of Heidegger included in this list are not repeated in the list of References.*

AS Anaximander's Saying (1946). Trans. & ed. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes. In *Off the beaten track*, 242–281. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

AWP The Age of the World Picture (1938). In *Off the beaten track*, 57–85.

BDT Building, Dwelling, Thinking (1951). Trans. Albert Hofstadter. In *Poetry, language, thought*, 143–159. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

BPP *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1927). Trans. Albert Hofstadter, Revised Midland Edition. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988.

BQP *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic"* (1937). Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994.

BT *Being and Time* (1927). Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

CP *Contributions to Philosophy: Of the event* (1936–1938). Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Villega-Neu. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012.

DL A Dialogue on Language (1953–1954). Trans. Peter D. Hertz. In *On the way to language*, 1–54. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

E *The Event* (1941–1942). Trans. Richard Rojcewicz. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009.

EP The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking (1964). Trans. Joan Stambaugh. In *On time and being*, 55–73. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

ET On the Essence of Truth (1930). Trans. John Sallis. In *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, 136–154. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

FCM *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* (1929–1930). Trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995.

GS   "Only a God can Save Us": *Der Spiegel*'s interview with Martin Heidegger (1966). Trans. Maria P. Alter and John D. Caputo. In *The Heidegger controversy: A critical reader*, ed. Richard Wolin, 91–116. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993.

HCT   *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena* (1925). Trans. Theodore Kisiel. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985.

HEH   Hölderlin's Earth and Heaven (1959). Trans. Keith Hoeller. In *Elucidations of Hölderlin's poetry*, 175–207. Amherest, NY: Humanity Books, 2000.

HEP   Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry (1936). In *Elucidations of Hölderlin's poetry*, 51–65.

HHI   *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"* (1942). Trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996.

IM   *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935). Trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

IWM   Introduction to "What is Metaphysics?" (1949). Trans. Walter Kaufmann. In *Pathmarks*, 277–290.

LH   Letter on "Humanism" (1946). Trans. Frank A. Capuzzi. In *Pathmarks*, 239–276.

M   *Mindfulness* (1938–1939). Trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary. London: Continuum, 2006.

MA   Memorial Address (1955). Trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund. In *Discourse on thinking*, 41–57. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

MFL   *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1928). Trans. Michael Heim. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992.

MHB   Metaphysics as History of Being (1941). Trans. Joan Stambaugh. In *The end of philosophy*, 1–54. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

N   *Nietzsche* (1936–1946). *Nietzsche*, Vols. 1 & 2 in a single paperback edition, and Vols. 3 & 4 in a separate single paperback edition. Trans. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper & Row, 1991.

NW   Nietzsche's Word: "God is Dead" (1943). In *Off the beaten track*, 157–199.

OCM   The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics (1957). Trans. Joan Stambaugh. In *Identity and difference*, 42–74. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2002.

OM   Overcoming Metaphysics (1936–1946). In *The end of philosophy*, 84–110.

OWA   The Origin of the Work of Art (1935). In *Off the beaten track*, 1–56.

P   Poverty (1945). Trans. Thomas Kalary and Frank Schalow. In *Heidegger, translation and the task of thinking: Essays in honor of Parvis Emad*, ed. Frank Schalow, 3–9. New York: Springer, 2011.

PI   The Principle of Identity (1957). In *Identity and difference*, 23–41.

PR   *The Principle of Reason* (1955–1956). Trans. Reginald Lilly. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991.

PS   *Plato's Sophist* (1924–1925). Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997.

QB   On the Question of Being (1955). Trans. William McNeill. In *Pathmarks*,
        291–322.
QCT   The Question Concerning Technology (1949). Trans. William Lovitt. In
        The question concerning technology and other essays, 3–35. New York:
        Harper & Row, 1977.
R   Remembrance (1943). In *Elucidations of Hölderlin's poetry*, 101–173.
ST   *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom* (1936). Trans.
        Joan Stambaugh. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1985.
T   The Thing (1950). In *Poetry, language, thought*, 163–180.
TB   Time and Being (1962). In *On time and being*, 1–24.
TT   The Turning (1949). In *The question concerning technology and other
        essays*, 36–49.
WCT   *What is Called Thinking?* (1951–1952). Trans. J. Glen Gray. New York:
        Harper & Row, 1976.
WIP   *What Is Philosophy?* (1955). Trans. Jean T. Wilde and William Kluback.
        Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.
WP   Why Poets? (1946). In *Off the beaten track*, 200–241.
ZS   *Zollikon Seminars: Protocols, Conversations, Letters* (1959–1969). Trans.
        Franz Mayr and Richard Askay, ed. Medard Boss. Evanston, IL: North-
        western University Press, 2001.

Chapter 1
Heidegger and Development:
An Introduction

The word O Logos names … that in which the presencing
of what is present comes to pass…. Since the beginning of
Western thought the Being of beings emerges as what is alone
worthy of thought. If we think this historic development in a
truly historical way, then that in which the beginning of Western
thought rests first becomes manifest: that in Greek antiquity
the Being of beings becomes worthy of thought is the beginning
of the West and is the hidden source of its destiny. Had this
beginning not safeguarded what has been, i.e. the gathering of
what still endures, the Being of beings would not now govern
from the essence of modern technology. Through technology
the entire globe is today embraced and held fast in a kind of
Being experienced in Western fashion and represented on the
epistemological models of European metaphysics and science.

—Heidegger, "Logos: Heraclitus, fragment B 50", 76.

Abstract Development is unveiled in the global south most inconspicuously as the experience of the modern. Looking back at Western modernity in the first half of the twentieth century, Martin Heidegger argued that late modernity marked an understanding of all that is or Being as readily available resource or standing reserve. For Heidegger, the technological understanding of Being has a planetary impetus. The chapter briefly lays out the argument of the book that development as modernization can be understood as concretizing the planetary essence of the technological understanding of Being, beset with the problems of an impossible conception of justice and equality, devastation of the planet and the technological transformation of the essence of the human being. Despite Heidegger's problematic politics, his response to the technological society, especially in its planetary dissemination, is insightful.

Keywords Modernization · Development · Being · Technology · Planetary

From about the year 1936, Martin Heidegger came to see Western metaphysics increasingly as a world-dominating frame. As a matter of fact, Heidegger's critical–philosophical look at the tradition that gave rise to modernity immediately followed

his disconcerting hobnobbing with the national socialists. Heidegger's influence on contemporary continental philosophy, social and literary theory, and the humanities in general, whether direct or indirect, has been unbelievable. To those who are anguished over his politics, the phenomenon of his influence is a nemesis the humanities somehow are unable to shake off. My interest in Heidegger for the purposes of this book arises partly from the curious spell this philosopher has cast over the various directions, sometimes opposing and unacknowledged ones, of the pursuit of the critical humanities today. Despite his being a confessed conservative and a more or less Eurocentric thinker, Heidegger's seminal, destructive and penetrating analysis of the Western intellectual tradition has opened up avenues for Westerners, non-Westerners and colonized peoples to take a reflective relook at the extent of the worldwide entrenchment of Western metaphysics.

Western metaphysics in Heidegger's view does not live today in philosophy textbooks and classrooms. It lives today, rather, in the concrete historical moment of late modernity, in this moment's miraculous technologies, in its mystery-unravelling sciences, in its devastating wars, in its humanistic project of material well-being, in what is left of its arts and religions, importantly, in what is exported in the name of modernity to desiring peoples across the globe, and in what is imposed in its name on sceptics, cynics and traditionalists everywhere. Heidegger argues that Western metaphysics has itself got dissolved and is overcome just as its essence has achieved world domination, typically without the sword, though wherever necessary with the sword as well. As the final line of the epigraph above says, technology is the trace left by Western metaphysics at its dissolution, and people all over the world are now coming to experience reality in the terms and conditions laid down by Western metaphysics even as it is receding from view. In fact, the dissolution of Western metaphysics is a transformation, which holds the world's peoples, the friends and the foes of the West alike, under its magical spell. Western metaphysics, thus, has attained planetary status at the very moment of its dissolution and overcoming. Heidegger's name for metaphysics in its disappearing visibility and its paradoxical and surreptitious global dissemination is "technology". Technology as the planetary avatar of Western metaphysics means the very disintegration of its story begun with the first ever Greek philosopher, Thales. The dissolution of metaphysics, Heidegger argues, calls for a second beginning of Western intellectual history, which at the very least ought to be non-technological in essence.

This book finds a curious thread in the story of Western metaphysics: if Western metaphysics perpetuates itself through technological domination of the earth and the world, development as modernization in its post-war structure can be thought of as the concrete form of the essence of technology self-completing itself in the global south.

In preparation to argue this case in detail in the next five chapters, in this introductory chapter, I intend to take up for examination a set of preliminary considerations. I shall first lay bare what is meant by the phrase "development as modernization" because my discussion of development as the concretion of the essence of technology in this book primarily refers to this popular/vulgar notion of development. Since this book's argument centrally relies on Heidegger's

conception of the essence of technology and its world-dominating trail, the second section of this chapter concerns with a somewhat non-technical introductory profile of that very notion. This section is envisaged for those readers of the book unfamiliar with twentieth-century continental philosophy. I shall then sketch out the central argument of the book in a nutshell in the third section, and end the chapter with an attempt to justify the use of Heidegger as the source for my argument in the book, given the political controversy that has surrounded the philosopher. Hence, this introductory chapter deals with three prefatory reconstructions—(i) of the popular idea of development as modernization, (ii) of Heidegger's philosophy of technology and (iii) of my central argument in this book—and a justification.

1.1 Development as Modernization

Theories of development have their ground in the disciplinary frameworks of economics, political science and sociology. Since the middle of the twentieth century, thinking about and strategizing development has been consolidated under the interdisciplinary field called "development studies", dominated by neoliberal economics, but is reliant upon social, political and anthropological theory for its critical component. Social and political philosophers have been occasional contributors in imagining what ought to be the just society in terms of development. Although "development" is sometimes spoken of as "international development" and a thoroughly problematic possibility of a universal discourse of development is steadily opening up with human development theory and the capability approach, development still is imagined mostly as an event unfolding in the global south, which lets it achieve a condition comparable to that of the north. There is something about development that throws open the nations and subjectivities of the global south unlike never before, even more than during the high days of colonialism. Escobar refers to this phenomenon as "[a]n unprecedented will to know everything about the Third World … growing like a virus" (1995: 45). Compelled positively or negatively by the technorepresentative project of knowing, there have been theoretical explications of development as modernization, as growth, as basic needs fulfilment, as primary goods egalitarianism, as human development, as capability expansion, as sustainable development, and critically as *dependencia* or even as a failed project that ought to be abandoned (postdevelopment), besides several other theoretical constructions.

In this study, my continuous reference to "development as modernization" is not an attempt to reconnect with the modernization theory or any theoretical representation of development. Modernization, on the other hand, is referred to here as the most popular imagination about development, and to that extent, it is the "vulgar" concept of development rather than the theoretically considered concept of development. It is the commonest idea of how societies should move ahead in order to have fulfilling, satisfying lives for their members in the contemporary

world. However, modernization is not the vulgar idea of development in the sense that it is not something palpable, real and tangible. On the other hand, modernization is palpably real; it is as concrete as the concrete structures of a tangibly modernizing society. It is that which happens in the name of development and progress: education, scientific temper, technological applications, modern medicine, new means of communication and media, new systems of production, the new market, industrial boom, frantic construction activities, new systems of work and earning, new fashions in clothing and eating, digital revolution, the easy access to information, changes in customs, law and organization, social changes that make the modern acceptable and accessible, and the new freedom and sense of power that modern ways give to their adherents. In short, development means the happening together of such changes in a society, which according to popular imagination is modernization or "becoming modern".

We are here speaking about the phenomenological sense of the "modern"—the modern as it comes across to me inconspicuously, not the modern as it should be, not a theoretically constructed modern, not an overtly generalized notional modern, but the everyday modern as I averagely and unobtrusively experience it. It is the modern that unfolds within my lived time with a pre-reflective force that lets me be meaningfully even in the between world of the global south. In one of the countless streams of combinations of the unfolding of the modern, the modern pre-cognitively pushes itself against me as I wake up from sleep and sip my first cup of tea in the day. The modern seeps into the news I see, hear and read, and the modern is there in the fact that far-off regions of the world are marvellously represented to me on television and in the sound waves of the radio. There is the modern in the bathroom fittings and their handiness, in the clothes I put on, the food I eat and in the fact that at least partly these items have come to me from distant lands. The modern inhabits the vehicle I drive to the workplace, its dexterous arrangements, its efficiency and speed. The modern is discreetly present in the environment and people at workplace, in their grave, professional, disciplined and sometimes officious demeanour, in the role I am expected to play in my workplace, in how I measure myself against job descriptions, in the way I and others fulfil them, in the desperate insufficiency of time and in the consequent planning, strategizing, hurrying and worrying. The modern inhabits my calculated ways of relaxing and unwinding, my organized manner of spending "quality" time with loved ones, the way I want to appear responsible and regular, disciplined and normal. The modern is there in the glass of milk I gulp down before the television set is off; it is there in the fluffiness of the bed I lie down to sleep on. The modern invades my final sense of tired satisfaction for having done it all efficiently on the given day, and it is there in the little yoga exercise I perform one by one in unmistaken order to ward off sleeplessness.

Reflectively coming to understand the pre-reflective impingement of the modern upon our existential orientation indicates our indiscernible existential surrender to the modern. Existing in the modern world involves certain receptivity towards the modern ground plan. We receive the modern rather passively than willfully. Of course, any phenomenological account of the modern should take cognizance

of the unmodern. But in our contemporary existential orientations, the unmodern is conspicuous and obtrusive because inconspicuously and unobtrusively there is already the modern. We receive the unmodern either in reflective and willful choice as Gandhi did in certain ways or in the compulsions of inadequacy, lack and need as millions of people in the global south still do. Hence, while we are inconspicuously modern, we are unmodern conspicuously. My receptions of the unmodern make me inadequate in my contemporary existential orientations. The modern makes demands on me, invades my existential orientations and blocks my way if I were to be somehow receptive to the unmodern. The "unmodern" is no more a simple alternative to the modern; it is a deficient mode of the modern that makes me eerily anxious about my inability to be modern.

Notice that for our pre-reflective receptions of the modern, there is a social ground plan already laid out and functioning. If this were not so, the unmodern would not have been a deficient mode of the modern. We receive the modern in a circular format of attuning. By accumulating certain attitudes and possessions, we attune ourselves with the social ground plan of the modern and begin to inhabit the modern space, and we do this today because we are always already in a process of receiving the modern social ground plan inconspicuously and unobtrusively there before us. For those who are unmodern in the modern world, unless it is their deliberate programme of life, existence would become bothersome because while they are already attuned to the social ground plan of the modern, they "lack" the demands made on them by that ground plan.

Development in its concretion is the gigantic process of laying the ground plan of the modern in its many details. More than objective poverty, being poor in the modern world means my lacks and inadequacies with regard to the demands made by the modern social ground plan on me, towards which I am pre-reflectively receptive. One of the most significant aspects of the modern social ground plan is political organization. Being poor in the modern world disempowers me and makes my citizenship in the modern polity worthless on account of my inadequacies to access the "civil" spaces of the modern state. Within these spaces, the governed and the government encounter each other and governance occurs. Within these spaces, the governed access modern amenities set up by the government. Hence, being poor in the modern world implies that one is inadequate about negotiating the civil spaces of the modern state.

Noting that the number one problem for the human sciences today is modernity itself, Charles Taylor argues that moderns act, think, react and respond on the basis of a certain hazy, unclear and not fully articulable background, which he calls "modern social imaginary". "Social imaginary" is preferable to the term "ground plan" because an imaginary is not planned in any way but is somewhat passively received. What is brought to effect by acting on the background of the modern social imaginary is "that historically unprecedented amalgam of new practices and institutional forms (science, technology, industrial production, urbanization), of new ways of living (individualism, secularization, instrumental rationality); and of new forms of malaise (alienation, meaninglessness, a sense of impending social dissolution)" (Taylor 2004: 1). According to Taylor, these practices, ways

of living and the social imaginary that support them initially originated as local/provincial events of western Europe. Later, they became the social imaginary of a large, influential and colonizing group of people, so that they gradually became the universal conception of the good life for people everywhere. Taylor observes that the modern conception of the good life "has now become so self-evident to us that we have trouble seeing it as one possible conception among others" (2004: 2). What were provincial changes have become scarcely distinguishable from the universal. Development, whether in the global north itself or the south, is imagined today after the manner of these changes which have become the modern universal. According to the modern social imaginary, no one is completely "undeveloped" because every human being and human society conceals within itself these universal forms in embryo. What is required is a deep, hard look followed by hard times of upheaval and change. Reaching towards these goals means becoming fully human. Development is modernization or achieving the universal human forms first achieved by western Europeans.

In this imagination, development is not merely increasing income and wealth, fulfilling basic needs or entering the modern market system. In Amartya Sen's pithy phrase, development is freedom. As compliance with the modern social imaginary, development means freeing oneself from the stranglehold of local human forms in order to achieve universal human potentialities. As such, development is not an invention, but a universal discovery of societies, for if only they correctly delved into the resources of their rational human nature, they would all come up with the same human forms supported by the modern social imaginary. In this picture, development would also mean a whole set of changes that produces the modern individual, whose complete humanity is dependent on an incalculable reserve of commodities, which can fully be secured only when human beings attune themselves to a new approach towards reality through calculation, measurement, quantification, formulization, framing and monetization/capitalization and, thus, achieve a position whereby the individual is able to represent reality reductively as resource for gratification, and that alone. In this way, it becomes necessary for humans to make their approaches towards reality more calculatedly and scientifically, more definitively and securely, more aggressively and violently so that the necessities for being fully human can be fully realized. According to the tacit modern social imaginary, these approaches towards human and non-human reality follow an imagination of infinite human powers and the need for infinite human progress, realizable by managing technoscientifically the finite store of materials on the earth. Infinite human powers, technologically and scientifically aided, can constantly maintain the limitless supply of finite resources. According to the modern social imaginary, the essential structure of modernity has nothing to do with the historical experiences of people. Western European experiences are the fortuitous historical medium for the concretion of the universal. Development as modernization is an ahistorical process awaiting societies everywhere in more or less the same form, and European modernity has fortuitously become modular for the rest of the world.

Despite deconstructions and critiques, reinterpretations and alternative imaginings, the popular and political development imagination is, I think, still centred

on modernization in the sense I have been describing. Only marginal repackaging of development as modernization occurs with reflection on and efforts at just and ethical development because they are based on the belief that development is the best possible form of life and that it is possible to establish this form everywhere. Development ideology and development practice, thus, have a deep resonance.

Today, there is an incredibly large pool of critical humanities and social sciences literature, calling into question the mainstream idea of development. This literature has persistently brought to light the contradictions of development as modernization, even as it is increasingly occupying centre stage in mainstream social, political and economic imagination. One such account that comes to mind is an exquisitely textured work on the state in Bastar, a tribal majority district in central India, by Nandini Sundar. In this book, the question of the state's right to take over the land of the people or allocate it for supposedly developmental purposes is raised very thoughtfully. The tribes keep wondering about the government's right over their land and how it can take over the land to give it away to industrial houses, when the government, in the first place, did not establish the tribes in the land. Sundar notices the anomalies of democracy in the statist scheme of land acquisition for development without the democratic process of seeking the opinion of people. She calls for "the need to defend democratic rights within an economic and political order that is continually eroding them" (Sundar 2007: 262). The district of Bastar is rich in natural resources and is efficient in their exploitation. But Bastar also houses some of the most destitute Adivasi (tribal) hamlets. That Bastar is caught up in Maoist/Naxalite violence is, thus, not a surprise. Big business had even inspired politically assisted people's counter insurgency operation in Bastar called *Salwa Judum* (Purification Hunt) under the pretext that cleansing the area of the Maoists/Naxalites was necessary to attract capital. The Supreme Court of India later ruled the private army unconstitutional. Bastar bears out the contradictions of development as modernization: "Official documents of the Government of India talk about the need for development and land reform, while helicopters drone overhead and security forces cordon off villages protesting against their land being acquired for steel plants" (Sundar 2007: 266). When we consider modernization as an unpreventable storm of change blowing over powerless peoples, the violent establishment of the modern order without the modernist democratic processes, especially among vulnerable populations, becomes a common sight.

This contradiction in the development story can be made sense of in many ways. It can be argued that crony capitalism alone is responsible for Bastar's fate and that a class war is being fought there. The liberal political point of view sees the unrest in the area as rooted in insufficient modernization, and so when people protest against the steel plant, the government simply fails to see why they take out a protest against what is supposed to be their liberation.

In this book, I link up the anxious love–hate relationship with developmentalism we see everywhere with the technological understanding of reality. An efficient and technological approach to all reality has been the underlying impetus for Western modernity. I shall argue in this book that the colonial–postcolonial project of setting

in place the modern ground plan in every nook and corner of the world has for its telos the technological understanding of reality in degrees of variation. In fact, without this telos, there can only be factories, machineries and materials but not development. The question of agency in this regard, the question of who would establish the modern social ground plan, whether self, a state, an other or whether the modern social imaginary has an agency of some sort on its own, needs to be addressed. For now, it is clear that the technological understanding of reality is central to my argument. Therefore, I now move to a somewhat non-technical exposition of this notion.

1.2 Heidegger's Philosophy of Technology

In the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel characterized philosophy as "its own time comprehended in thoughts" (1991: 21; emphasis removed). But according to Hegel, philosophy cannot comprehend its time in thought beforehand; it cannot predict the essence of the age to come. Hegel's celebrated line in this regard is: "When philosophy paints its grey in grey, a shape of life has grown old, and it cannot be rejuvenated, but only recognized, by the grey in grey of philosophy; the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk" (1991: 23). Only when the age is in its twilight can the philosopher take a bird's eye view and capture its essence with the benefit of the hindsight.

If Hegel attempted to capture the *Zeitgeist* of the age of Enlightenment in a triumphalist mood, Heidegger, more so after the Nazi fiasco, is remarkably subdued. Modernity is not the final achievement of the absolute spirit; it is not the completion of the gradual lighting up of inner and outer reality or enlightenment. Far from the prized achievement worthy of exportation to people everywhere, modernity is darkness, desolation, devastation and dehumanization. The *Zeitgeist* of late modernity is expansionistic out of its own essence, but Heidegger is completely sure that its levelling, homogenizing procedure is bleak and unholy. The tradition is great at its Greek origin, but has progressively gone wrong in the interpretive appropriation of its origin. Heidegger's Eurocentrism is rooted in his admiration for the Greek origins of the tradition, but the tradition itself has folded up in modernist, self-glorifying nihilism, hinged on the accidentals of the interpretive appropriations of history. The tradition can be reinterpreted and reappropriated, and to be sure, Heidegger thinks of himself as the quiet but venturesome poet of thought, who is not showing us the promised land of a clear future but is at least blazing a trail, a difficult trail, towards a possible future.

I see the later Heidegger's philosophy of technology in this spirit, for technology for him is the spirit of the age, its metaphysics, and "[m]etaphysics grounds an age in that, through a particular interpretation of beings and through a particular comprehension of truth, it provides that age with the ground of its essential shape" (AWP: 57). In more abstract terms, it is the understanding of Being[1] of the late

---

[1] I abide by the conventional translation device of capitalizing the 'B' of "Being" (*Sein*) in order to distinguish it from "beings" or entities (*das Seiende*).

modern age. Before coming to Heidegger's understanding of technology as such, I need to say a few words on what Heidegger means by "Being", at least for the sake of readers unfamiliar with his texts.

Being is that which is; all that *are*, are beings. There is a fundamental difference, says Heidegger, between Being and beings. He calls it the "ontological difference" (BPP: 319). In the words of Dreyfus and Charles Spinosa, ontological difference is "the difference between the understanding of Being and the beings that can show up given an understanding of Being" (2003: 315). When we say "being is that which is" we generally mean that being is the broadest category that can be thought in terms of all that is, of every entity whatever is, most generically and equally. A person, a god, a powerful sensation are all in being just as a grasshopper or a blade of grass is in being. Hence, we say that that which is in being is *a being*, an entity. Heidegger here intervenes to say that anything is a being *in a meaningful sense*—that is, as something that can appear to us meaningfully *as* such and such—only on the basis of an understanding of Being or a somewhat total and unified interpretation of the meaning of the things of the world that precedes it.

How do we gain an understanding of Being? By passively exposing ourselves to the social practices of our community, by imbibing pre-reflectively the sense of these practices rather than by representing them to our minds consciously and, in Dreyfus's words again, by letting ourselves "passively be formed by the public interpretation (of Being), since every person, in order to be a person at all, must be socialized into a particular cultural understanding of Being" (1991: 26; my gloss). Heidegger's philosophical enquiry is animated by the "understanding of Being" that makes possible for entities to show up to us *as* such and such.[2]

Entities can appear differently in their meaning in different historical eras and locations. For a devout Hindu, the river Ganga is sacred and holy; to modernized Indians, the same river is a tourist spot, the end point of a city's sewage system, or the site for hydroelectric power. Heidegger explains such difference in the understanding of the same thing in terms of the difference in the understanding of Being. "Entities *are*", He writes, "quite independently of the experience by which they are disclosed, the acquaintance in which they are discovered, and the grasping in which their nature is ascertained. But Being 'is' only in the understanding of those entities to whose Being something like an understanding of Being belongs" (BT: 228).

Now, the entity to whose Being an understanding of Being always belongs is the human being; such is the meaning of Heidegger's esoteric statement in "The Letter on 'Humanism'" that the human being is the shepherd of Being and language is the house of Being. Nancy formulates the Being–human relationship in the following way: "humanity is the exposing of the world; it is neither the end nor the ground of the world; the world is the exposure of humanity; it is neither the environment nor the representation of humanity" (2000: 18; emphasis removed).

---

[2] An interesting example that Heidegger cites regarding this is the disappearance or death of God: "Whether the god lives or remains dead is not decided by the religiosity of men and even less by the theological aspirations of philosophy and natural science. Whether or not God is God comes disclosingly to pass from out of and within the constellation of Being" (TT: 49).

Being is the scheme of intelligibility or meaning that allows us to encounter things in one way or another: "that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which… entities are already understood" (BT: 25–26). At the same time, an understanding of Being remains in the background for the sake of fore-grounding, disclosing or freeing encounterable entities. The more it remains so in the background and the more it disappears from view, the more convincing is the palpable reality of the thing encountered on account of it. It takes a critical philosophical enterprise to lay bare the background understanding of Being. According to Heidegger, this is exactly what hermeneutic phenomenology is supposed to do. When I was discussing above "the modern social imaginary", what I had in mind was "the modern understanding of Being" in this sense, which lets modern entities to show up as such and such.

We must complicate this picture further. Heidegger wants to get away from the anthropocentric thesis that seems to lurk behind in the proposal that entities can show up only in the openness for Being or understanding of Being (the clearing) provided by the human being. This caution is already alluded to in Nancy's statement above that human beings only expose entities in their meaning but are not the end or ground of the entities themselves. Entities have an independent life of their own. The world as a finite totality of meaningful things in their relation to each other is what is exposed by the human being; the world is neither the representation of the human mind nor the pristine environment unrelated to us. The world is the interstitial space of meaning between the human being and entities, welded together by an overarching understanding of Being. In being human, there is always a mattering approach towards the world of things and other humans because we are beings that take issue with Being or are beings that, first and foremost, care (take issue with, get lost in) about beings in their Being, before we can represent them cognitively. Hence, Being does not mean only background intelligibility. It means also intelligible presencing or appearing of entities. "Being means appearing…" writes Heidegger. "Being essentially unfolds *as* appearing" (IM: 107). Being is both background intelligibility that lets entities to show up as such and such, and the manner of presencing of those entities. Being also means the contingent ground or abground that holds in store and into which withholds all possibilities of the presencing of beings. (Young 2002: Chap. 1). These are the two meanings of Being for Heidegger.

There is an emphasis here that we are not creators of an understanding of Being. "Being is cleared for the human being in ecstatic projection… But this projection does not create Being" (LH: 257). We receive an understanding of Being rather passively through our initial socialization. The further nuances that we might bring into a received understanding of Being arise from the force and the sway Being has over us, rather than our direction of Being as autonomous subjects. If there was any sense of voluntarism in the early Heidegger's conception of Being in relation to the concept of resolute authenticity, this is relinquished in favour of the concept of releasement (*Gelassenheit*) in his later writings. Since the human essence is openness for Being, the most eminent way of being human is to let beings be and be open for the event of Being's manifestation (*Ereignis*). *Ereignis* is the event by way of which the openness that we are for

Being is appropriated by Being in a proactive sense rather than we constructing an understanding of Being as autonomous subjects. So, "To think 'Being' means: to respond to the appeal of its presencing. The response stems from the appeal and releases itself toward that appeal" (Heidegger 1971: 181–182). I shall argue in the later chapters at several points that this is not a statement about relinquishing human agency completely, but, rather, this formulation, based on Heidegger's special interpretation of the tradition, is itself an antidote (and thus a human "response") to the technological society that is underwritten with a sense of constructing, manipulating and producing beings.

There is more to the understanding of Being in that since it is nothing but the dominant sociocultural interpretive framework—"constellations of historical intelligibility" in the words of Thomson (2005: 2)—among a given historical people, there can be changing epochs of Being among that people. Heidegger himself is speaking only about the West, but historical epochs of Being can be hermeneutically brought to light in relation to any historical people. That is, a historical age is held together or is grounded in a broad and general metaphysics or understanding of Being. Heidegger's history of Being, simply put, is a listing of the historical epochs of the Western understandings of Being or accounts of how beings emerge in their intelligibility right from the historical epoch of the pre-Socratics down to the epoch of the late moderns. Now, "epoch" in Greek literally means "to hold back", and hence, with the epochal appearance/unconcealing or truth of Being, there is also a simultaneous holding back, suspending and concealing. When medieval Europeans understood Being as *ens creatum* and early modern Europeans as object of/for the subject, the understanding of Being of the early Greeks as *physis* was withheld and concealed. This is how Heidegger characterizes the changing expansive historical horizons of intelligibility, which determine what becomes culturally meaningful and what not. "The disappearance of what was previously present is not a vanishing of presencing. Rather, presencing presumably withdraws" (QB: 313). Without allowing ourselves to experience the truth of things in certain ways, we cannot experience them in those ways. Without being attuned to the Medieval epoch, we cannot attune ourselves with and experience the Medieval gods like them. The epochs are contingent in as much as they come and go; they are abyssal in the sense that we cannot provide a radically grounded, founded explanation to why and wherefrom they come. They are thus "granted" to us by Being. Notice that Heidegger is stepping aside from all foundationalist ontologies and at the same time providing a certain contingent ground or abground for meaningfulness. These contingent epochal grounds are, as Thomson puts it,

> neither as secure as those permanent foundations metaphysics always sought would be, but nor are they as shaky as the merely arbitrary constructions Heidegger's postmodern and poststructuralist heirs take them to be, and this helps explain why the history of Being Heidegger charts takes the form of a series of relatively durable understandings of what is, rather than either a single unbroken epoch or a continuous flux (2005: 59).

Isn't this, then, too neat, too well rounded a picture? In fact, the claim is not that there can only be a single, monolithic understanding of Being at any given historical time and place. There can be marginal understandings of Being which are not dominant or, so to speak, hegemonic. We read in the 1950 lecture "The Thing"

that "[i]n the destiny of Being there is never a mere sequence of things one after another: now frame (*Gestell*), then world and thing; rather, there is always a passing by and simultaneity of the early, and late" (T: 183). In "Why Poets?" (1946), it is pointed out that the late modern Western experience of the absence of God in the face of the culture of secularization "does not contradict the fact that a Christian relationship to God continues among individuals and in the churches, and it certainly does not disparage this relationship to God" (WP: 200). Heidegger seems to want to break free of the Hegelian history of the univocal and universal transformation of the spirit.[3]

That much for Being. For Heidegger, metaphysics as an account of the Being of beings is coming to an end with late modernity, and the dissolution of metaphysics is marked by the term "technology".

> The basic form of appearance in which the will to will arranges and calculates itself in the unhistorical element of the world of completed metaphysics can be stringently called 'technology.' This name includes all the areas of beings which equip the whole of beings: objectified nature, the business of culture, manufactured politics, and the gloss of ideals overlying everything. Thus 'technology' does not signify here the separate areas of the production and equipment of machines… *The name 'technology' is understood here in such an essential way that its meaning coincides with the term 'completed metaphysics'* (OM: 93; my emphasis).

Hence, for Heidegger, the name "technology" stands for the late modern understanding of Being. Technology is the event of the manifestation of Being in the historical West during the late modern epoch. As a form of Being's revealing, technology is truth (that is, unconcealment). "As a form of truth technology is grounded in the history of metaphysics, which is itself a distinctive and up to now the only surveyable phase of the history of being" (LH: 259). As the fully surveyable phase of the history of Being, technology is the appearance that there are only beings and the possibility of their endless manipulation. With the technological age, it appears as though the Being of beings has been withdrawn completely, a withdrawal which Heidegger describes as the "abandonment of beings by Being" (CP: 88), and as nihilism whereby human beings only encounter themselves everywhere (QB: 307). Hence, it is to be marked clearly and unambiguously that the name "technology" for Heidegger stands for the metaphysics of the late modern age: "Just as we call the idea of living things biology, just so the presentation and full articulation of all beings, dominated as they now are everywhere by the nature of the technical, may be called technology. The expression may serve as a term for the metaphysics of the atomic age" (OCM: 52).

Since the name "technology" is used by Heidegger not to mean machines but the understanding of Being that machines represent most characteristically, he repeats like a refrain in the celebrated 1949 essay, "The Question Concerning Technology", that the essence of technology is nothing technological. The essence of technology is not the machines themselves but *the demand placed by*

---

[3] I shall explore in detail these strains in Heidegger's thought in the next chapter.

the epochal understanding of Being in the historical era of late modernity upon human beings to see in nature, themselves and all beings only resourcefulness, so that all beings including humans become reducible to pliable forms for stockpiling in order to make them available at will for endless human use, reuse, manipulation and consumption. For Heidegger, modern consumerism, productionism, progressivism and the need for the new are all arising out of the technological understanding of Being. This understanding conceals itself in our eagerness to measure, calculate, know comprehensively, put everything to efficient use, speed up every process, reach everywhere, make things of gigantic proportions, think only logico-analytically, demand to render reason for everything, to reduce compulsively the known to a formula, and such other reductively instrumental approaches towards all beings.

The concept of instrumental rationality in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School is comparable to Heidegger's notion of technological understanding of Being. Instrumental rationality is the idea that modern culture has reduced reason to a means for the efficient attainment of exploitive human ends for the sake of human mastery over nature and domination over other humans, thereby jeopardizing the autonomy claim of reason. The idea of reason as the autonomous critical power is, thus, replaced with the idea of reason as a tool for instrumental control. But we must note in this regard at least three cardinal points of difference between Heidegger and the Frankfurt School. (i) Heidegger does not posit the change in human understanding as a transformation of our basic rationality but as the transformation of our primordial understanding of Being as such. Hence, the transformation is ontological rather than rational. Modern technology does not stand for a different understanding of reason, but is a primordial form of revealing, the reductive ontological frame by way of which moderns experience what-is. (ii) For Heidegger, humans are not first and foremost rational agents, whereas for the critical theorists rational agency is fundamental, and their foundational understanding of the emancipatory potency of humanity is grounded on it. According to Heidegger, the passive receptions of our early socialization, on account of which an understanding of Being belongs to us as Daseins fascinated by our world, deeply undercuts any idea of fundamental rational agency and emancipatory intention. The idea of reason is, rather, dictated by our understanding of Being, and that is how modern reason has become instrumental and calculative. (iii) Heidegger, for sure, does not share the critical theorists' unshakeable faith in Enlightenment modernity, despite their deeply critical positions on its historical trajectory. Thomson points to tragic modern historical moments like 9/11 as unsettling "Kant's optimistic prognostications concerning humanity's 'essential destiny'" and "our long-standing and amazingly resilient liberal democratic faith in the slow but steady historical progress of rational 'enlightenment'" (2005: 46). To this extent, Heidegger's critique of technology calls for the rejection of technological modernity in its significance, but this cannot be effected by historical agents through revolutionary action but has to follow from an epochal change in our understanding of Being, brought about through meditative thinking, resistant living and heroic exemplars ("gods").

Technology is elevated by Heidegger's approach because it thus becomes onto-logical, that is the dominant form of Being's revealing in the late modern era. Without a dominant form of revealing, a people would lose their anchor of mean-ing and disintegrate, and as such technology is a blessing. On the other hand, there is a grave danger hidden in the technological understanding of Being, despite its miraculous achievements like high modernity itself and the kind of uprooting, dis-entangling, disengaging freedom it has bestowed on Westerners. The danger, first and foremost, is that unlike other forms of revealing, technology tends to obstruct and veil the openness that the human being is for the presencing–absencing play of Being, so that a different revealing stands the chance of being completely oblite-rated and disparaged.[4] If every other epochal understanding of Being allowed the cohabitation of various understandings of Being, and if the first beginning of the Western intellectual culture with the early Greeks made this happen most splen-didly, the late modern epoch, for Heidegger, tends to close off the open field of the manifestation of Being. Secondly, the obliteration of the openness for Being affects the essence of the human being, who essentially is this very openness and that alone most primordially. Hence, the technological era also means the technol-ogization of the human being and the transformation of her essence.[5] Thirdly, the late modern understanding of Being entails the enormous human power to reduce everything at will to producible material, and this points to laying waste to the planet. But this power finally turns upon the human being herself, for both the sub-ject and the object are understood in the technological age as resource (Heidegger 1977: 173). And finally, the technological understanding of Being, a European phenomenon in its origin, does not remain so, but becomes planetary and world dominating. As the planetary understanding of reality, technological understanding is nihilistic in its essence because its grounding ontological background becomes completely concealed even to the point of not being seen at all and because it reduces all meaning to human caprice. Every historical epoch of Being in the north Atlantic world remained anchored within that world for the meaningfulness of its people, but the technological understanding of Being, indeed technological nihil-ism, "at first merely European… appears in its planetary tendency" (QB: 294).

Before ending this brief account of Heidegger's philosophy of technology, I must alert the reader to a spontaneous irritation that should arise out of her postmodern/poststructural sensibilities, if any—isn't this way of understanding technological modernity, a monolithic and monological metanarrative towards which we must cast aspersions of incredulity and suspicion?[6] As Dreyfus points out "when he asks about the essence of technology we must understand that

---

[4] Heidegger writes that "the approaching tide of technological revolution in the atomic age could so captivate, bewitch, dazzle, and beguile man that calculative thinking may someday come to be accepted and practiced *as the only* way of thinking" (MA: 56).

[5] Heidegger writes: "Then man would have denied and thrown away his own special nature—that he is a meditative being. Therefore, the issue is the saving of man's essential nature" (MA: 56).

[6] For a succinct treatment of this problem, see (Thomson 2005: Chap. 2).

Heidegger is not seeking a definition. His question cannot be answered by defining our concept of technology. Technology is as old as civilization" (2006: 361). Since we are technological beings from the start, Heidegger is pointing out that the peculiarities of modern technology arise out of the essential manner of our comporting ourselves towards the Being or meaning of all reality as orderable, storable, efficiently manipulable resource. Hence, to say that a pen is not technology in this sense or some other piece of technology is not technology in this essential way is beside the point. "It is a fundamental error to believe that because machines themselves are made out of metal and material, the machine era is 'materialistic.' Modern machine technology is 'spirit', and as such is a decision concerning the actuality of everything actual" (HHI: 53). Essence for Heidegger is not quiddity,[7] not the unchanging idea or the whatness of a thing, but the evolving manner of how a thing "essences" in a verbal sense, how it "remains in play" as that thing for a historical people, "as a destining of revealing" (QCT: 31).[8]

Moreover, while things and events are always differentiated one from the other clearly and characteristically, Heidegger invites us to see how differentiations cannot show up without the background of an identity/unity, which he calls an understanding of Being. A certain unity of meaning comes to prevail in terms of our cultural–historical frames of understanding. His point is to show that that which bestows meaning on the different entities and events today is the technoscientific frame of understanding, which has undeniably become a global phenomenon.

A problem with the poststructural trend of laying bare the internal differentiations of a narrative is that it tends to disallow even critical appraisals. When Western modernity is critiqued, it is sometimes suggested that there is no single Western modernity; when development is critiqued, again it is hastily pointed out that there is no single development. A manner of approaching Heidegger's philosophy of technology in this vein would be to say that there is no single notion of technology either. It is well known that the poststructural approach arises out of the intensely critical traditions of Continental philosophy, but its method of fragmenting a narrative can effectively be used also as an easy ploy in favour of the status quo. Hence, to say that there is no technological understanding of Being in the sense I have enunciated above would mean to close our eyes towards the planetary adulation of technological modernity and the levelling, uniform and standard world that is being created in its vogue in the name of development. The equivalence coming to be established in our understanding of Being has to be finally seen as the technologization of the human being herself. A well-concealed but fully entrenched modern social imaginary is constrainedly transforming the essence of the human being as openness for myriad understandings of Being and is throwing open a destructive approach towards non-human beings. The poststructural understanding of differentiations within overarching narratives can be seen in this case

---

[7] For a discussion on Heidegger's notion of essence, see my essay (George 2012).

[8] The ontotheological nature of the essence of technology, which Iain Thomson emphasizes, will be discussed in §7 of the next chapter.

of the critical look at the planetary understanding of Being as marginal practices or marginal understandings of Being, struggling for survival. There is no denial of these understandings; what is critically looked at is the hegemonic sway of the dominant imaginary over the marginal imaginary.

In this book, my invitation to the reader is to look at the post-war development narrative of the global south, or more appropriately developmentalism, as the concrete planetary dissemination of the technological understanding of Being. Certainly, this is not the only window to the post-war development discourse. Escobar's *Encountering Development* (1995) admirably uses the Foucauldian critical apparatuses in order to suggest a postdevelopmental alternative to development, focusing on the question of power underlying the complex discursive terrain of post-war development. My study, on the other hand, focuses on the spell cast by post-war development narrative on the people of the global south themselves, on the difficulty of alternative considerations of development to sustain themselves in the face of developmentalism, and on the danger of the overarching logic of efficiency, calculation and the preoccupation with resourcefulness. My strategy is not to deny the modern as such its due space but to reclaim the modern without its technological nihilism.

1.3 The Argument

Efficient, technocratic ways of tapping the energies of nature, non-human life and the human being to their uttermost limits abound in our late modern world. Taking this planet as a single whole, we cannot fail to see that for about 16 % of the world's population, which uses up about 80 % of the world's resources, transformations arising out of the efficiency paradigm have been miraculous to say the least, even extra-human, and to that extent "inhuman". If we follow the trail of Martin Heidegger's argument, a particularly technological understanding of all reality, which demands of the human agent to comprehend the real as resource for the sake of its reduction to flexible, efficient and useful units to benefit human manipulation, is driving this extraordinary human feat. But this amazing achievement of the modern civilization is intuitively contestable on account of the grossly inegalitarian tenor of the very movement that constitutes it and on account of the intuitive impossibility of the hope it programmatically cultivates. Heidegger sees technological understanding, the driver of the wondrous modern feats, as the transformed essence of Western metaphysics, an understanding of the Being (or meaning) of all beings, in its planetary phase. In the global transfer of the technological sense of reality, what transpires is the belief that humanity everywhere shall take part in the efficiently erected wonders of the typically characterized technological model of modernity. This belief, which creates adulation for the new manner of encountering reality everywhere and in the global south most expectantly, despite its impossibility, is nevertheless expedient for the very upkeep of its momentous, inextinguishable global trajectory.

   The planetary trail of technological understanding has the structure of development as modernization as exposed above, and so development, as established in the postcolonial global south in terms of a specific discursive, institutional and functionally organized sociopolitical and economic practice, can be seen as the concretion of the technological understanding of beings. Development, thus understood, is not something like a programme for poverty alleviation or speedy constructions in the metropolises of the global south, but development means far-reaching transformations of human approaches towards life, towards the settings where life flourishes, towards the needs and things that make life fulfilling, and towards values, dispositions and arrangements that readies oneself for the new order of needs, whether these are attainable or not. Development is desire gratification and attuning oneself towards the impossible order of desires created all around you by forces beyond you. Development, thus, is freedom, that is uprooting oneself from erstwhile contexts of significance and replanting oneself in a new context of meaning, which in the least includes imagining oneself as individual first, notionally entering into the global market, attuning one's desires to this arena's limitless possibilities, disposing oneself towards the fascinatingly productive circulation of capital, and readying oneself for the promise of justice offered by this new order. Development understood in this manner is fully established as a discursive practice when the last person in a society, who has no possibility of gaining anything from its logic, nonetheless believes that she also stands a chance. Development is established when destitute population believes that things will turn better for them sooner rather than later. When people displaced, pauperized and unjustly treated by developmental regimes of power still believe that efficient ordering is their hope as well, development is established as the only possibility. Technological understanding of reality, its ahistorical and violently expansionistic regime, rules by projecting itself as the sole plausible political tool for transforming human life by reordering humans and their society in terms of developmental reorienting and reorganizing.

   Are non-efficient manners of approaching reality that do not compel humans to be violently reductive possible in the modern era? Is flourishing good life imaginable as living with the needed and without the superfluous? Is human freedom conceivable as positively bounded by our common life of sharing the earth and existential burdens? These questions can be answered in the affirmative by imagining marginal practices of development and good life taking centre stage in an imaginary future. However, any optimism in this regard is gravely misplaced, for technological understanding, in its planetary phase is still in its beginnings and nations everywhere are seduced by the promises that go with it. What is now coming to view is the making of the world as a single continent, Europe, in its essence; that is the world as a whole, is increasingly becoming hospitable to the technological view of reality. Projects of subversion and resistance, becoming aware of the extent, reach and danger of the technological understanding, and individual and political projects of the preserving–caring approach to what-is are urgent items of the agenda of humanity, though the world does not seem to be ready for it yet. From a philosophical vantage point, this pessimism is ontological distress, and an ontological transformation that lets the new possibilities thrive and flourish cannot arise without the critical,

distressful attunement. In as much as this distressful attunement is a response to real-ity, the first step towards a new beginning has already come to pass. On account of the violent and at the same time seductive structure of the technological understand-ing of reality, there is sense in the Heideggerian claim that it is necessary that a new ontological age should dawn first in the West, for no non-efficient ordering of life and reality can survive dominantly in the face of the aggressive, expansionistic and annihilationist logic of the technological understanding of Being, the late modern transformation of Western metaphysics. But a non-efficient order means the flour-ishing of various conceptions of the good life and the subversion of the uniformly and technologically organized global humanity. At the same time, only those non-efficient marginal social practices that imagine the good life for all humans equita-bly can stake its claim to be part of the subversive project because something like a desire for good life, however conceived, is constitutive of human existence as such.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

This book at bottom is an argument for cultural freedom. It is not an argument against the efficient order as such but its totalizing agency.[9] I believe that liberals should make the same argument in some form. As Mill's liberal gospel puts it:

> If it were only that people have diversities of taste, that is reason enough for not attempting to shape them all after one model… The same things which are helps to one person towards the cultivation of his higher nature, are hindrances to another. The same mode of life is a healthy excitement to one… while to another it is a distracting burthen… (1989: 68).

In defending identity politics and coming directly to the above passage of Mill, Appiah argues that people in the modern world "need an enormous array of tools in making a life. The range of options sufficient for each of us isn't enough for us all" (2006: 19). In fact, liberals have benignly accepted the politics of identity and multi-cultural politics, the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference, demand-ing, as Taylor puts it, to recognize the "unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity" (1994: 38). What seems to be lacking is the liberal eye's ability to see the levelling of identity and difference brought about by the universal establishment of the tech-nological understanding of Being or, simply put, the reductive view of all phenom-ena in terms of a certain calculative intelligibility, a certain formation of organized life, and what this type of levelling takes away from peoples in the global south.

I believe that those from the far left end of the political spectrum should also make the same argument. Marx and Engels, as it is well known today, were not free of the racial and colonial prejudices of their age (Paul 1981). Other than class con-sciousness, which too is to disappear with ultimate communist community, Marx wanted all social distinctions to disappear. In "On the Jewish Question" (1843),

---

[9] Denis Goulet, who pioneered development ethics, asks: do cultural communities "also wish to be viewed as worthy of merit independently of their viability or their utility to other communi-ties?" (1981: 4). He thinks it necessary to ask "whether multiple cultural rights are compatible with technology's inherent rationality" (1981: 5).

he ridicules the liberal idea of emancipation from the social markers of difference like religion at the level of the communal human essence, the political state, only to reclaim them at the level of the individual, the civil society. Marx complains that the essence of the civil society is "no longer in community but in difference" (2000: 54). It is the job of revolution to break the stranglehold of "social difference" upon human consciousness. We read in *The German Ideology* (1846):

> … within a nation itself the individuals, even apart from their pecuniary circumstances, have quite different developments, and that an earlier interest, the peculiar form of inter-course of which has already been ousted by that belonging to a later interest, remains for a long time afterwards in possession of a traditional power in the illusory community (State, law), which has won an existence independent of the individuals; a power which in the last resort can only be broken by a revolution (Marx and Engels 2000: 197).

And yet, those from the revolutionary left will agree that the social levelling brought about by the global march of the technological society, justified in the name of the moral demand for equality, cannot be a camouflage for furthering inequality, despite what Marx and Engels thought in the nineteenth century about the Slavs and the colonized Indians. Socialists of all variety should be outraged by the fact that inequality is increasing despite resource increase everywhere on the planet to its detriment.

It is well known that most ecologists, especially deep ecologists, support cultural difference. But this should not be, at the same time, a clandestine approval of internal colonialisms, oppressive inequalities and elitist environmentalisms. That is why it makes sense to think that the egalitarian concerns from the far left of the political spectrum may have to be roped into reflections about development as the concretion of the technological understanding of Being. Hence, this book steers clear of the deep ecological argument. However, everyone who cares about the fate of the planet should also be anxious about the egalitarian promise of the technological society in the face of the question of the health of the planet.

The cultural argument is problematic for obvious reasons. It could come to mean a simple, tolerant non-interventionism or letting things be, a liberal disinterest in the affairs of others. Peaceable, tolerant letting them be in fact makes available enough cheap labour that otherwise could disappear in the demand for equality. But even more problematically, the cultural argument can fall into self-righteous per-spectivism and block our ontological openness towards other humans, which is our fundamental sociality. Hence, I need to emphasize that what I am looking towards here is not a world without technology, but a world possibly freed from the hegemony of a particular, monolithic way of understanding all-that-is, which we call the technological understanding of Being. Can judicious intervention and contestation of in-house hegemony and domination happen without the monistic ontology of technological understanding? A cautiously affirmative answer to this question animates the spirit of this book. While liberals think that people should flourish according to their self-endorsed designs, technological understanding of Being regiments the myriad possibilities of Being in terms of a single giant vision. While the political left thinks that equality in front of the law is meaningless unless there is equality in fact and equality in our ability to use our freedoms, the technological society that levels human understanding in terms of a certain calculative

intelligibility in fact widens the inequality between individuals and peoples in terms of their ability to exploit instrumental rationality , whether to earn wealth or power or influence over others. While ecologists and culturalists want to maintain cultural and environmental status quo, they forget that an important factor that makes technological intelligibility fascinating for people everywhere is the hope that equality and freedom from internal oppressions and external aggressions can be attained. Therefore, it is important for any argument for cultural difference to bring within its purview from the very beginning a concern with internal justice and fair play. In short, we should aim to bring together, however uneasily, two ideals mutually resistant in their absolute forms: freedom and justice.[10] This book aims to bring these concerns together, and strangely enough, it believes that Heidegger's is the right theoretical perspective to take up in order to make that attempt.

1.4 Why Heidegger and Development?

In a lecture course titled *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, in 1924, Heidegger introduced Aristotle's life tersely: "our only interest is that that he was born at a certain time, that he worked, and that he died" (2009: 4). He despised the "biographical, psychological commentary" of even Nietzsche, the most dramatic of philosophical biographies, which according to him showed the "psychological-biological addiction of our times" (N I: 10). However, it has now become impossible to ponder over straightforwardly, and much less appropriate Martin Heidegger's thought, as I do in this book, after the events of the year 1933 for ever wedded his seminal philosophical meditations to his largely uneventful and sedentary life. Furthermore, it is a gross error to think that philosophy is outside its context, life world, worldview and milieu, especially from Heidegger's own philosophical perspective.[11] After the polemical examinations of critics like Victor Farias, Tom Rockmore and Emmanuel Faye, and the more considered reflections of Hugo Ott, Otto Pöggeler, Habermas, Derrida, Levinas and Julian Young,[12] Heidegger's Nazism is now understood to have been deeper than it was at first thought to be. He remained a registered member of the party till the end in 1945 and was largely silent

---

[10] As Albert Camus writes, hoping for a world where freedom and justice would flourish together: "Absolute freedom mocks at justice. Absolute justice denies freedom. To be fruitful, the two ideas must find their limits in each other" (1991: 291). My attempt in this book is to explore these 'limits'.

[11] For a balanced view on the matter, see: Habermas (1989), Ott (1993), Pöggeler (1993), Derrida (1991), and Young (1997). For some of the most extremely polemical accounts of this matter in scholarly literature, see: Farias (1989), Rockmore (1992, 1999), and Faye (2009).

[12] Probably the most sustained critic of Heidegger's politics and ontology, on almost every page of his philosophical prose, is Emmanuel Levinas. John Caputo argues that the anti-essentialist Levinasian perspective of the Other is absent especially from the later Heidegger's essentializing history of Being, and so, he contends, Levinas's relentless critique "made it impossible to discuss Heidegger today without wrestling with the question of ethics" (1998: 232).

about that period in his life, excepting occasional admissions of regret in scanty pri-
vate conversations, without having much to say about the horror of the Holocaust.
Heidegger maintained the habit of putting down his everyday observations and
responses in a philosophical and reflective form in black-covered little notebooks for
nearly forty years. The recent (spring 2014) publication of the German edition of his
jottings of 1939–41, provocatively titled *Black Notebooks*, furnishes fresh material
regarding his anti-Semitic tendencies. After the war, Heidegger was first thrown out
of the university, and later exonerated and reinstated as professor emeritus.

  The debate on the Heidegger affair has been vicious and partisan. However, over
thirty-five years of reflection since the philosopher's death seems to have come to the
tacit agreement that Heidegger was an enthusiastic enough Nazi, a cultural anti-Sem-
ite, and did certain morally reprehensible things as the Nazi rector of Freiburg
University, but, at the same time, he did not agree with the party's biological racism
and his philosophical work, except when one interpretively wants to twist things
around, was not in any way more hospitable to fascism than was it to democracy. I
would claim indeed that the more fundamental an ontology is, the more open it is as a
field of multiple possibilities. Emmanuel Faye argued in 2005 that Heidegger's philos-
ophy is thoroughly imbued with Nazi ideology, and therefore, it should be debarred
from philosophy classrooms and his works should be classified under Nazism in
libraries. To anyone interested in free thought per se, which is but philosophy, this is a
very offensive suggestion. Only certain overtly simplistic assumptions about the con-
nection between laboriously articulated and philosophically worked out academic
positions and real life, leave alone realpolitik, can come to such suggestions, not to
mention the fascism hidden in this attack against the supposedly fascistic tendencies
of thought. Are political forms textbook copies of idealized, thoroughly nuanced phil-
osophical positions? They are much more complex than such idealizations, except
when philosophers like Kant or Mill or Marx openly support a political point of view,
and contribute directly towards a political philosophy. Wills and passions, imagina-
tions and desires, reasons and calculations of individual actors and political groups,
ideologies and propagandas, actions and reactions of opponents and the "other",
imagined or real, convolute political processes so much that the claim of *an* ontology
leading to *a* political form and that alone seems to me to be completely confounded.
Edith Wyschogrod remarks that "Levinas operates upon strictly Hegelian assump-
tions: a concrete historical moment is the embodiment of an abstract moment of
thought" (2000: 15) in the context of Levinas's opinion that National Socialism was
indeed the culmination of fundamental ontology's preoccupation with pagan, pristine,
unsullied, close-to-nature existence. Does Levinas's own controversial remark that "in
alterity we can find an enemy" (1989: 294), referring to the Palestinians vis-à-vis the
Israelis, and a few such unguarded remarks, mean that all the resources in his wonder-
ful philosophy of the Other for rethinking interpersonal and intercommunity relations
are thereby extinguished, that its only political form is parochial nationalism?[13]

---

[13] Levinas's theoretical position is about "every man's responsibility towards all others, a
responsibility which has nothing to do with any acts one may really have committed" (1989:
290).

As per Heidegger's publicly defended position, he thought that Nazism offered the right political and ideological space for the encounter between global technology and contemporary humanity. Since my study links up Heidegger's notion of the planetary spread of the technological understanding of Being with developmentalism in the global south, this claim has to be seriously evaluated. In the 1966 interview to *Der Spiegel* magazine, to the question how countering global technology and the question of the homeland and National Socialism fitted together, Heidegger responded that he did not envisage technology as a fate that could not be escaped or unravelled. The task of the thinker in the technological age, he said, "within the limits allotted to thought", was to help humans attain "an adequate relationship to the essence of technology", which is the calculative and reductive comportment towards all reality. He then adds "National Socialism, to be sure, moved in this direction. But those people were far too limited in their thinking to acquire an explicit relationship to what is really happening today and has been underway for three centuries" (GS: 111). Julian Young has laboriously tried to argue in the first chapter of *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism* that the version of Nazism that Heidegger accepted was not its political form at all. We may think of Heidegger's claim as pure nonsense and, more charitably, as naïve ivory tower image of realpolitik as Hannah Arendt did. Some might think that the claimed reason was not the reason at all for the philosopher's signing up with the evil regime; it was, rather, pure myopic racism and bigoted German nationalism. These interpretations, as things stand, cannot be prevented or challenged. Heidegger did not do enough to prevent them.[14]

I, rather, tend to think that Heidegger nurtured a sort of philosophical ambition of bringing into effect a less efficiency-oriented, less technologically totalizing form of life through the type of political change that he naïvely thought National Socialism promised to bring to effect in 1933, for his association with the movement was well thought out and philosophical. He continued to maintain

---

[14] The publication of *Black Notebooks* has reignited the concern about the Nazi contamination of Heidegger's philosophy. While this publication has sounded the death knell for Heidegger's philosophy according to his stringent critics, Heideggerians still think that his anti-Semitism was in no way exceptional for his times and that the prejudices of thinkers cannot nullify thought as such. They point to the fact that Heidegger allowed the publication of the diary, scheduled albeit as the very last, knowing fully well what was inside them and, thus, making himself vulnerable to hostile assessment. He dared to put his deep failure in the dock, they contend. Some of them point to Heidegger's own concept of errancy (withdrawal of Being and therefore of truth) within which human existence is always adrift just as existence is *in* the truth. "The errancy through which human beings stray is not something that, as it were, extends alongside them like a ditch into which they occasionally stumble; rather, errancy belongs to the inner constitution of the Da-sein into which historical human beings are admitted.… The concealing of concealed beings as a whole holds sway in that disclosure of specific beings, which, as forgottenness of concealment, becomes errancy" (ET: 150). Heidegger's anti-Semitism can be said to be a fundamental error and concealment of the truth common among prewar westerners. But certainly, as the best-known philosopher of his times and astute observer of the human condition, Heidegger's moral and intellectual failure was far more serious and shameful than that of the common westerner of those days. His supporters are sometimes surprised by the intellectual lethargy in his anti-Semitic observations (Rothman 2014; Rée 2014). Heidegger thinks that no human being stands as close to error as the philosopher, the venturesome poet of thought (FCM: 19).

throughout his life, as the admission in the 1966 interview shows, that there was something in National Socialism about readying humanity for encountering global technology, which somehow the real Nazis failed to see. If we do not take Heidegger's word for it, the option before us is to take his later philosophy as paganism, autochthonism and ethnocentrism as Levinas did, or to take it as meaningful thought, cleverly contrived by a bigoted mind to appear not bigoted. I, rather, take the view that he somehow sensed in 1933, even if naively, ambitiously, falsely and unethically, that National Socialism's concrete form offered an opportunity to encounter planetary technology. During that period, he evidently put the idiom of fundamental ontology at the service of Nazi rhetoric, though not at all in its most abominable, biologically racist forms.

Then, and soon, there is a tone of distress and disappointment. Right through the mystifying private philosophical musings, starting with *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936–38), and including *Mindfulness* (1938–39), *The Event* (1941–42) and the Nietzsche lectures of the same period, we hear in his thinking a profound distress about the impossibility of options, of distresslessness despite distress, of the deep entrenchment of the technological understanding of Being, of the abandonment of beings by Being and so on. This distress is expressed very depressingly in the 1949 lecture on technology, "The Danger", where National Socialism is alluded to as yet another manifestation of the technological understanding of Being in the most distressful and brutal fashion.

> Are there times when we could have noticed *the* distress, the dominance of distresslessness? There are indications. Only we do not attend to them. Hundreds of thousands die in masses … they become pieces of inventory of a standing reserve for the fabrication of corpses.… They are unobstrusively liquidated in annihilation camps (2012b: 53).

That is, concrete National Socialism has metamorphosed into an engine for the technologically efficient production of death as such.

Did this conception of technological understanding and the nihilistic cultural condition that it gave rise to emerge out of Heidegger's contrition for participating in the evil National Socialist movement, out of sheer shame and guilt to have done so, or was it a clever ploy, a brilliant cover-up exercise? This we are not given to know. Whatever might have been the undercurrents, what he has produced in the bargain is an interpretation of modern culture that is highly disquieting, hardly flattering—if he really was the nationalist and the ethnocentrist that his detractors claim he really was—and absolutely dark and gloomy. This is why, we must insist, things are not nicely pieced together in the racist, anti-Semitic, nationalistic, absolutely debauched picture of Heidegger, the person and the philosopher, that occasionally makes a sensation in the academic circles as Faye's book recently did.

Heidegger is put in the dock today not the least because chauvinism, xenophobia and ultra-conservatism have been continuously churned out of Heidegger scholarship. Heidegger inspired humanities has been, on the other hand, the brewing ground for the new, postmodern/poststructural left, for the apophatic essenceless god in theology. Those who have travelled beyond the "modern subject" have all been yoked to Heideggerian questioning as if to a sweet burden. The self-righteous

interrogation of Heidegger arises, rather, from a certain loss of "innocence". If over three centuries of colonization, slave trade and genocide of indigenous populations were undergirded with a civilizational premise, the Holocaust and the communist and totalitarian brutalities in general, ghastly as they were, were inexcusable evil, the culmination of all evil, because it was evil finally achieving its potential for "self-destruction". Everything aligned with this ultimate evil, it was to be made sure, was to be purged of the modern intellectual consciousness. The atomic bombings and the other moralistic white crimes of the allies, the continuing provocation, upkeep and the operation of the current war machine, somehow "technically" falls outside the potential for "self-destruction" and, thus, also outside interrogation, denigration and easy dismissal. Such is the morality of the victor, the victorious "self".

Heidegger's later thought, on the other hand, in my reading, takes the bull by the horns. Rather than turning away from the intellectual culture that led up to the colonization and denial of the other, and ultimately self-destruction and the final defeatist othering of the self itself, Heidegger's thought looks squarely at the whole basis of what has led to modernity, what it has become and hints at where probably it is going wrong, even in his own attempts thus far. Of course, in this he was not alone. Several astute physicians of culture—Gandhi in any case was one in India—all over the world meditated similarly about the modern culture in the twentieth century. How philosophy could do this questioning is a curious matter, for philosophy thrives on pure reason, abstract reason, efficient reason at its logical, analytical best, and the efficiency-driven *telos* of this very reason, in Heidegger's reading, is actualized in modernity. He looks at the possibility of a renewal, a starting anew, a second beginning of the tradition, not by looking outside into Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism or a romanticization of the primitive, unsullied existence, but from right within the Western tradition and intellectual heritage. Since modernity is the culmination of this heritage and since modernity, in its historical sense, is a transport of Europe to the non-Europe, there is no better place to confront the planetary sojourn of the technological understanding of Being concretized as development and progress, I firmly believe, than in the texts of Heidegger. This is how Heidegger and development get knotted in this study.

Heidegger was always in search of a new way of looking at things, a new way of appropriating the tradition and a new terminological apparatus to express them even in his early works. His anti-Cartesian temperament is clear from the introductory pages of *Being and Time*. He saw the Platonic, medieval and especially Cartesian appropriation of the tradition as responsible for the gloom setting upon the world as a philosopher who came to the limelight after the first quarter of the twentieth century. Who wouldn't recognize that this diagnosis was eminently prompt, even if the solution he tried to institute through his intervention in 1933 turned out not only to be a huge fiasco but the very "malice of rage" he spoke of in the "Letter on 'Humanism'"? After the fiasco, he resigned himself to the meditation on global technology and confronting it not as a National Socialist, not in terms of any other political form, but through an endless, often opaque, open-ended, critical meditation on the tradition, not in an upbeat effort to reinvent and found a new appropriation of it, but in an utterly modest, chastened attempt

to show how the tradition he revered so much in essence was foundering, darkening and dissipating. In search of a second beginning in opposition to the first beginning of the Western tradition appropriated by Plato, and stepping aside from the rationalistic, logical tradition that is at the base, according to him, of the technological understanding, he called himself just a thinker, not philosopher, called for the eminent end of philosophy, and experimented relentlessly with thinking as revealing the possibility of a new world, a new humanity, a new human relationship with the world and themselves, and a new, poetic form of philosophical writing and terminological apparatus, which has little in common with the tradition it was striving to reject, even if imperfectly. His heirs are certainly affected by these ways of doing philosophy, even if they use it to subject Heidegger's own writings to the penetrating critical gaze. I think this was a valiant and original effort, which has sustained the critical tradition ever since, despite its originator being derided as a Nazi. There is an increasing sense today that critique is losing steam not because there is no more room for it, not because the tradition has been critically appropriated, but because technological understanding, which Heidegger's critique brought to light as the propeller of the tradition's darkening, has deeply entrenched itself and is fast expanding in acceptable, apparently harmless and even expedient planetary forms, even as the technologization of the human being and the devastation of the planet continue unabated.

While attempting to take one of the strands of the Heiedeggerian critique of modernity to what I think is its persistent conclusion, I take Heidegger for the most important Western philosopher of the twentieth century for what he reveals about our age, its limits, how it could be transformed and how transformation is beset with grave difficulties. For Heidegger, the truth a philosopher reveals is not a universal conclusion rationalistically and calculatedly—that is, technologically—derivable through the appropriate application of the rational part of the human brain. The truth a philosopher reveals is, rather, the response he or she articulates to the appearance and revealing of phenomena in his or her historical time and place. Heidegger complained about a listener questioning him on his 1950 lecture, "The Thing":

> … whence my thinking gets its directive, as though this question were indicated in regard to this thinking alone. But it never occurs to anyone to ask whence Plato had a directive to think of Being as *idea*, or whence Kant had the directive to think of Being as the transcendental character of objectness (T: 183-84).

For the strident, triumphant spirit of the pure modernist, who believes that the best of our age is yet to come, neither Heidegger nor this study reveals anything. To be sure, the best of our age is yet to come, but "the best" understood not as the same in bigger, more extensive proportions, spread out all over the world, but the best reinterpreted, reappropriated and radically rethought so that the best is not progressive, cumulative accumulation of history but relooking at, redirecting and withdrawing from elements of that history. Progress is also destruction, deconstruction, abandoning and reinvention of the tradition, rather than the hapless, uncreative clinging to it.

The global south today is dazzled and blinded by the promise and the already visible effects of the technological understanding of Being. There seems to be nothing better than technological nihilism. Critical thinking is the ability to challenge this commonsense. Nothing else is promised in the following pages.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Appiah, K. A. (2006). The politics of identity. *Dædalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 135*(4), 15–22.

Camus, A. (1951) 1991. *The rebel*. (A. Bower, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Caputo, J. D. (1998). Heidegger. In S. Critchley & W. R. Schroeder (Eds.), *A companion to continental philosophy* (pp. 223–233). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Derrida, J. (1987) 1991. *Of spirit: Heidegger and the question*. (G. Bennington & R. Bowlby, Trans.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and time, division I*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (2006). Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics. In C. B. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger* (2nd ed., pp. 345–372). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dreyfus, H. L., & Spinosa, C. (2003). Heidegger and Borgmann on how to affirm technology. In R. C. Scharff & V. Dusek (Eds.), *Philosophy of technology: The technological condition—An anthology* (pp. 315–326). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Farias, V. (1987) 1989. *Heidegger and Nazism*. (P. Burrell, Trans.). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Faye, E. (2005) 2009. *Heidegger: The introduction of Nazism into philosophy*. (M. B. Smith, Trans.). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

George, S. K. (2012). Heidegger's alternative to essentialism: An overview. *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 29*(1), 133–157.

Goulet, Denis. (1981). In defense of cultural rights: Technology, tradition and conflicting models of rationality. *Human Rights Quarterly, 3*(4), 1–18.

Habermas, J. (1988) 1989. Work and weltanschauung: The Heidegger controversy from a German perspective. (John McCumber, Trans.). *Critical Inquiry*, 15(2), 431–456.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1821) 1991. *Elements of the philosophy of right*. (H. B. Nisbet, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1950) 1971. Epilogue to "the thing": A letter to a young student. (A. Hofstadter, Trans.). In *Poetry, language, thought* (pp. 181–184). New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1944) 1975. Logos: Heraclitus, fragment B 50. (D. F. Krell & F. A. Capuzzi, Trans.). In *Early Greek thinking: The dawn of western philosophy* (pp. 59–78). New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1954) 1977. Science and reflection. (W. Lovitt. Trans.). In *The question concerning technology and other essays* (pp. 155–182). New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1924) 2009. *Basic concepts of Aristotelian philosophy*. (R. D. Metcalf & M. B. Tanzer, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1949) 2012. The danger. (A. J. Mitchell, Trans.). In *Bremen and Freiburg lectures: Insight into that which is and basic principles of thinking* (pp. 44–63). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Levinas, E. (1982) 1989. Ethics and politics. (J. Romney, Trans.). In S. Hand (Ed.), *The Levinas reader* (pp. 289–297). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Marx, K. (1843) 2000. On the Jewish question. In D. McLellan (Ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected writings* (2nd ed, pp. 46–70). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, K., & Frederick, E. (1846) 2000. The German ideology. In D. McLellan (Ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected writings* (2nd ed, pp. 175–208). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mill, J. S. (1859) 1989. On liberty. In S. Collini (Ed.), *On liberty and other writings* (pp 1–116). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nancy, J-L. (1996) 2000. *Being singular plural*. (R. D. Richardson & A. E. O'Byrne, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Ott, H. (1992) 1993. *Martin Heidegger: A political life*. (A. Blunden, Trans.). New York: Basic Books.

Paul, D. (1981). "In the interests of civilization": Marxist views of race and culture in the nineteenth century. *Journal of the History of Ideas, 42*(1), 115–138.

Pöggeler, O. (1988) 1993. Heidegger's political self-understanding. (S. G. Crowell, Trans.). In R. Wolin (Ed.), *The Heidegger controversy: A critical reader* (pp. 198–244). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Rée, J. (2014). In defense of Heidegger. *Prospect*. Retrieved July 31, 2014, from http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/in-defence-of-heidegger.

Rockmore, T. (1992). *On Heidegger's Nazism and philosophy*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Rockmore, T. (1999). Philosophy or weltanschauung?: Heidegger on Hönigswald. *History of Philosophy Quarterly, 16*(1), 97–115.

Rothman, J. (2014). Is Heidegger contaminated by Nazism? *The New Yorker*. Retrieved July 31, 2014, from http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/is-heidegger-contaminated-by-nazism.

Sundar, N. (2007). *Subalterns and sovereigns: An anthropological history of Bastar (1854–2006)* (2nd ed.). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalim: Examining the politics of recognition* (pp. 25–73). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Taylor, C. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Thomson, I. D. (2005). *Heidegger on ontotheology: Technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wyschogrod, E. (1974) 2000. *Emmanuel Levinas: The problem of ethical metaphysics* (2nd ed.). New York: Fordham University Press.

Young, J. (1997). *Heidegger, philosophy, Nazism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Young, J. (2002). *Heidegger's later philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 2
Historicizing the Development Narrative

You want to know what the philosophers' idiosyncrasies are?
Their lack of historical sense for one thing, their hatred of the
very idea of becoming, their Egypticity. They think that they are
showing respect for something when they dehistoricize it, sub
specie aeterni (from the standpoint of eternity),—when they turn
it into a mummy. For thousands of years, philosophers have
been using only mummified concepts; nothing real makes it
through their hands alive.

    —Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, 166–167; my gloss.

Abstract The post-war development ideal, imagined after the society and economy of the modern West, is valorized as an ahistorical and acultural planetary discourse. The chapter examines how a historical–cultural product like development can take the form of an ahistorical and disengaged narrative, and how subjects of other histories are affected by the neutralized, universal form of development. Ahistorical developmentalism follows the trail of the mainstream ahistorical tendencies of the modern intellectual currents. This mainstream tendency is resisted in the historical thinking of a line of philosophers from Herder to Heidegger and others. Historical thinking has given rise to the possibility to show something like the post-war development narrative in its historical peculiarities rather than in its ahistorical, universal normality. Heidegger's history of Being—a way of showing the historical uniqueness of the Western understandings of Being in various epochs, leading up to the world-dominating technological understanding of Being as resourceful material in the late modern epoch—can help historicize developmentalism ontologically as the planetary concretion of the technological understanding of Being. Historicizing development can make possible genuine, contextually–historically sensitive and purposive engagement of a historical people with their futures.

Keywords Ahistorical · History of being · Developmentalism · Epoch · Subversion

For conceiving, executing and evaluating development, it is generally believed, an ahistorical understanding of it, isolated from time and place, is preferable. The post-war construction of the development narrative, thus, came to mean the universal march of societies towards achieving what the industrial West definitively achieved by the first half of the twentieth century and continued to achieve progressively thereafter. Global south would therefore be that which forever lags behind the north but follows suit. In the discourse of development, its concept is understood as a constant presence, a unique, universal mode of having and being, and its binary opposite in the Derridean sense, "underdevelopment", which, too, is a largely singular, universal condition, is to be discredited and overcome. Such understanding of development, no doubt, has a distinct functional simplicity. It can, for instance, give rise to the dollar-a-day definition of poverty. However, this narrative of development has, of late, fallen into disfavour, though it still holds sway as the mainstream idea of development.

One of the ways to challenge the ahistorical notion of development has been to broaden its scope, make it more inclusive and argue for its historico-cultural reach as the work of Amartya Sen and others have. This challenge accepted the ahistorical development ideal, albeit with modification, and argued that the distilled Western model itself was the result of experiences drawn from all over the world. A second challenge has called for the rejection of the current narrative completely as postdevelopment thinkers have, suggesting radically historical relook at the concept of development.

The chapter pleads for the radical historicization of the notion of development from the perspective of Heidegger's history of Being. The aim of the chapter is to bring to light the general ahistorical tendencies in current intellectual culture, the challenge posed to it, especially by Heidegger, and to show why ahistorical narratives, especially when they are models placed before us to strive politically and socially after, like development is, are problematic.

2.1 From Ahistoricity to Radical Historicality[1]

The complex process of human knowing of the inner and the outer world is commonly thought about from two divergent perspectives: the disengaged ("a view from nowhere") point of view and the engaged ("a view from somewhere") point of view (Taylor 2006). Modernity is produced as a historical era and, even more, as a particular human condition, on the basis of the paradoxical imagination that the world in its objectivity can be accurately known only by a subject who is autonomous and disengaged from that world.

---

[1] In this section, I briefly trace the philosophical turn from ahistorical universality to radical historicality in western metaphysics and theory in the modern era, that is, from Descartes to Heidegger. I am very aware that this historicization is further radicalized by Foucault and Rorty. However, I stop with Heidegger for the reason that this book frames its argument for the most part from a Heideggerian perspective. Moreover, I think that these other theorists largely take off from the philosophical vantage point opened up by Heidegger's path-breaking investigations. My focus in this section is not on exhaustive treatment of philosophical history but on tracing the trail of change leading up to Heidegger's understanding of the history of Being.

It may really be that our store of knowledge about the world is produced through both these ways of accessing it as Thomas Nagel argues. For Nagel, humans are constitutively self-absorbed, but they also can recognize the excessiveness of their self-absorption. However, Nagel thinks that "[t]he gap is too wide to be closed entirely, for anyone who is fully human" (1986: 223). Subjectivity and objectivity are quite nebulous matters of degree; the view of the subject is objective to the degree that it is detached from the subject's position in the world, her makeup and the type of being that she is. The ethical view is more objective than the personal but less objective than the scientific (Nagel 1986: 5). Nagel's concern is about the integration of the two standpoints and the limits of objectivity, and he stresses that "there are things about the world and life and ourselves that cannot be adequately understood from a maximally objective standpoint" (1986: 7).

However, my concern is not about whether we come to know the world objectively or subjectively. I am concerned, rather, about the evident centrality of the disengaged knower of the objective world within modern culture, and about the role played by the disengaged epistemological standpoint in the creation of ahistorical developmentalism, and I am concerned with the turn within modernity towards the alternative (contextual, historical and engaged) conception of the epistemological standpoint, and with the possibility of historicizing and contextualizing the development narrative from that standpoint. No doubt the ahistorical knower is privileged in mainstream intellectual culture. That is why Charles Taylor asks philosophers to marshal forceful arguments "to convince people to think differently" and "shake them out of what seems obvious"—the "default position", "this rationalist model", which "has entered common sense" (2006: 210).[2] Notwithstanding the miracles of modern reason and science, engineered from the standpoint of the disengaged subject, it is important to understand how and why an alternative view began to be articulated.

Although the disengaged model of knowing was the privileged epistemological standpoint in the Western intellectual culture since at least Plato, with modern emphasis on epistemology over metaphysics, this model of the knowing agent began to be explicitly considered the hallowed base of modern sciences, philosophy and culture with Descartes's reconfiguring of philosophy in the seventeenth century. In the second meditation, Descartes settles down on the "thinking thing", the thing "that doubts, that understands, that affirms, that denies, that wishes to do this and does not wish to do that, and also that imagines and perceives by the senses" (2008: 20), the thing absolutely distinct from the body, shape, spatial extension, motion, place or anything material and non-intellectual, as the indubitable foundation of knowledge. For Descartes, this discovery should not have merely speculative import, but should concretely lead to "the discovery of a host of inventions which will lead us effortlessly to enjoy the fruits of the earth and all the commodities that can be found in it" (2006: 51). "The power", writes Charles

---

[2] Taylor points to Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty as other philosophers who also contributed in this regard but he argues that it was Heidegger who "got there first" (2006: 202) and has "helped to free us from the thrall of modern rationalist epistemology" (2006: 218).

Taylor while tracing the philosophical history of the disengaged subject, "to give ourselves the certainty we seek seems to have been the key insight in Descartes' decisive moment of inspiration…" (1989: 156–57). All certainties, including God's existence ("a stage in *my* progress towards science… a theorem in *my* system of perfect science"), are products of "a clarity and fullness of self-presence" that I find in myself (Taylor 1989: 157). Taylor notes that with Cartesianism "what I now meet is myself"—and thus the modern subject is born.

The account of the disengaged self, together with that of the Enlightenment, culminates in Kant's conception of the autonomous subject, who is the author of the laws of the starry skies above and the moral law within. The laws of nature "exist only relative to the subject in which the appearances (of nature) inhere, insofar as it has understanding, as appearances do not exist in themselves, but only relative to the same being, insofar as it has senses" (Kant 1998: 263; my gloss). The moral law, on the other hand, "elevates infinitely my worth as that of an *intelligence* by my personality, in which the moral law reveals to me a life independent of animality and even of the entire world of sense" (Kant 2002: 203). The dignity, centrality and inwardness of the rational agent of modernity are unique. "Rational agents have a status", remarks Taylor while dwelling on Kant's autonomous subject, "that nothing else enjoys in the universe. They soar above the rest of creation. Everything else may have a price, but only they have 'dignity'" (1989: 83).

If this view of the universal, ahistorical subject, wrapped up in intimacy with eternal laws, reached its zenith in the eighteenth century, there arose during this same period the counterview of the radically historical, engaged subject on account of "a popular interest in the radical diversity of cultures and a growing sense of the limitations of modernity" (Ameriks 2006: 2). This strain in the history of philosophy, an enquiry thought to be a search after certainty by both the modern masters, Descartes and Kant, was fuelled by the fact of difference and the real multiplicity of philosophical standpoints. Although the essential insight of Kant's Copernican revolution, the contribution of human mind to knowledge production, may have played a role in the change of intellectual attention to the context of the knower, Kant himself did not take part in the turn. The historical point of view was expressed most unambiguously for the first time in the writings of Kant's student and later adversary, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), a man unequivocally open to the multicoloured cultural landscapes of the world and not prejudiced unlike Kant in his view of other cultures (Harvey 2000)—indeed a well-travelled man in comparison with the proverbially sedentary Kant. Against his times, Herder argued that "human nature is no vessel for an *absolute, independent, immutable happiness,* as defined by the philosopher" but changes with "*land, time,* and *place*" and so "all *comparison* becomes *futile*" (2004: 28). He stated famously that "[e]very nation has its *center* of happiness *within itself*" (2004: 29), and what mattered was the spirit of the people/nation that needed, strove for and attained one "good" over another, and not the good in question itself. In short, the historical turn in European philosophy and culture, thus, got going with "German romanticism, with its concern for historically differentiated national cultures, against Enlightenment universalism, and Wilhelm Dilthey, with

his concern for the autonomy of the human studies, against the imperialism of the natural sciences" (Roberts 1995: 23).

What has come to be crucially attached to historicism are the beliefs that (i) everything in the sociopolitical world have a *historical* origin; they are not ahistorical and eternal; (ii) without investigating their *contextual* location, they cannot be properly understood; (iii) they are parts of the *organic* structure of society; and (iv) they undergo a *developmental* process of birth, growth and decline as parts of the organism that society is (Beiser 2005: 29–30). While several early historicists like Herder accepted the relativist strain of thought inherent to historicism, G.W.F. Hegel, the most renowned nineteenth-century historicist, tried to purge it of relativism. The result is rather unsettling. Hegel's *Geist*/Spirit is "a subject of experience and action… necessarily *self-transforming in time* and necessarily *social*… [a] thinking and acting subject" (Pippin 1993: 57),[3] which "in and for itself is *reason*… world history is the necessary development… of the *moments* of reason and hence of spirit's self-consciousness and freedom. It is the exposition and the *actualization of the universal spirit*" (Hegel 1991: 372). World history, for Hegel, progresses according to the necessary internal telos of the Spirit; its beginning point is the east or Asia, but "Europe is the absolute end of history… World history imposes a discipline on the unrestrained natural will, guiding it towards universality and subjective freedom" (Hegel 1975: 197). Europe is the fullness of history and universality. More precisely, the task of achieving the "reconciliation of the objective truth and freedom" is "assigned to the Nordic principle of the *Germanic peoples*" (Hegel 1991: 379). Hegel realized that philosophy arose from its times, and if a philosopher's theory transcended her time, he warned, it has existence only within her opinion and imagination (1991: 21–22). And thus, Hegel's magnificent attempt to purge historicism of relativism fell prey "to the very ethnocentrism from which historicism should liberate us" (Beiser 1993: 287).

At the close of the nineteenth century, there were at least two tentative positions in the German philosophical scene regarding the new sense of history that contested the certainty and centrality of the disengaged knower, beginning with Herder and others. Both these formed the background of Martin Heidegger's excurses into the historicality (*Geschichtlichkeit*) of the human being and the history of Being as such. (i) Dilthey's axiomatic position that the subject matter of the human sciences could not be understood from the methodological perspective of the natural sciences. His ambition was to specify the categories for understanding the human world as Kant did for understanding the natural world. But Dilthey came to realize the open-endedness and hermeneutic nature of this project at the twilight of his long career with the realization that the categories for understanding the human

---

[3] Hegel's own characterization of the subject is: "… absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'. It is in self-consciousness, in the Notion of Spirit, that consciousness first finds its turning-point, where it leaves behind it the colourful show of the sensuous here-and-now and the nightlike void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present" (1977: 110–111).

world were not universal and unchanging as the Kantian categories of understanding the natural world were. "The method is", Dilthey writes, "always to create concepts that exhibit the distinctive nature of the times… If such concepts encompass the totality of an age, we call them historical categories" (2002: 306). Dilthey accepted the embeddedness of the subject in history and the difficulty of objective (scientific) knowledge in the human sciences, though he continued to try to overcome relativism without falling into the Hegelian trap. With Dilthey, we have the hermeneutical turn within the historical turn. (ii) Nietzsche, who derided metaphysics as the mummification of concepts (see epigraph to this chapter), understood the historical turn itself as frozen and ahistorical. His call was to focus on history for the sake of life and action rather than for lifelessly scrutinizing, freezing and idealizing life itself. As the champion of life and vigour, Nietzsche noticed that "it is possible to value the study of history to such a degree that life becomes stunted and degenerate" (1997: 59) under the principle "let truth prevail though life perish". What Nietzsche objects to is the objectification of history, which is nothing but what Heidegger later diagnoses as "ontotheology" hidden in the history of Western metaphysics and intellectual culture in general, and which, paradoxically, says Heidegger, is fulfilled in Nietzsche's own glorification of the will (see NW).

For Heidegger's notion of historicality in *Being and Time*, Dilthey was the prime source. Although he observes that Dilthey's understanding of the phenomenon of history was not ontologically determined, he appreciated Dilthey's attempt to understand life and history philosophically from a hermeneutical basis (BT: 450). His appropriation of Dilthey, therefore, centres on that very insight: "[t]he question of historicality is an *ontological* question about the state of Being of historical entities" (BT: 455). On the other hand, Heidegger's appropriation of Nietzsche in his exposition of the history of Being relates Nietzsche not only as the greatest critic of metaphysics, but also as its last great exponent. For Heidegger, Nietzsche, as it were, marks the culmination and the end of Western metaphysics—for "[t]he man whose essence is… the will to power is the overman" and the essence of the willing being and what is willed "correspond to the will to power as the *Being* of beings" (NW: 188). According to this understanding of Being, the human being finds herself "placed … before the task of undertaking mastery of the earth" (NW: 188). In Heidegger's terms, Nietzsche's diagnosis is correct, but his solution is symptomatic of the decadence of metaphysical thinking he himself diagnosed: "Nietzsche… heard a calling that demands that human beings prepare for assuming domination over the earth" (QB: 321). Heidegger's single-minded concern is:

> Man is about to hurl himself upon the entire earth and its atmosphere, to arrogate to himself the hidden working of nature in the form of energy, and to subordinate the course of history to the plans and orderings of a world government.… The totality of beings is the single object of a singular will to conquer (AS: 280–81).

According to Heidegger, Nietzsche's questioning was a responsive reception of the decadent modern understanding of Being wherein a particular history of Being (the Western) is objectified and is set up as the dominant model for the domination of all beings.

Heidegger's own response to historicism is set forth well within his ontology. He began his enquiries in an absolutely abstract strain by asking the quintessential philosophical question: why are there beings at all and why not rather nothing? But he related this question to the essence of the human being, her milieu and history. Like no other philosopher before, Heidegger delved into the whole intellectual history of the West and began to narrate a thoroughly disenchanting but thoughtful and erudite philosophical history of modernity, to which, I think, all the European intellectual currents since then owe their debt. Let me now briefly locate Heidegger's response to historicism within the context of his philosophy.

Being for Heidegger, as we have noted in the last chapter, does not mean the existent or the entity but the manner or way its presence or actuality unfolds, and the background understanding/intelligibility that allows human beings, the only being that is concerned with the question of Being, to understand them as such and such. Still clarifying the meaning of Being in 1955, nearly three decades after *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that "[p]resencing ('Being') is … [a call] directed toward the human essence … [which is] a hearing", and so there is a remarkable "belonging together of call and hearing" (QB: 308–9). In short, if Being is the presencing of all that is to the being that is open towards what is thus presenced, that being, the human being, is an ongoing field of play where Being's presencing is responded to by way of language. Such is the Heideggerian characterization of the essence of the human being: the openness-for-Being. In *Being and Time*, he enquires into the Being of the ontologically exceptional human being and clarifies its Being at least in two important respects: (i) that *to be* a human being means to take issue with (or *care* about) its own Being and about the Being of all that matters to it and (ii) that *to be* a human being means also to be *temporally* structured, and hence, finite. The care structure is itself temporally structured.[4]

These two ways of characterizing the human being mean at once that the primordial way of our Being-in-the-world is not disengaged and detached, neutral and objective, but engaged and hermeneutically structured. Our experiences can be made intelligible only if we place them in their larger context of meaning, which Heidegger calls "world". World is the horizon or background, upon which foregrounded things make sense, shine in their light, and present themselves. World is the referential context of significance, the openness wherein beings appear. World is the space for the manifestation of Being, the intelligibility structure

---

[4] My interchangeable use of the terms 'Dasein' and 'human being' calls for caution. In fact, Dasein is not a characteristic of or a synonym for the human being, but is the designation for 'where' the relation between human being and Being happens, and so Dasein is the individual human being as much as the historical people and the understanding of Being that dwells within the clearing provided by her/ him/ them. In all cases of the interchangeable usage, this clarification should be borne in mind. The only justification for this usage is Heidegger's insistence that the human being *alone* can provide the openness for Being: "For it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence" (PI: 31). The human being is Dasein only in as much as she/he takes issue with Being and is the openness for Being's presencing. Thanks to Robert Scharff for raising the issue in an email conversation.

that discloses or frees entities in their Being. As individual humans, we, with our exceptional ontological status, stand out into this openness, which, on the other hand, is not there at all without the human community. Kevin Aho puts it in the following way:

> Existence, of course, is not to be understood in the traditional sense, in terms of static, objective 'presence' (*Anwesenheit*). Existence is the dynamic temporal 'movement' (*Bewegung*) or 'happening' (*Geschehen*) of an understanding of Being that unfolds in a concrete historical world. *Dasein* is *this happening of understanding, and existence refers to the unique way that a human being understands or interprets his or her life within a shared, sociohistorical context* (2009: 13; my emphasis).

World is not detached from us, and that is why as openness-for-Being our Being is understood as Being-in-the-world. We are as much in the world as the world is in us. Heidegger's deliberate aim is to discredit Cartesian dualism and show that the inside–outside distinction of our relationship with the world is illicit. What we listen to first-hand is not the sound of so many decibels, but to the melodious call of a cuckoo, the quiet gurgling of a stream or the annoying creaking of a door. These sounds make sense to us because they form meaning-invested aspects of our world. It is secondarily that we can think of the scientific aspects of these sounds. We experience phenomena *as* something (a particular sound *as* that of the cuckoo) *from* (as part of) our "world". Without the background of the world, the sound cannot be interpreted as that of the cuckoo. Hence, for Heidegger, the engaged aspect of experience is temporally prior to the disengaged aspect, and the former is the "condition of" the latter, which might modify the more primordial aspect of experience (Taylor 2006: 218).

This means that all our understandings of phenomena are ontologically caught up within a circular hermeneutic structure as our understanding of the part and the whole of a text are inextricably intertwined. We cannot understand ourselves except through the world as the background of our understanding of our intimate self, and we cannot understand the world except through some reference to our ceaseless self-interpretations. A piece of ourselves is always there in all that we know, and a piece of all that we engage with, all that matters to us, the world, is always there in the way we understand ourselves (See BT: Sects. 7C and 32). Our self-understanding and way of existence somehow spill over into our understanding of the world and destabilizes its supposed neutrality, while our self-understanding is already coloured by the world wherein we are situated. The Heideggerian discovery that the human phenomenon is ontologically already within a hermeneutic circle is the fundamental insight behind the modern hermeneutics of Gadamer and Ricoeur, an insight which has also dealt a substantial blow to the disengaged perspective at least within the human sciences.

According to the central thesis of *Being and Time*, the revealing of the Being of phenomena to the human being unfolds as a temporal experience in an integral sense. In each case of our engaged, worldly experience, whether it be of our own being or of the being of another entity, we project ourselves towards that experience in terms of a background (pastness) from where this experience now (presentness) stands out towards its further possibilities (futurity). The temporal

structure of the experience of Being means that the ontological entity, the human being, uniquely exists as a temporalizing activity (Mulhall 2005: 161), and this existential temporality is finite because "the future itself is closed to one" (BT: 379) in one's temporal understanding of death as the most certain yet indefinite possibility. So, the project of *Being and Time* is summarized at the beginning of the book in this way: "*time* needs to be *explicated primordially as the horizon for the understanding of Being, and in terms of temporality as the Being of Dasein*, which understands Being" (BT: 39).

Only when the temporal structure of the human being as it "stretches along between birth and death" is grasped, Heidegger thinks, we can have an appropriate understanding of the phenomenon of historicality. What is historical is not an ancient script or the remnants of a lost civilization; what is historical is the human being herself. A script appears to us in its historical significance not because it is damaged or antique but because the world wherein the script was handy has now come alive with our encountering it in its significance for us. If a philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of history is trying to grapple with the objectivity of history in terms of the science of history or historiology, we miss the historicality of the human being that makes a scientific understanding of history possible. Heidegger's contention is that history can become the object of a science only because of human temporality and historicality. Further, as for the existential characteristic of historicality, it allows the human being to authentically arrive at "a possibility which it has inherited and yet has chosen" (BT: 435). From within the heritage that is handed down to an individual, she chooses her own "fate" and, as a communal being, a being with others, she cochooses it with others from the "destiny" of her community. In this, writes Piotr Hoffman, an individual is "using up [her] own time, the time allotted or apportioned to [her]", and Heidegger here is "accounting for the specifically dynamical aspects of human temporalizing" (Hoffman 2005: 330).

Historicality is the happening of Dasein, its stretching between birth and death, always in terms of its past, but a past appropriated for its "now", in terms of its future. Heidegger introduces the term "historicality" in the following way in § 6 of *Being and Time*:

> 'Historicality' stands for the state of Being that is constitutive for Dasein's 'historizing' as such; only on the basis of such 'historizing' is anything like 'world-history' possible… Dasein 'is' its past in the way of *its* own Being, which, to put it roughly, 'historizes' out of its future on each occasion. Whatever the way of being it may have at the time… Dasein has grown up both *into* and *in* a traditional way of interpreting itself… By this understanding, the possibilities of its Being are disclosed and regulated. Its own past—and this always means the past of its 'generation'—is not something which *follows along after* Dasein, but something which already goes ahead of it (BT: 41).

The human being's stretching itself from birth on the basis of the tradition into which it has grown, its historizing, is constitutive for it. Any human being always exists in this way. However, this does not mean we are determined by our past; our pre-reflective being-in-the-tradition is always appropriated by us in terms of the future, and so we historize out of our future. Possibilities are not fully limited

by history, and history itself is invested with meaning by the possibilities of being. But the horizon for the understanding of possibilities is more or less delimited by tradition and history, whether positively or negatively. It is because we are historical constitutively that we can make history and write it.

From the earliest phase of his thinking (the phase that culminated in *Being and Time*) to the last seminars, Heidegger was always grappling with his own particular way of participating in the historical revolution underway in Germany for over a century. He strove to distance himself from idealizing historical developments in the Hegelian fashion in the realization that there are certain uniquely particular elements in history, whether of the individual or of the community, unfolding within the handed-down heritage. This is the unpredictable destiny of a historical people. The various strains of historical processes arise from the temporal–historical ontological structure of the human being, her concern regarding inheriting and yet making history. *The grave danger of idealizing particular historicizations is one of the concerns that Heidegger addresses in his later notion of the history of Being.* The later Heidegger tones down his early concern with voluntaristic "making history" but looks at history as the revealing–concealing play of Being to which historical peoples respond. Historical disclosures of Being are received by us and are not clever human contrivances. History in this sense is conspicuous in its lack of human-effected rational design. The willful human takeover of history (in the way he hoped the national socialists would help humanity "achieve an adequate relationship to the essence of technology" [GS: 111] in 1933), and *Being and Time*'s transcendental ontology of historicality as such are abandoned in the later writings in favour of the history of Being (the elucidation of the sense in which Being as such is historical) and, more concretely, how the history of Being is manifested through the Western intellectual culture, beginning with the pre-Socratics to his own times. As many commentators have argued, Heidegger's celebrated turn (*Kehre*) also inaugurates a change in the storyline, a change from the story of the human being (*Dasein*) to the story of Being as such. I will trace this latter story later in this chapter when I attempt to place developmentalism within the Western history of Being—a story which is still unfolding as the most seductive account of planetary domination. But before coming to that, let me embark on a clarification on the ahistorical nature of the mainstream development narrative.

2.2 The Ahistorical Development Narrative

I have been arguing that the dominant notion of the disengaged model of the knower came under challenge in European philosophy since the late eighteenth century, and this challenge led to a general historical revolution in European humanities. My aim has been to show how Heidegger decisively got into this debate and provided an ontohermeneutic view of human historicality. Even without his later notion of the history of Being, the message is already clear: there is no presuppositionless way of understanding the world. It is impossible to begin

without a set of presuppositions built into the background of our knowing as long as we are the kind of beings we are. The later Heidegger would focus considerably on laying bare the ontohistorical background of the intellectual history of the West without lazily resigning to accept as self-evident the mainstream model of Western history as universal rather than cultural/historical.

I will now focus on the disengaged, ahistorical notion of development. This discussion will be united in the next section with Heidegger's "destruktion" of the planetary domination of Western metaphysics from the perspective of the ontotheological essence of technology. Here, I look at development simply as the giant process of modernization, but in so doing I am not, as clarified in the last chapter, speaking specifically in terms of the sociological theory of development as modernization, though there is much convergence between modernization theory and my exposition here. Rather, modernization is spoken of here as "social imaginary" in Charles Taylor's sense, to which also I have made reference in the last chapter—"that largely unstructured and inarticulate understanding of our whole situation, within which particular features of our world show up for us in the sense they have" (2004: 25). Social imaginary is nothing but the Heideggerian understanding of Being in the sense of the broad, not fully articulable intelligibility structure. Without the background imaginary of the modern, what is going on in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres in countries like India cannot be made sense of. Looking at India, not as if wearing a neutral pair of theoretical glasses but as if the force of the phenomenological event before one's eyes were undeniable, one gets to see the several well-entrenched institutional and cultural forms of modernity without which one cannot make sense of Indian realities any more. Unlike in the global north, modernization as a social imaginary does not make sense in the south as "achieved modernity" but as the eager "development" towards it. The labour pains of still unfolding modernity are borne cheerfully and expectantly on account of the perfect and transhistorical value attached to it by its present pursuers in the non-West. Partha Chatterjee discusses the shock experienced by elite Bengali Hindus when public meetings were called for the first time to condole the death of eminent persons in colonial Bengal in opposition to the traditional manner of grieving in seclusion (Chatterjee 2001: 166). Both the shock and the later acceptance of the new practice cannot be understood without reference to the change in social imaginary, in fact a new understanding of Being.

Before coming to "the ahistorical development narrative" per se, allow me to make a brief remark concerning modern scientific discourse and the alternative approach to it that emerged in the human sciences. The modern scientific worldview is the grandest and the most ideal ahistorical narrative in history. Even what is antithetical to its ground plan is sucked into its orbit and is legitimized as determined by it. The valorization of the scientific method since the seventeenth century and its unprecedented success paved the way for normalizing ahistorical discourses. However, underlying the most basic division of phenomena into natural and human in the modern approach to the study of them is a grave difficulty: human phenomena studied by human sciences do not lend themselves to isolation and testing in protected environments as biology could do with its phenomena and they cannot be

fitted into predictable frames of reference as physics could do with its phenomena. While the phenomena of biology and physics do not resist scientific activity, the unique phenomena of the human sciences do speak up for themselves and resist the objectifying act of science. More importantly, without a deep insight into the self-understanding, context, culture and history of these phenomena, nothing could be usefully generalized about them. The mainstream ahistorical methodologies encounter the challenging idiosyncrasy of the human phenomena by dehistoricizing and freezing them in accordance with the accepted ground plan of the natural sciences.

On the other hand, a more authentic approach to the human phenomena, which attempts to encounter them in their uniqueness, will look at their inseparability from context and history as their definitive possibility. "The inexactness of the historical human sciences", insists Heidegger,

> … is not a deficiency but rather the fulfillment of an essential requirement of the type of research. It is true, also, that the projecting and the securing of the domain of objects is, in the historical sciences, not only different, but far more difficult to achieve than is the rigor of the exact sciences (AWP: 60).

One of the consequences of the historicality of the human phenomenon is that the researcher somehow carries her own history and self-understanding into the interpretive study of the human/social phenomena, and hence arises the logical question of the vicious circle—the problem of the inseparability of the stance of the interpreter from the interpretation. According to the common sense of the modern scientific age, the ideal way of dealing with the viciousness of the circle is to avoid it altogether and produce knowledge of human phenomena "as independent[ly] of the standpoint of the observer as our knowledge of Nature is supposed to be" (BT: 194). For Heidegger, the mainstream approach is a misunderstanding of the phenomena under study, and the more authentic way of dealing with such phenomena is to relinquish the vain seeking to be included within "the realm of exact knowledge" of the kind pursued in the natural sciences. Therefore, the job of the student of human phenomena is, rather, to be well within the circle, and understand that one's "first, last, and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception [the pre-given structures that make understanding possible] to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves" (BT: 195; my gloss). The ahistorical approach plays into the hands of what Heidegger warns as the misunderstanding: in wanting to be rigorous, human sciences are haunted by their supposed inadequacy of not being a science and in their eagerness to be like the natural sciences they abandon their hermeneutical, historical and contingent nature. For this reason, Heidegger asserts that "[p]hilosophy can never be measured by the standard of the idea of science" (1998b: 96).

Among the human sciences, economics is probably the most exact. But, as Charles Taylor argues, economics has been able to develop to its present degree of exactness because modern culture prepared the conditions for human beings to behave predictably in terms of certain "calculable considerations of instrumental rationality". "Economics can aspire to the status of a science, and sometimes

appear to approach it, because there has developed a culture in which a certain form of rationality is a (if not the) dominant value" (Taylor 1985: 103). A historical view of economics should take into account this development of culture, which made its disciplinary matrix possible, and which could, in future, with a different cultural development, make possible a different ground plan for economics.

Coming to the ahistorical development narrative, when a historical process that ran its course in a specific historical context is separated from its history and context, theorized as an abstract ideal and projected upon a completely different historical context as the teleological end point of that context, we say that a historical process is understood and applied ahistorically. When numerical notions like the dollar-a-day definition of poverty are used across contexts to decide who is poor, we say that what should be a contextual use of a numerical notion is employed ahistorically. When we are speaking about social, political, economic or cultural processes, we are actually speaking about processes that are strongly embedded in historical settings. When such notions are disentangled from their historical roots and projected as paradigms for people of other historical and cultural settings, suspicion is cast on this process of "deworlding" ideas for the consumption of others. The word "ahistorical" is usually used with a negative connotation because ahistorical narratives, among other things, damage the sense of identity and history of a people, sometimes irreparably as in the case of colonial experience, on account of the passive consumption of imposed conceptions of the real and the good.

While according to the mainstream account, modernity is the teleological goal of universal humanity, the alternative account acknowledges that European modernity is a historical–cultural phenomenon. But if a certain transcendental teleology of the ideal progress of history like Hegel's spiritual processes or Marx's material processes animates the historical account of modernity, such accounts encounter history as the objective, scientific unfolding of spiritual or material forces, and the locale of that unfolding, the geopolitical entity called "the West", as the universally repeatable field of true history. In such historical accounts, erroneous history is that history which deviates from Western history, which alone is the ground that fulfils the conditions for the self-realization of the spiritual or material forces (see Anderson 2010; Tibebu 2010). The ethnocentrism of such historical accounts is evident because Hegel and Marx explicitly trace in a universalistic format something historical and cultural, camouflaged as ahistorical and universal, as in typical ahistorical accounts of modernity.

For Charles Taylor, historical and ahistorical accounts give us two divergent theories of modernity with different but far-reaching consequences. The first considers modernity as a cultural process that the broad Atlantic world underwent at a particular point in history, producing a particular civilization as distinct from the African, Chinese, Indian and its own medieval civilization. The second theory looks at modernity, rather, as a culture-neutral developmental process, an ahistorical movement from traditional to modern society, "a set of transformations that any and every culture can go through—and that all will probably be *forced to undergo*" (Taylor 1995: 24; my emphasis). According to the latter account, non-Western societies should also be made to undergo the several supposedly neutral

processes that Western society underwent during the modern period like seculari-zation of its religion, rationalization of its ends of life, and the split between fact and value in its metaphysics. The latter being the mainstream view, a zealous civi-lizing mission has been underway in the global south for the sake of its "normali-zation". The historical trajectory of this view of modernity has often been coercive and violent because not conforming to the universal ideal of social development is considered abnormal and savage. In a historical conception of modernity, on the other hand, social changes occur as responses to reality, not as impositions. Cultural worlds are not sealed off to the outside; they open up to alien worlds in the ebb and flow of life and make history happen as a form of culture, learning and cultivation. Ahistorical modernization ideal, by veiling the historical details of the rise and flourish of Western modernity, denied the status of a different civilization to non-Western cultures. Rather, they become civilizations only when they become indistinguishable from Western modernity.

M.K. Gandhi's 1909 attack on Western modernity in the anti-colonial pamphlet *Hind Swaraj* should be read as an attack on the ahistorical account of modernity and its imperialist consequences. The Gandhian critique gains in clarity today as the narrative of modernity in its most common transhistorical avatar undervalues the non-materialistic aspects of traditional Indian life by the systematic valoriza-tion ofinstrumental rationality , undergirded by the moral narrative of reforming India's caste-ridden social structure and the elimination of poverty and want. For Gandhi, a civilization that privileges competition, material well-being and irreli-gion is no civilization at all (1960, Vol. 10: 20–21). Though there is a contem-porary yearning for the Gandhian alternative of a less resource-intensive mode of living in the face of the devastation of the earth, that alternative has disappeared as a viable possibility from the modern cultural horizon. It is this casting a shadow on what was visible as a possibility in a different cultural or epochal horizon that the ahistorical account of modernity achieves. As Ashis Nandy contends, the ahis-torical developmental framework once "institutionalized in a society… becomes nearly impossible to exorcise… [because it] has become an identifiable way of life that must, by its very nature, help other ways of life incompatible with it to die a natural or unnatural death" (1994: 15). Today, development (in the sense of moving towards Western modernity) is the background social imaginary for understanding society in the global south, despite theoretical debates concern-ing the postdevelopment era. Secularization, yet another transhistorical ideal of modernity, probably brings the greatest difficulty to deeply religious societies like India, so that Nandy could say that "the major threats to religious tolerance now come from the modern sector in India" (1995: 63). To think of development as a complex but politically innocent process would be to naïvely forget that "[t]he modern world, including the modernized Third World, is built on the suffering and brutalization of millions" (1989: 269).

By denying legitimacy to non-modern conceptions of good life, ahistorical accounts of development deny historical agency to people of the global south. They are ahistorically constructed as weak, child subjects, devoid of power, agency, knowledge and skills, and unable to meet their basic needs, awaiting

strong, adult Western subjects for redemption. Arturo Escobar considers such a picture as an ahistorical homogenization of non-Western peoples, which makes sense only from the ahistorical Western perspective, and thus "is more a sign of power over the Third World than a truth about it" (1995: 9). The story of development, according to Escobar, is all about growth, capital, technology and modernization (1995: 162), and so he considers it important to study "Western modernity as a culturally and historically specific phenomenon" and he calls such a study "the anthropology of modernity" or "rendering 'exotic' the West's cultural products in order to see them for what they are" (1995: 11). His project, hence, is to shed light on the historical peculiarities of the most taken-for-granted universals of modernity and show how these apparently unchallenged truths of modern civilization originated as Western social practices. Escobar historicizes development just as Karl Polanyi historicized the Western market society (see Polanyi 2001).

However, the linear narrative of ahistorical development denies civilizational status not only to a different cultural setting, but in its eagerness to valorize contemporary cultural achievement, the ahistorical view of Western modernity looks at its own moral–cultural history as invalid, dark and savage. As the ahistorical account of modernity violently encounters other cultures, it violates the ethos of its own genesis as well. Historical and cultural ideals are detached from their moral moorings, and erstwhile ways of life and cultural values are held to be necessarily overcome and therefore false. The new cultural ideals like science, individualism, negative freedom and instrumental rationality are valued merely for their utilities with little regard for the positive vision of the good out of which they emerged. This view of things, in the words of Taylor, "screens out whatever there might be of a specific moral direction to Western modernity" (1995: 26). Cultural dynamism is, thus, denied, and a particular achievement of a particular history is held secure in its permanent presence.

To speak concretely and historically, the development discourse with its particular modalities of ahistorical representation began with the post-war outreach programme of the United States, one of the two new centres of world power, and precisely with the goal of exporting Western technological know-how and worldview to the global south. Postdevelopment thinkers consider the age of development as "that particular historical period which began on 20 January 1949, when Harry S. Truman for the first time declared, in his inauguration speech, the Southern hemisphere as 'underdeveloped areas'" (Sachs 2010a: xvi). For these thinkers, the picture or representation of "underdevelopment" that Truman constructed on that day has since remained intact, and the new era of moralistic imperialism without emperors or developmentalism was thus born. Truman's vision and promise are unequivocally technological. The context of his inaugural speech is the beginning of cold war and America's championing of democratic capitalism in the face of the communist challenge. He proposed four American courses of action: (i) supporting the United Nations, (ii) aiding post-war European economic recovery, (iii) strengthening the north Atlantic region against communist aggression and (iv) embarking "on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement

and growth of underdeveloped areas" (Truman 2010: 306). Believing the global south to be entrapped in misery and its misery to be a threat to itself and prosperous regions like America, Truman proposes that already achieved American technological advancement can relieve human misery completely. Only American material resources are limited; her "imponderable resources in technical knowledge are… inexhaustible". Hence, the concrete proposal is about technology transfer and capital investment by developed countries in underdeveloped regions. Truman's slogan is "peace, plenty, and freedom". What he advocates is the expansion of American trade to the remotest corners of the globe with the curious promise that this expansion is not for profiteering and exploitation but for "development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing". Truman's doctrine also holds in embryo the idea of economic and technological globalization, for he thinks that complete exploitation of resources, increasing trade and greater production will expand American business itself. The ahistorical dimensions of Truman's developmentalism are thus evident. He takes achieved American technological modernity as the neutral, repeatable phenomenon in every type of context anywhere in the world. Truman's developmentalism is in fact about socializing the global south in the technological understanding of Being.

The ahistoricity of developmentalism is today widely acknowledged after about three decades of sustained critique. There are several types of response to this critique today. The mainstream response ignores it and carries on with developmentalism unhindered, mainly through the international agencies of the UN, the IMF and the World Bank, and through the planned programmes of eager national governments. A subtle change noticeable is the self-consciously moralistic and sensitive development idiom, which, however, places all its moral weight on a global neoliberal economic order (see Sachs 2005). A few other advocates of development argue from the perspective of a very critical account of global justice (see Pogge 2008), and still others from that of development ethics (see Goulet 1973 and Crocker 2008). Sometimes, it is argued that the ahistorical development narrative not only constructed "the third world" but also "the West", without adequate basis in historical reality (Pieterse 2010: 29). By deconstructing the historical constructions of the West and the third world, and in certain respects negating these constructions by recourse to pluralities inherent in processes like modernization and globalization, in such accounts, the developmental project is salvaged as "a participatory, popular reflexivity", a deliberative development, anchored in "people's subjectivity" (Pieterse 1998: 369; emphasis removed). According to a fourth and most radical critique of the ahistoricity of development, the epoch of development in the post-war era "is coming to an end. The time is ripe to write its obituary" (Sachs 2010a: xv). This postdevelopment account rejects both the notion of development and globalism, for "[t]he conception of achieving 'one world' by stimulating progress everywhere… inevitably calls for absorbing the differences in the world into an ahistorical and delocalized universalism of European origin. The unity of the world is realized through its Westernization" (Sachs Sachs 2010b: 114). The suggested blueprint in this account is to delink desire for equality and better life from economic growth and relink it with cultural and communitarian notions of well-being.

Even after these decades of rethinking and critique, deconstructions and reconstructions, and despite what Escobar records as "local versions of development and modernity… formulated according to complex processes that include traditional cultural practices, histories of colonialism, and contemporary location within the global economy of goods and symbols" (1995: 13), contemporary consciousness in the global south is still and more than ever unable to divorce itself from Western modernity and its reproduction as development. It is in order to understand the seductive and at the same time dominative hegemony of the ahistorical developmental narrative that I now turn to Heidegger's ontotheological account of the Western history of Being.

2.3 Developmentalism, Ontotheology and the History of Being

Richard Rorty accurately observes a profound tension in Heidegger's early understanding of the historical nature of ontology. In 1927, Heidegger said in a lecture course: "Philosophy can and must define what in general constitutes the structure of a world-view. But it can never develop and posit some specific world-view qua just this or that particular one" (BPP: 10). Rorty asks in this connection how philosophy can step out of all histories and worldviews and formulate the pure, ahistorical structure of all worldviews—indeed of the historicality of the human being as such—if we are radically historical beings. Heidegger "never explains", complains Rorty, "how we could possibly do more than create a new, historically situated, final vocabulary in the course of reacting against the one we found in place" (1991: 42). For Rorty, the criterion for resolving the indecisiveness in the early and later Heidegger about the radical historicity of our understanding of Being is "contingency". The more an understanding of Being "makes it easier to grasp its own contingency" (Rorty 1991: 43), the more primordial it is. Something like the technological understanding of Being does not do so; therefore, it stands for the abandonment of beings by Being and ahistorical, violent and at the same time seductive planetary domination. In the Rortian formulation, philosophy is the clarification of historically and culturally situated final vocabularies, and hence, it can never claim independence from worldview. Western ontology is one ontology among many with no claim to being the transcendental judge of other ontologies. This means that the historicizing of philosophy is complete and the philosophy of historicizing would leave us with an important, radical and yet contingent and historical piece of philosophical knowledge: *all philosophies and knowledge are radically historical in their genesis, nature and significance*. Philosophy itself and the sciences it has given rise to are historically contingent.

How should we take Rorty's claim about Heidegger's approach to history? Does early Heidegger think that Being as such is historical? Do we understand Being—"that on the basis of which entities are already understood"—and the being of different entities differently in different historical epochs? If yes, doesn't a profound

relativism ensue from such a position? The early Heidegger's hermeneutical under-standing of Being does give hints towards this direction, for in *Being and Time* we are told that the understanding of Being unfolds against the background of the her-meneutical context of a world so that there is "never a presuppositionless apprehend-ing of something presented to us" (BT: 191-2). Lafont (2005: 282) argues that such a view already leads to the claim that "there is no absolute truth across incommensura-ble understandings of Being". An understanding of Being is neither a subjective rep-resentation nor a product of the natural biology of the brain, but results from our non-representative, non-naturalistic reception of and attunement to tradition. Every person's understanding of Being is determined by his or her tradition or world, but it is the very structure of the person to be always already engrossed in an understand-ing of Being. Our cognition and its validation are based upon our pre-cognitive understandings of Being. However, the early Heidegger is not relativistic if we con-sider that he underscores the possibility of universal knowledge of a scientific vari-ety, which he considers a "founded mode" of our pre-scientific understanding of Being (BT: § 13). But it is to be stressed that modern science's claim to universality is itself based on the understanding of Being that came to be entrenched in Europe since the seventeenth century,[5] which is now in its dominating planetary trail.

By the 1940s, Heidegger began to think that his "destruktion" of the history of ontology in *Being and Time* was not radical enough. The primordial essence of Being, which in Rorty's words is nothing but the sense of Being's historical con-tingency, Heidegger notes, is mired under "a pile of distortions", under layers of centuries of metaphysical thinking in the West. "Destruktion" carried out in *Being and Time*, he declares, "has not yet been thought in terms of the history of Being" (MHB: 15). Hence, the ambitious attempt to provide a fundamental ontology for all sciences in *Being and Time* (which could, for example, state in general terms that "all Daseins everywhere and at all times are historical", a proposition that could ontologically ground the science of history itself) is abandoned by the later Heidegger.[6] In *Being and Time*, fundamental ontology is transhistorical, and so, as

---

[5] One way of responding to the 'Heidegger and relativism' debate is to say that Heidegger never saw the problem in this light at all. That is, he engaged with questions concerning realism and idealism or relativism and non-relativism only to show that such epistemologically driven questions arise from an inadequate understanding of the ontology of Dasein (BT: 205; see also Scharff 1992). While this recognition is important and primary, I think it is necessary also to 'face' the ontological limits of our cognition and knowledge.

[6] In *Being and Time* Heidegger notes that "[p]hilosophy is universal phenomenological ontology, and takes its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, which, as an analytic of *existence,* has made fast the guiding-line for all philosophical inquiry…" (BT: 62). Accordingly, philosophy's task in relation to the sciences is "ascertaining the a priori conditions not only for the possibil-ity of the sciences which examine entities as entities of such and such a type, and, in so doing, already operate with an understanding of Being, but also for the possibility of those ontologies themselves which are prior to the ontical sciences and which provide their foundations" (BT: 31). That is: the task of philosophy in relation to the sciences is to clarify the fundamental ontology or the ontological structures of Dasein which makes possible the ontologies of the various sciences. And so the task of philosophy in relation to the science of history is to clarify "authentically his-torical entities as regards their historicality" (BT: 31).

Ian Thomson aptly notes, the real difference in the later Heidegger is the hard-won recognition that "being has a history… the fact that humanity's most fundamental sense of reality changes with time" (2005: 114, n. 76). Thomson adds that by the term "historicity" most of us mean this changing sense of reality.

The later Heidegger's reluctance to continue with fundamental ontology, I think, meant that he came to abandon the spirit of the ahistorical transcendental philosophy of *Being and Time*. In that work, it is acknowledged that "inquiring into the meaning of Being in general" or the meaning of existentiality (in short, the Being of Dasein, the ontico-ontological horizon for the meaning of Being) "is itself characterized by historicality" (BT: 42). However, it is not made clear whether "transcendental phenomenology" is itself historical and therefore contingent. Rather, we get the feeling while reading the text that transcendental phenomenology is transhistorical and absolute.[7] Rejecting this view, Heidegger maintained in 1962 that we can only try in vain to interpret the event of Being's occurrence in terms of the historicality of the human being because what is historical is Being as such. Hence, he insists, the only way to think Being "from the perspective of *Being and Time* is to think through what was presented in *Being and Time* about the dismantling of the ontological doctrine of the Being of beings" (TB: 9). In fact, rather than rejecting the transcendental phenomenology of *Being and Time,* Heidegger tries to place it within the history of Being. If Being is itself historical, any theory of the structure of the coming to presence of Being or general intelligibility is a contingently mediated and historical theory. Hence, more significant than theorizing on the structure of the coming to presence of Being is laying bare the history of various epochal understandings of Being.

But the understanding of Being is never fully articulable and never doubtlessly evident. Being is ontically closest to us and ontologically farthest. Hence, the question of Being cannot gain from a naturalistic/scientific answer. *Being and Time* begins with the argument that we always already have an average and inarticulate understanding of Being, and the enquiry into Being is based on this indefinite understanding. Ontological investigation implies making out "what this obscured or still unillumined understanding of Being means, and what kinds of obscuration—or hindrance to an explicit illumination—of the meaning of Being are possible and *even inevitable*" (BT: 25; my emphasis). A certain obscuration is inevitable in any attempt to articulate the inarticulate understanding of Being. Hence, philosophy as the articulation of the inarticulate understanding of Being accepts "this ambiguity which is a positive characteristic of metaphysics" (FCM: 10), and so "[n]o knower necessarily stands so close to the verge of error at every moment as the one who philosophizes" (FCM: 19). Conscious human decision and knowledge, says Heidegger, "is grounded in something that cannot be mastered,

---

[7] Heidegger recognizes this in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) too, when he states that his raising of the question of Being itself is misconstrued as another transcendental question "because *Being and Time* spoke of a 'transcendental horizon' (BT: 63). But the 'transcendental' meant there does not pertain to subjective consciousness; instead, it is determined by the existential-ecstatic temporality of Being-here" (IM: 19–20; my gloss).

something concealed, something disconcerting" (OWA: 31). Being calls for responsive thinking for its foregrounding.

History of Being is the description of the various revealing–concealing plays of Being in different historical epochs and settings. According to Heidegger, each historical age is grounded in a particular metaphysics, an interpretation of beings as a whole or an understanding of Being, which bestows it a certain stability. For Heidegger, the understanding of Being of the metaphysical tradition of the West was always guided by two questions: the ontological question ("what are beings, in general, as beings?") and the theological question ("which being is the highest and in what way is it?"). "That which is the highest being is the ground in the sense of that which allows all beings to come into being" (Heidegger 1998a: 340). Heidegger calls the intimate entwinement of these two questions in the tradition of Western metaphysics by the name "ontotheology". His thesis is that Western metaphysics from Plato to Nietzsche has such a structure. When it postulates a particular being as the ground and justification for all beings, Western metaphysics is thinking ontotheologically. When modern Western philosophy posits subjectivity as the ground of objectivity, it is thinking ontotheologically just as when medieval Western philosophy posited God as the ground of all created beings. An epoch is held together by a more or less comprehensive ontotheology.

Heidegger refers to the original Greek meaning of the word epoch ("to hold back", "to withhold"), in order to emphasize that the revealing of entities within a particular ontotheological epoch also means withholding or concealing its historicity and contingency so that a particular way of looking at reality within a historical epoch receives legitimacy, durability and the stamp of "truth". Withholding takes away the historicity and contingency of the epochal understanding of Being and absolutizes it (Thomson 2005: 20; see TB: 9). Withholding also means that when one understanding of Being holds sway, another withdraws or loses its sway. Each ontotheological epoch could be considered a broad canvass of intelligibility, and so, as Thomson remarks, "the history of intelligibility has taken the form of a series of relatively durable, overlapping historical 'epochs' rather than either a single monolithic understanding of what-is or a formless ontological flux" (2005: 146).[8]

Epochal transformations, unlike the dialectical history of Hegel, are neither within human control nor fully accessible to calculative/rational knowledge. They are neither ideal universal forms for all peoples everywhere to emulate and reproduce, nor are they positive teleological fulfilments of their origin. Gadamer calls Heidegger's philosophy as such "a teleology in reverse" because it is not "the fulfillment of a long prepared development but, rather, a return to the beginnings of Western philosophy and a revival of the long forgotten Greek argument about 'Being'" (Gadamer 2004: 247). This would be true of Western history as well in Heidegger's reading. "The sequence of epochs in the destiny of Being is not accidental", Heidegger reiterates, "nor can it be calculated as necessary… The

---

[8] Thomson explains the concept of 'ontotheology' in considerable detail in the first chapter of *Heidegger on Ontotheology*. For his discussion on the notion of epoch in Heidegger in the book, see: (2005: 19).

epochs overlap each other in their sequence so that the original sending of Being as presence is more and more obscured in different ways" (TB: 9). Epochs are not accidental because there is an inarticulate interpretive line, however vitiated, that powers epochal transformations. History is not predominantly designed by human agents because human agency itself is response to epochal understandings of Being. Historical epochs overlap each other because as a particular epochal understanding of Being holds sway, several others continue in the margins. Heidegger wanted to break away from the objectified, positively teleological history of Hegel. He remarked in a lecture course delivered in 1955–1956:

> [T]he epochs suddenly spring up like sprouts. The epochs can never be derived from one another much less be placed on the track of an ongoing process. Nevertheless, there is a legacy from epoch to epoch. But it does not run between the epochs like a band linking them; rather, the legacy always comes from what is concealed in the *Geschick* [destiny], just as if from one source various streamlets arise that feed a stream that is everywhere and nowhere (PR: 91).

Epochal meaning of Being like "objectness" in the modern period is the condition for the possibility of the appearance of entities as such and such. However, ontological epochs are only the contingent ground or abground of beings because they keep changing through history and culture. The ahistorical, planetary form of the Western understanding of Being, technological modernity, is a particular streamlet arising out of the Platonic source; it is neither ideal nor necessary, and therefore is not the positive, teleological end of history in a Hegelian/Marxian sense; it is a "local" understanding of Being that has an essentially dominant, planetary impetus.

An epoch of Being or history as such can arrive only out of ontological errancy. Errancy means "straying from Being", which is "the essential space of history. In it the historically essential strays past what is like Being" (AS: 254). Without moving away from a dominating understanding of Being, which is errancy, epochal history cannot happen. Without this straying, different ontological epochs, nevertheless connected essentially to the Greek beginning, cannot come to pass. Just as an epoch reveals, so also an epoch conceals. Without concealing or errancy, an epoch cannot found history. "Each time that Being keeps to itself in its destiny, suddenly and unexpectedly, world happens. Every epoch of world-history is an epoch of errancy" (AS: 254).

Heidegger's epochs, we must remember, are not commensurable with the historical periods or eras of scientific history, although we cannot at the same time assert that they have no correspondence whatever with historical periods. Heidegger observes that Western philosophy has always thought about beings in their relation to Being, but tradition has been mute with regard to the truth of Being as such. Hence, thinking about Being, which he wants to reclaim as genuine philosophy from the pre-Socratics, ought to be historical, but for such historical thinking "history is not the sequence of historical periods but a unique proximity of what is the same, which concerns thinking in the incalculable ways of destiny and with variable degrees of immediacy" (NW: 159). The causal and chronological sequences of history are a concern of the science of history and not of epochal, ontological history, for "[w]hen we are historical we are at neither a large nor a

small distance from the Greek. But we are in errancy toward them" (AS: 254). Historical epochs have an underlying thread of synchrony (Being or what is the same, understood as presence since the Greeks) while at the same time also diachrony (beings or incalculable epochal difference in the presencing of beings). While Heidegger's epochs roughly follow the historical periods (Greek, Roman, Christian, early modern, late modern, etc.), they do not stand for the central historical events of the eras but for the understanding of Being revealed during the epoch, on account of which the events of the period could have their grounding and reality. There is also no effort to causally explain their arising.

In 1938, Heidegger made the important claim in *Contributions* that late modern Westerners understood Being in general as essentially "machination" or *Machenschaft*, which is the epochal understanding of the ontotheological meaning of Being. Machination is defined as makeability/producibility or the disclosure of all beings to the human being as producible material and the manipulative power they wield over beings to reduce them to mere material for production (M: 12). In 1949, Heidegger reframed this essential understanding as "enframing" or *Gestell*. Without going any deeper into this claim here (as the next chapter deals with it in detail), it suffices to say borrowing the apt phrase of Julian Young that enframing is "the disclosure of everything as pure resource" (2002: 54). The essence of the technological age is the disclosure of phenomena, their unveiling, as resource.

Now, transforming what is natural into artefact or resource is one of the significant ways in which humans of all ages and places have related to their world, and so we have been technological beings from the start. But in the late modern age, an extreme projection of human will is turning the earth into mere raw material and human beings themselves into human material. This is so, Heidegger claims, because in the technological age, Being as such is disclosed to humans as *resource only*. The essence of technology is the manifestation of Being and human comportment towards beings as resourceful material. "Only in the modern era", Heidegger notes, "does this begin to develop as a destiny of the truth of beings in their entirety; in contrast, until recently its scattered appearances and efforts had been incorporated into the comprehensive realm of culture and civilization" (WP: 217). With technology as the Being and truth of beings as a whole, what comes to be is human "*transition to the technologized animal*, the one that, through the gigantism of technology, is beginning to replace the instincts, which are already becoming weaker and coarser" (CP: 78). With the crucial role played by the Cartesian explanation of truth as certainty, the essence of technology, definitive for the modern era, comes to mean the 'schema of thorough and calculable explainability" (CP: 104).

Heidegger uses the term "technology" (and its essence as enframing) to mean the essential completion and dissolution of Western metaphysics within late modern culture. This essence of technology pervades our understanding of nature, culture, politics and ideology (OM: 93). It is to be noted that *enframing as the essence of the technological epoch is not the universal essence of Being. Rather, it is Being's revealing that pertains to the completion of western metaphysics in the late modern west.*

However, a crucial and massive shift is emerging in the trail of Western metaphysical epochs in the late modern era because in its technological essence, enframing, the late modern Western understanding of Being, is no more merely "Western" but "planetary". At its hour of dissolution, Western metaphysics is at the same time globally diffused. Planetary dissemination of the technological understanding of Being is still incomplete and imperfect but definitively on course. Technological understanding of Being has a capacity for world domination out of its own essence. Western metaphysics at a particular historical juncture switches gears to become the hidden metaphysics of global humanity. Hence, Heidegger observes that the name "technology" "makes it possible for the planetary factor of the completion of metaphysics and its dominance to be thought without reference to historiographically demonstrable changes in nations and continents" (OM: 93). We need to remember, therefore, that the name "technology" is used to capture the very specific and unprecedented trait of planetary imperialism manifested by Western metaphysics in the late modern era as it achieves its own dissolution and conclusion. Heidegger insists that the name "technology" "is understood here in such an essential way that its meaning coincides with the term 'completed metaphysics'" (OM: 93). By concealing the metaphysical heritage from where modern technological understanding sprouts, modern calculative and instrumental rationality becomes the "planetary manner of thinking" (OM: 95).

This development happens in a variety of readily apparent and stealthily hidden ways. In the 1955–1956 lecture course, *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger analyses the force of the principle of sufficient reason in defining the modern age. This principle makes the demand on us "to render sufficient reasons for all cognition" with the consequence that anything can be made sense of anywhere in the world only by the rendition of adequate reasons, which are instrumental in nature. The equating of Being with reason is an aspect of the world domination of Western metaphysics. Erstwhile practices, human comportments and systems in the global south perished as they were weighed against instrumental reason. In the face of the assault against its non-instrumental, incalculable and inarticulate reasons, the global south first fell mute in anxious self-doubt, and then embraced the new and strange order of instrumental reason as the Felix culpa. Hence, the epoch of Being of the late modern West has become a "world-epoch", ruled by the demand to render sufficient reason for what-is. This demand is "the arrangement that places all objects and stuffs in a form for humans that suffices to securely establish human domination over the whole earth and even over what lies beyond this planet" (PR: 124). What is happening in the process is *the becoming "west" of the entire world*; otherwise put, the entire humanity comporting towards what-is in a calculative and technological way. The metaphysical framework of the West is globalized through the homogenizing processes of technology, both in its external forms like the industrial/capitalist society and the modern organizational apparatuses, and in its inner forms like the demand to render reasons for everything, or to measure, forecast and control what-is. According to our epigraph to the last chapter, technology makes it possible for the entire globe to experience Being in the Western fashion through the planetary dissemination of Western metaphysics, and "the

sciences, themselves the offspring of metaphysics" (NW: 159). By the use of the name "technology", Heidegger wants to capture the outward forms of the more or less homogenous global transformations with modernization as well as the inner necessity of the modern civilization to see reality purely as resource for human manipulation. What is to be underlined in this discussion is *the transformation of a local understanding of Being into a planetary one*.

According to Heidegger's interpretation, the concept of *technē* in Aristotle's writings (one of the three forms of human approaches to phenomena with episteme and phronesis) essentially meant a form of "disclosing the unconcealed" (*alētheia* or truth) as it was for the early Greeks. For the Greeks, says Heidegger, *homoiosis* or correspondence meant "the disclosive correspondence expressing the unconcealed", which takes what is revealed for what it is. However, for Heidegger, the future of global humanity's encounter with phenomena in accordance with the ordering of reason and calculation was set up by the Roman assimilation of the Greek concept of *homoiosis* or disclosive correspondence into Latin in terms of *rectitudo* (adjusting one's statement to…) and *adaequatio* (…what is rightly and firmly established and instituted), and the acceptation of this assimilation by Latin Christianity in the early medieval period. This understanding of reason (*ratio*) and truth (*veritas*) has ruled Western intellectual culture and metaphysics ever since, as the Greek understanding of disclosive correspondence gradually faded away. "This determines for the future, as a consequence of a new transformation of the essence of truth, the technological character of modern, i.e. machine, technology" (Heidegger 1992: 50). For Heidegger, both the imperial and the technological character of the modern have the same originating ground: "the essence of truth as correctness in the sense of the directive self-adjusting guarantee of the security of domination" (1992: 50). The security of technological domination arises from the rational, understood as adjusting oneself, indeed people everywhere, in terms of "what is correct", and what is correct is that which is calculable and technologically reducible as resource.

The global sway of Western metaphysics, fulfilled in the technological age with "the farthest corner of the globe… conquered technologically and… exploited economically" (IM: 40), is spoken of in 1935 characteristically as "the darkening of the world, the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the reduction of human beings to a mass, the hatred and mistrust of everything creative and free" (IM: 40). This darkening is said to have engulfed "the whole earth", and people are said to be losing their "last spiritual strength" to understand the decline. The global sway of Western metaphysics is nothing but the self-adjustment of all statements everywhere about beings to Western *ratio* in the technological age. The ontotheological Western history of Being is achieving world domination not only in historical colonialism. Domination of the Western *ratio* in the technological understanding of Being does not leave the world even when the historical West shrinks or even when a China or an India takes the place of England or America. What would rule within non-Western domination of the world would still be Western metaphysics.

This appears to be the story of developmentalism and the sway it enjoys world-wide. Heidegger remarks in a revealing passage from 1962:

> Being as presencing in the sense of calculable material… claims all the inhabitants of the earth in a uniform manner without the inhabitants of the non-European continents explicitly know-ing this or even being able or wanting to know of the origin of this determination of Being. (Evidently those who desire such a knowledge least of all are *those busy developers who today are urging the so-called underdeveloped countries into the realm of hearing of that claim of Being* which speaks from the innermost core of modern technology) (TB: 7; my emphasis).

In other words, the "busy developers", both Western experts and local elites, are busily urging the non-West to listen to the call of Being as calculable material, both human and non-human. Truman's clarion call in 1949 to export Western technology to the "underdeveloped" regions, thus, can be understood as urging the global south "into the realm of hearing of that claim of Being which speaks from the innermost core of modern technology". Elsewhere, Heidegger observes that in the metaphysi-cal sense Europe has become the brain of "the entire terrestrial body"—"the brain that manages the technological-industrial, planetary-interstellar calculation" (HEH: 201). Imperialism is not something done with and finished. It requires neither the external colonizer nor armies. "The fundamental event of modernity is", says Heidegger, "the conquest of the world as picture… the collective image of repre-senting production" (AWP: 71). With the urge to turn the world into a picture, a rep-resentation set up in terms of the rational order, human beings across the world want to be beings who dictate the measure of all beings. In short, all human groups of the earth converge to produce global humanity by the conquest of the world in terms of the Western representation of beings. In Heidegger's characterization, this imperial journey of Western metaphysics is completed in the Nietzschean will to will, which, in Hannah Arendt's coinage, the later Heidegger juxtaposes against his own notion of "willing not-to-will". She writes in *The Life of the Mind*: "In Heidegger's under-standing, the will to rule and to dominate is a kind of original sin, of which he found himself guilty when he tried to come to terms with his brief past in the Nazi move-ment" (1978: 173).[9] While the dominative will is not particularly modern, when the technological conquest of reality as picture and its tremendous potential for using up the resources of the earth and of humanity are put at the service of the dominative will, the planetary trail of the technological understanding of Being is realized.

The sway of technological understanding that pushes forward development as modernization is largely irresistible due to the "lack of distress in distress" it gives rise to, due to its seductive promise, due to its inherently violent internal logic, and due to its ahistorical rationality. This is why an open yet critical approach to his-tory is to be welcomed.

---

[9] Arendt's assessment here corroborates with my view in the introductory chapter that the notion of the technological understanding of Being in relation to the human will was at the centre of Heidegger's initial support for and later disenchantment with National Socialism. His later think-ing on human agency in relation to the technological epoch, as Arendt thinks, can be seen to partly arise from his own disgraceful encounter with Nazism. Much has been written about Arendt's postwar reconciliation with Heidegger both disapprovingly (Ettinger 1995) and favour-ably (Maier-Katkin and Maier-Katkin 2006).

2.4 The Sin of Forgetting History

The argument that contextualized and historicized accounts of development and social change are a panacea for all ills is naïve. Historicized accounts of development are no magic wand. Craig Johnson's *Arresting Development: The Power of Knowledge for Social Change* (2009) makes a credible case against both the ahistorical neoliberal development orthodoxy—the mainstream approach even after at least three decades of animated critique—and the postdevelopment intoxication with historicizing and fragmenting the development narrative. According to Johnson, the postdevelopment attack has intimidated social scientists from generalizing and comparing development experiences across fields of study and pushed them to take shelter in the ethnographic/anthropologic methodology of minutely studying micro-level social and economic practices (Johnson 2009).[10]

Every historically situated critique should be vigilant about throwing the baby out with the bathwater. It is not possible any more to wish away the way the modern affects people everywhere. It is not right for anyone to say that the plight of the very poor is a myth, especially when the one who says so is not one from among the very poor. At the same time, the type of social, political and economic changes we are experiencing all over the world, as of now (that is, even after decades of thoroughly critical assessment), is still of the Enlightenment variety. This type of change has a singularly "deworlding" effect, and it makes the non/less instrumental approaches of communities to their existential goals or "existence rationality" in Goulet's phrase (1973: 188) vulnerable under the onslaught of technological understanding. It is, therefore, important to ask why a discourse (in the Foucauldian sense) that alienates people everywhere and makes the most marginalized population in the global south even further vulnerable, which leads to the technologization of the human and devastation of the planet, still continues and is popularly accepted.

Turning a blind eye to destitution by the adherents as well as denouncers of the discourse of development as modernization only seems to further reinforce its inherent logic. There is an essential materiality inherent to the human condition, and this materiality of the spirit both elevates and traumatizes embodied existence. "The Other's hunger", Levinas writes most eloquently, "be it of the flesh, or of bread—is sacred; only the hunger of the third party limits its rights; there is no bad materialism other than our own" (1990: xiv). The problem with the current development paradigm is not that its promise of redeeming humanity from hunger and want is not meaningful. All questions that remind humanity of its materiality and embodiment are of significance. What is problematic is the denial of materiality in its own name, of being duped by the question of materiality, of the promise to

---

[10] Johnson proposes the 'comparative institutional method', which is "an inductive methodology that searches for commonalities and connections to broader historical trends and problems while at the same time incorporating divergent and potentially competing views about the nature of history, culture and development" (2009: i).

dematerialize the essentially material human condition. Again, while this strain of questioning is most fundamental, the question of justice is another: the impossibility of achieving the inappropriately promised affluence (dematerialized sophistication of technologized humanity) for everyone. Neither has the earth enough for this programme nor is it for everyone, for its ground is the specific logic of technological understanding, which is inherently unjust but held secure by the continuous growth and the global movement of capital.

The programme of the subversion of developmentalism calls for thinking. This subversion cannot be a simple revolutionary decision, for the hegemony of socio-economic evolutionism is so well entrenched within technological modernity that the modern understanding of revolution itself is technological in essence and spirit. Historical epochs cannot be rejected or wished away at will; they can only be "transformed". Heidegger remarked in the *Der Speigel* interview of 1966 that traditional Western metaphysics "no longer offers any possibility for experiencing in a thoughtful way the fundamental traits of the technological age, an age which is just beginning" (GS: 109). Metaphysics is fulfilled in the technological age with its achievement of world domination and dissolution in the sciences. What is now achieved from within its bounds, be it revolution, would only further reinforce the technological age. What is now required is to subvert this epoch thoughtfully, without denying its history and tradition, by genuine rethinking, insightful critique, alternative experiments both unique and hybrid by people everywhere.

It is sometimes pointed out that Heidegger's description of epochal understandings of Being and of the essence of technology is itself an ahistorical, essentialist metanarrative, as I have pointed out earlier. Andrew Feenberg argues that Heidegger essentializes technology and therefore "allows no room for a different technological future.… This essentializing tendency cancels the historical dimension of his theory" (1999: 16). As we have seen in the last chapter, Heidegger understands essence not in the Platonic–Aristotelian sense as permanent presence, but as the historical revealing of a thing or its presencing as that thing to a historical people on the basis of an epochal understanding of Being. And so, Feenberg's criticism misses the point. Ian Thomson, who responds to Feenberg's criticism, remarks that whereas critics like Derrida see greater ontotheological flux in Western history, Heidegger sees more durable ontological epochs that are connected as stages in the Western history of Being. Heidegger's durable ontological epochs, unlike Derrida's ontological flux, can explain why there are hegemonic narratives in history. "[T]he essence of technology", then, in Thomson's words, "is nothing other than an ontotheologically rooted self-understanding that has been repeatedly contested and redefined during the last twenty-five hundred years" (2005: 58). The global manifestation of this ontotheological self-understanding, which unfolds ontically under the name "development" in the global south, needs to be addressed ontohistorically.

A thoroughly ontohistorical understanding of developmentalism is a necessary precondition for its global subversion. Insight into the ontohistorical trajectory of developmentalism means insight into its technological Being. It also means pondering over the several "unintended outcomes" of development as modernization.

Denis Goulet observes perceptively that the gigantic processes of development as modernization work in a society in a "dialectical" fashion, as several of its outcomes look contradictions of development or anti-development in retrospect (1973: Chap. 4). They often work against culturally accepted notions of good life. Two well-discussed cases in Western societies are human alienation in the industrial society (Marx) and atomistic individualism in the liberal society (Charles Taylor). While it is important to challenge accepted and commonsensical cultural ideals of good life, such consequences as alienation and individualism violently unsettle human capacity for meaning in Western societies, leading to widespread cultural nihilism. It is important to understand the ontotechnological underpinnings of developmentalism if we want to genuinely encounter the dialectical contradictions of development we see repetitively in the global south—destitution, inequality, displacement, devastation of the planet, alienation, conspicuous consumption and technologization of the human. For all its innovation and inclusive pluralism, for instance, it is difficult to see how the capability approach of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum can contest the neoliberal consumer society and the capitalist system of production and distribution. The capability approach works within the late modern political–economic framework without posing any radical challenge to its dialectical contradictions (see Sen 2000: 112–13). As Heidegger repeatedly reminds, our ontologically technological era impinges on our consciousness as a "demand" or compulsion without revealing all its cultural forms. Without historicizing the ontotechnological compulsions and the dialectical cultural forms of development as modernization, no subversive approach to technological modernity can come to light. Without facing the question of relentless production and the representation of the human being as producer, the most tangible actualization of the essence of technology, the ontohistorical trajectory of technological modernity, cannot be grasped.

The historical approach is today a sine qua non for all critical, revisionary and subversive approaches to the mainstream understanding of development. In what Craig Johnson refers to as "the comparative institutional method", to look out for commonalities in the historical trends of development across borders and to see them in a sufficiently critical light (2009, i) a rigorous critical–historical approach is a precondition. Jan Nederveen Pieterse advocates "polycentrism" as the more appropriate baseline for analyzing the trends of globalization and modernization because "the bulky category 'the West', which in view of steep historical differences between Europe and North America is not really meaningful" (Pieterse 2010: 113). Pieterse showcases the East Asian Model and the Japanese Challenge as the non-Western exemplars of the global development processes. A thoroughgoing, critically historicizing approach would be necessary to show in what unique ways these development models stay apart from the ontotechnological historical trajectory of Western modernity.

The sense of "historicizing" we are invoking here demands in the first place laying bare the history of concepts, ideals, "truths", processes and events, especially of those generally presented in our contemporary discourses in the most ahistorical, acontextual, apolitical manner. Historicizing first of all is tracing the

genealogy of our taken-for-granted universals, showing them in their original cultural uniqueness rather than their subsequently achieved neutral universality. Historicizing firstly is tracking the intellectual trajectory of the present cultural/intellectual forms from the historical point of their origin. The Nietzschean genealogical method and the tradition of biblical hermeneutics have been forerunners of historicizing in this sense. And so the sense of "historicizing" we are invoking here is in many ways a critique of objectivistic histories rather than accepting them without protest. The layers of interpretive appropriation concealed and passed over in many common manners of narrating history become very important for the type of historicizing Heidegger has in mind. The later Heidegger's disenchantment with *Being and Time*'s transhistorical fundamental ontology and his insistence on the need to "radically historicize ontology" is the revolutionary spirit behind the now "taken-for-granted point of philosophical departure for virtually every major practitioner of poststructuralism, postmodernism, and deconstruction" (Thomson 2005: 10). A central tenet of this type of historicizing is the unwillingness to tamely accept the political and economic innocence of the many modular ideals of modernity just as it calls us to sternly interrogate tradition. The radical intention of historicizing, however, should not be misconstrued as the essentialist recuperation of tradition. Historicizing interrogates and exposes what is concealed in all presences, whether traditional or modern, and so it is allergic to all notions of unchanging, non-temporal, ideal essences in historical forms. The historical approach of Heidegger can never approach tradition in its sterile constancy but only in its dynamic significance in relation to its still unrevealed possibilities.

Therefore, the development vision M.K. Gandhi envisaged for the emerging Indian nation in the first decades of the twentieth century, despite its several dilemmas and predicaments, must be seen as a radical historicization of the notion of development as modernization, although the hermeneutical background of the Gandhian critique was completely different from that in the works of Heidegger or Foucault. Gandhi was pronouncedly against independent India following the economistic development path of the West for two reasons: (i) the sheer unsustainability of such a way to progress[11] and, more importantly, (ii) the lack of conviction that such a way was indeed "progress". The first of these is a practical insight which contemporary environmentalism sees as one of its core principles. Gandhi thought that without the colonies and the market set-up on unequal terms, which were the bedrock of the modern English, Continental European and American commercial success, it was impossible for India to effectively pursue the Western development path. He feared, and with good reasons in retrospect, that the planet could not sustain the Western path to progress if people all over the world began to pursue it. Secondly, Gandhi was not morally persuaded that such a concept of

---

[11] According to *Young India* of 20 December 1928, Gandhi told a capitalist: "God forbid that India should ever take to industrialization after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts" (Gandhi 1960, Vol. 38: 243).

change was in fact "progress". He told a group of economists in 1916 that according to the ancient ideals "limitation of activities promoting wealth" (1960, Vol. 13: 314) was preferable to its naked pursuit. If India developed in the same way as England, Gandhi thought, she would become another nation with a different history as according to him competitive materialism was not the cultural ideal of India (1960, Vol. 10: 37). In the *Hind Swaraj*'s daring coinage, to ask the English to quit India without India relinquishing modern Western civilization would be to become "Englistan" and not Hindustan (an alternative name for India); that would be to ask for "English rule without the Englishman… the tiger's nature, but not the tiger… [to] make India English" (1960, Vol. 10: 15). For Gandhi, history is to be lived in the spirit of history's ideals, and not in merely recalling its past glory: "instead of boasting of the glorious past, we [must] express the ancient moral glory in our own lives and let our lives bear witness to our past" (1960, Vol. 13: 316).

Certainly, Gandhi did not sufficiently historicize Indian cultural ideals but saw them too homogenously, and we might also say today that he had a too essentialist notion of Indian culture. However, in the context of the development narrative, his interrogation of the universal ideals of modernity should be seen as one of the earliest challenges to cultural imperialism. Much of the Gandhian development dream did not hold sway in the Nehruvian independent India. But, one might say, something of the Gandhian political ethos survived too, for example, in the Indian interpretation of secular pluralism, which advocates respect and political provisions for every citizen's religion. In the precariously poised multi-religious modern India, born out of a bloody partition on religious grounds, it is unclear what other alternative would have served every Indian better, given the constraints of a functioning democratic polity. In any case, it would not be right to say that what survived of the Gandhian heritage in India's democratic political ethos was a less historicized account than the economic model India adopted, for the sense of history and context with which Gandhi worked on and literally constructed India's nationhood in the first half of the twentieth century is by far one of the most creative responses to history and change in the Indian context. At the same time, Gandhi failed to do the same when it came to India's deeply unequal, rigidly stratified social hierarchy of caste. The fully historicized account of the reality of caste is found in the writings and political actions of B.R. Ambedkar, the most eminent Dalit personality of the Indian independence movement and the architect of the Indian Constitution, who argued for constitutional protection and affirmative action for India's Dalits ("untouchables" in the traditional caste hierarchy) and Adivasis (tribals) (see Ambedkar 2014; Roy 2014).

The relevance of the Gandhian engagement with history, whether for India or for the world, is astonishingly clear in yet another respect: the present phase of economic development vis-à-vis the ecological crisis. Ramachandra Guha, the Indian environmental historian of a social ecological orientation, writes: "For the individual willing to heed his advice, Gandhi's code of voluntary simplicity offered a sustainable alternative to modern lifestyles.… This was an ethic he himself practiced; resource recycling and the minimization of wants were integral to his life" (2008: 232). But Guha argues that while Gandhi's critique of the modern life style was valid and prophetic, his advocacy of simplicity cannot be

universalized. Guha persuasively makes the case that the rural poor, who live close to nature (he calls them the "ecosystem people"), given a chance, would aspire to achieve the lifestyle of the rich, who use up much of the natural resources of the earth (he calls them the "global omnivores") to maintain their profligate lifestyle. What Guha attacks is the gap that actually cannot be filled—the production of unending desire. The solution he offers is a responsible politics that squarely addresses the asymmetry of resource use, the ever-widening gap between the rich, who "consume more than their fair share of the world's resources", and the poor who are left to underconsume and, paradoxically, to bear the brunt of the effects of the ecological disaster caused not by them. If Guha's call to empower the ecosystem people by "strengthening their ability to govern their lives and gain from the transformation of nature to artifact" and thus "force omnivores to internalize the costs of their profligate behavior" (2008: 244) is adhered to, I think, that would mean engaging in an authentic dialogue with the Gandhian heritage and the much clichéd version of the "spiritual India", for a political call to simplicity and reasonable consumption surely is a huge turn away from the core of development as modernization, at the centre of which lies the valorization of labour, production, distribution and the global consumer society.

Knowing fully well that every real attempt at historicization is imperfect and contingent, let me now recount what Hannah Arendt advocated for fellow Jews in 1942. Arendt, who speaks of freedom as "the questionable gift of spontaneity, of being able to do what could also be left undone … [of] 'changing the world', and not in interpreting or knowing it" (1978: 198), admonished the zealous reformists among European Jews *for* the sin of forgetting history at the height of the Jewish reform movement in a brief column she wrote for the Jewish newspaper, *Aufbau*, published from New York. The aim of the reformists was complete identification of the Jews with the nation states of Europe (Strate 2012). But Arendt complains that the reformists "destroyed the legends of its [Judaism's] founding" (2007: 149)—the memory of Moses leading the Israelites from out of bondage to the land of freedom. This destruction no doubt made the European Jews "modern" and indifferent to an "especially long national history". In fact, the tradition was not reformed but robbed of its national, political, lived meaning. For Arendt, the message of the "oldest document of human history", the Torah, is the moral distinction between freedom and slavery, "the eternal rebellion of the heart and mind against slavery", and by robbing history of this meaning, the Torah becomes mute to the Jews themselves. The attempt to forget the heroes of Judaism, Arendt warns, is a failed project from the start because the Christian West has already appropriated them as the heroes of freedom and, thus, of humanity. The history of humanity is neither a hotel where one can rent a room for convenience nor a vehicle to board and disembark at random, she notes evocatively. Freedom and new humanity, call it modernity, is a creative dialogue with history. She writes

> Our past will be for us a burden beneath which we can only collapse for as long as we refuse to understand the present and fight for a better future. Only then—but from that moment on—will the burden become a blessing, that is, a weapon in the battle for freedom (Arendt 2007: 150).

I would add that Emmanuel Levinas's oeuvre, both philosophical and confessional, has achieved a meaningful philosophical dialogue with the Jewish tradition in the Arendian sense. In Levinas's interpretation, the status of Judaism as the chosen people is "a particularism that conditions universality, and it is a moral category rather than a historical fact to do with Israel… This indicates the degree to which the notion of Israel can be separated… from any historical, national, local or racial notion" (Levinas 1990: 22). Levinas's reading of Judaism in terms of the moral predilection of human beings transforms his philosophy: "Morality is not a branch of philosophy, but first philosophy" (1961: 304). This is sometimes seen as making the Jewish message philosophically intelligible without violating Jewish particularism.[12]

I have been referring to various ways in which epochs, traditions and social changes have been historicized and reclaimed. If we do not do the same for development as modernization, it would increasingly look like a tyrannical and at the same time seductive present. Without coming to understand the contingency and historicity of the technological society, the technicized and virtual approach to life and things will look most real and modern to us. This ahistorical technologization of the real would then realize itself as ideal modernity that people everywhere *should* uncritically embrace. The danger of the technological age, says Heidegger, is holding humanity to ransom within a particular understanding of Being: "The rule of Enframing threatens man with the possibility that it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth" (QCT: 28). The sin of forgetting history most of all means closing the openness of Being, that is the realm of the possible.

Ashis Nandy in a 2004 interview emphasized the need to examine the past in the following way:

> It is in the context of this long tradition of social evolutionism, a kind of sanitized version we call progress, that globalization too, is now trying to acquire global hegemony and the elites of virtually every society accept this as a natural trajectory. This past is important, because the mandate for certain forms of violence is integral to such a world vision. If societies are moving through historical stages, if we accept that each stage is superior to the previous stage, if you cannot go back in time—and if you do, it is a retrogression, a slip into primitivism, primordialism and romantic nostalgia for a past that was violent and oppressive—no one can escape this social evolutionism and every regime has the

---

[12] For Hilary Putnam, "Levinas is universalizing Judaism… in essence, all human beings are Jews" (2002: 34). One of the most recent contributions to this reading of Levinas is the work of Michael Fagenblat (2010). According to Fagenblat, "Levinas's fundamental move … is to ex-appropriate the Torah of the Jews through a Midrash addressed to anyone responsive to it, which thereby creates a new addressee of the message entrusted to the Jews" (2010: 23). Israel, then, is "the new ethical subject, the one who answers to the call of the other" (Fagenblat 2010: 24). In this attempt, the Talmud, 'the primordial event in Hebraic spirituality', is the vehicle by which ancient Judaism travels into modernity, for "if there had been no Talmud, there would have been no Jews today" (Levinas 1990: 175), and this spiritual journey unfolds as 'an intimacy without reserve', as a Jewish message that is for the whole humanity, and a Judaic exceptionalism that means not exceptional rights but duties (Levinas 1990: 176). This philosophical reinterpretation of the spiritual tradition of the Talmud means, according to Catherine Chalier, "that despite all its shortcomings in the course of history, carnal Israel … remains … the guarantor precisely of this original and universal responsibility toward the other.… No one can abandon it without failing in his or her human vocation" (2002: 105).

right to herd the population it rules over towards this promised future, despite what a few critics or human rights or environmental activists say. And development has very carefully positioned itself within this broad framework (Nandy 2004: 9).

We thus get caught up in a strange phenomenon, an enticing distress, which fills our present with an eerie anxiety regarding the future and forces us to be oblivious of the past. The violence of this forgetfulness of history is proving costly.

Nietzsche warns that philosophers make mummies of concepts by detaching them from history and context. However, ahistorical narrative strategy is central to modernity as a whole. Post-war development discourse exemplifies how ahistorical narrative strategy can reproduce a particular historical experience as the ideal planetary socio-economic model. Historicizing not only makes our present relevant but contingently proposes meaningful futures, thus bringing cohesion to our narratives or what Paul Ricoeur calls 'followability of the story' (1990: 67). A historicized account of modernity is a project of making our futures meaningful.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Aho, K. A. (2009). *Heidegger's neglect of the body*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Ambedkar, B. R. (1936) 2014. *Annihilation of caste: The annotated critical edition*. New Delhi: Navayana.
Ameriks, K. (2006). *Kant and the historical turn: Philosophy as critical interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Anderson, K. B. (2010). *Marx at the margins: On nationalism, ethnicity and non-western societies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Arendt, H. (1978). *The life of the mind, 2: Willing*, One-Volume Edition. San Diego: Harcourt.
Arendt, H. (1942) 2007. Moses or Washington. J. E. Woods, Trans. In *The Jewish writings*, J. Kahn & R. H. Feldman (Ed.) (pp. 149–150). New York: Schocken Books.
Beiser, F. C. (1993). Hegel's historicism. In F. C. Beiser (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Hegel* (pp. 270–300). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Beiser, F. C. (2005). *Hegel*. New York: Routledge.
Chalier, C. (2002). Levinas and the Talmud. In S. Critchley & R. Bernasconi (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Levinas* (pp. 100–118). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Chatterjee, P. (2001). On civil and political societies in post-colonial democracies. In S. Kaviraj & S. Khilnani (Eds.), *Civil society: History and possibilities* (pp. 165–178). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Crocker, D. A. (2008). *Ethics of global development: Agency, capability, and deliberative democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Descartes, R. (1637) 2006. *A discourse on the method of correctly conducting one's reason and seeking truth in the sciences* (I. Maclean, Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Descartes, R. (1641) 2008. *Meditations on first philosophy with selections from the objections and replies* (M. Michael, Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Dilthey, W. (1910) 2002. *Selected works, 3: The formation of the historical world in the human sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Ettinger, E. (1995). *Hannah Arendt/Martin Heidegger*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Fagenblat, M. (2010). *A covenant of creatures: Levinas's philosophy of Judaism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Feenberg, A. (1999). *Questioning technology*. London: Routledge.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. (1960) 2004. *Truth and method*. (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). Revised Edition. London: Continuum.

Gandhi, M. K. (1960–94). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, in 100 Vols. New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Goulet, D. (1971) 1973. *The cruel choice: A new concept in the theory of development*. New York: Athenaeum.

Guha, R. (2008). *How much should a person consume? Thinking through the environment*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

Harvey, D. (2000). Cosmopolitanism and the banality of geographical evils. *Public Culture, 12*(2), 529–564.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1821–31) 1975. *Lectures on the philosophy of world history: Introduction*. (H. B. Nisbet, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1807) 1977. *Phenomenology of spirit*. (A. V. Miller, Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1821) 1991. *Elements of the philosophy of right*. (H. B. Nisbet, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1942–43) 1992. *Parmenides*. (A. Schuwer & R. Rojcewicz, Trans.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1961) 1998a. Kant's thesis about being. (Ted E. Klein Jr., & W. E. Pohl, Trans.). In *Pathmarks*, W. McNeill (Ed.) (pp. 337–363). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1929) 1998b. What is metaphysics?. (T. E. Klein Jr., & W. E. Pohl, Trans.). In *Pathmarks* W. McNeill (Ed.) (pp. 82–96). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Herder, J. G. (1774) 2004. Another philosophy of history for the education of mankind. (I. D. Evrigenis & D. Pellerin, Trans.). In *Another philosophy of history and selected political writings* (pp. 3–98). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Hoffman, P. (2005). Dasein and "its" time. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A companion to Heidegger* (pp. 325–334). Malden: Blackwell.

Johnson, C. (2009). *Arresting development: The power of knowledge for social change*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kant, I. (1781 & 1787) 1998. *Critique of pure reason*. (P. Guyer & A. W. Wood, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kant, I. (1788) 2002 *Critique of practical reason*. (W. S. Pluhar, Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Lafont, C. (2005). Hermeneutics. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A companion to Heidegger* (pp. 265–284). Malden: Blackwell.

Levinas, E. (1961) 1979. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*. (A. Lingis, Trans.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1963) 1990. *Difficult freedom: Essays on Judaism*. (S. Hand, Trans.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Maier-Katkin, D., & Maier-Katkin, B. (2006). Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger: Calumny and the politics of reconciliation. *Human Rights Quarterly, 28*(1), 86–119.

Mulhall, S. (2005). *Routledge philosophy guide book to Heidegger and Being and time* (2nd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Nagel, T. (1986). *The view from nowhere*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nandy, A. (1989). Shamans, savages and the wilderness: On the audibility of dissent and the future of civilizations. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political 14* (3), 263–277.

Nandy, A. (1994). Culture, voice and development: A primer for the unsuspecting. *Thesis Eleven, 39*(1), 1–18.

Nandy, A. (1995). An anti-secularist manifesto. *India International Quarterly, 22*(1), 35–64.

Nandy, A. (2004). Revisiting the violence of development: An interview with Ashis Nandy. *Development, 47*(1), 8–14.

Nietzsche, F. (1973–76) 1997. *Untimely meditations*. (R. J. Hollingdale, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nietzsche, F. (1888) 2005. Twilight of the idols, or how to philosophize with a hammer. (J. Norman, Trans.). In *The anti-Christ, Ecce homo, Twilight of the idols, and other writings*, 153–229. Cambridge: Aziloth Books.

Pieterse, J. N. (1998). My paradigm or yours?: Alternative development, post-development, reflexive development. *Development and Change, 29*(2), 343–373.

Pieterse, J. N. (2010). *Development theory: Deconstructions/reconstructions* (2nd ed.). New Delhi: Sage.

Pippin, R. (1993). You can't get there from here: Transition problems in Hegel's *Phenomenology of spirit*. In F. C. Beiser (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Hegel* (pp. 52–85). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pogge, T. (2002) 2008. *World poverty and human rights* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Polanyi, K. (1944) 2001. *The great transformation: The political and economic origins of our time.* Boston: Beacon.

Putnam, H. (2002). Levinas and Judaism. In S. Critchley & R. Bernasconi (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Levinas* (pp. 33–62). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ricœur, P. (1984) 1990. *Time and narrative*, Vol. 1. (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Roberts, D. D. (1995). *Nothing but history: Reconstruction and extremity after metaphysics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rorty, R. (1991). Heidegger, contingency, and pragmatism. In *Essays on Heidegger and others: Philosophical papers* (pp. 27–49). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roy, A. (2014). The doctor and the saint. In *Annihilation of caste: The annotated critical edition* (pp. 17–141). New Delhi: Navayana.

Sachs, J. D. (2005). *The end of poverty: Economic possibilities for our time*. New York: Penguin.

Sachs, W. (2010a). Introduction. In S. Wolfgang, (Ed.) *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power*, 2nd Edn (xv-xx). London: Zed Books.

Sachs, W. (2010b). One world. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power* (pp. 111–126). London: Zed Books.

Scharff, R. C. (1992). Rorty and analytic Heideggerian epistemology—and Heidegger. *Man and World, 25*(3–4), 483–504.

Sen, A. (2000). *Development as freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Strate, L. (2012). Sept 17. History and freedom. *Hannah Arendt Center*. Retrieved on 31 July 2014 from. http://www.hannaharendtcenter.org/?p=7537.

Taylor, C. (1981) 1985. Social theory as practice. In *Philosophical papers, Vol. 2: Philosophy and the human sciences*, 91–115. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1995). Two theories of modernity. *Hastings Center Report, 25*(2), 24–33.

Taylor, C. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Taylor, C. (2006). Engaged agency and background in Heidegger. In C. B. Guignon & Second Edition (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger* (pp. 202–221). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thomson, I. D. (2005). *Heidegger on ontotheology: Technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tibebu, T. (2010). *Hegel and the third world: The making of Eurocentrism in world history*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Truman, H. S. (1949) 2010. Inaugural address. In M. S. Arthur & F. L. Israel (Eds.) *My fellow citizens: The inaugural addresses of the presidents of the United States, 1789–2009* (pp. 300–308). New York: Infobase Publishing. (1949).

Young, J. (2002). *Heidegger's later philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 3
War and Development

*We, the famished ragged ragamuffins of the East, are to win
freedom for all humanity. We have no word for 'Nation' in
our language. When we borrow this word from other people,
it never fits us … I have seen the West; I covet not the unholy
feast in which she revels every moment, growing more and more
bloated and red and dangerously delirious. Not for us is this
mad orgy of midnight, with lighted torches, but awakenment in
the serene light of the morning.*

—Tagore, "Letters to a Friend", Vol. 3, 284.

Abstract Western understanding of Being, according to Heidegger's history of
Being, has been coloured in the late modern era by the ontotheological essence of
technology, enframing, which is the way humans understand all beings in terms
of their resourcefulness for use. The dominant understanding of development as
modernization, on the other hand, can be seen as concretizing the essence of tech-
nology in the global south since the second half of the twentieth century. There is
a warlike movement in the unfolding of technological understanding, which mani-
fests itself in development as the seeking of national power through militarization,
taming of the forces of nature and living beings and overcoming the existential
strife that is native to the human condition. Faced with the event of the dominant
ontological manifestation of Being as producible material in the modern age, how-
ever, humanity is not irredeemably fated with a single understanding of what-is,
for possibilities of subverting the warlike unfolding of the essence of technology
in its manifestation as speedily modernizing development are available.

Keywords Enframing · National development · War · Existential strife · Promise ·
Subversion

The celebrated Bengali poet-intellectual and Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath
Tagore, was a fervent advocate of modern science, liberal humanism, the life of
the mind and freedom of thought. Rejecting Gandhi's call to spin and weave the
charkha and burn foreign clothes in 1921, he wrote that the blind call to spin the

charkha is no different from offering tomatoes to Lord Jagannath (1996, Vol. 3: 543). But Tagore's version of modernism found objectionable the inherent alliance in Western modernity's commercial, material and technological interests with a fundamentally violent logic. Gandhi went one step further, rejecting Western modernity in its entirety for its intrinsic materialism intertwined with a violent instinct. In 1909, he wrote to Lord Ampthill, the interim viceroy of India in 1904 and his well-wisher: "Violent methods must mean acceptance of modern civilization and therefore of the same ruinous competition we notice here [in the west] and consequent destruction of true morality" (1960, Vol. 9: 509). Though Gandhi detested violent communism, he equally detested the covert and overt violence of capitalism. "A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility", he wrote in the 1941 piece known as "Constructive Programme", "so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists" (1960, Vol. 75: 158). In Ashis Nandy's account, Gandhi "was one of the very few among the Third World's major nationalist leaders to see the full implication of the Faustian compact the Western man had made with his modernity" (1981: 191). The chapter looks at this "Faustian compact" that is somehow overwhelming Gandhi's India and the global south as a whole and is showing no real signs of decline in the shores of its genesis and glorious bloom.

The Enlightenment notion of infinite human progress, and the Baconian idea of human advancement and perfection over time, aided by the application of science, received the status of a single agenda for all humanity in the post-war years of the twentieth century with *development* as the hinge word. The idea of development, since then, has come under fierce scrutiny, and while for its enthusiasts development is a panacea for all ills, its critics claim that development is an idea whose time is over. However, there seems to be a widespread agreement today, especially among the more perceptive observers of the development process, that in the global north, there has been a development-overkill, linked up with several other overstretched notions, and that this dangerous excess has become a model for the global south, leading to paradoxical results. One of the overstretched notions central to the idea of national development is *war*. Strife, on the other hand, is an existential exigency, the perfectly human struggle to exist. The subject matter of this chapter is war as the structural constituent of modernizing development, as the subtext of the modern technoscientific understanding of all-that-is and as the driver of the underlying promise to ease the human condition by possibly eliminating its native existential struggle.

The chapter is organized in four sections. I shall first discuss the manifold ways of appearance of technoscientific[1] understanding in the modern era, with emphasis

---

[1] I use the terms "technological" and "technoscientific" understanding of Being interchangeably. Strictly for Heidegger "technology", as I have pointed out in the last two chapters, is the primordial understanding of Being in the late modern epoch, which according to him is the ontological basis for modern science. The usage "technoscientific" should remind us that Heidegger's characterization of the features of the technological understanding of Being like calculability, speed, gigantism, efficiency logic, instrumental rationality, resourcefulness and flexibility are popularly conceived as the elements of scientific temper.

placed on the warlikeness of its manifestation, in accordance with Heidegger's conception of the essence of technology as enframing . In the second section, I shall focus on the inconceivability of national development without aligning it with hostile aggressiveness on several fronts. Thirdly, the messianic promise of forcefully eliminating the existential strife inherent to the human condition will be shown as the constitutive impetus of enframing in its manifestation as modernizing development. And, the last section of the chapter will briefly meditate on the possibilities of subverting the work of enframing in its dominant manifestation.

3.1 The Work of Enframing

Heidegger famously called the essence of modern technology "enframing" (*Gestell*). As we have already noted, essence means not the continuous, unchanging presence over time of what is most natural to an entity, but the *way* in which an entity endures over time as that entity, pursuing its journey in being and revealing itself to human beings in particular historical epochs (QCT: 30; see also BQP). In *Contributions* (1936–38), the term "machination" (*Machenschaft*) is used to mean human interpretation of the Being of entities in the modern epoch in terms of makeability. "The mechanistic *and* the biologistic modes of thinking are", he says, "always only consequences of the concealed machinational interpretation of beings" (CP: 100). Machination stands for the modern tendency to exhaust the meaning of Being in the makeability of exchangeable products as a result of calculative, instrumental thinking of and comportment towards them (Vallega-Neu 2003: 38). In 1949, Heidegger's cogitations took fuller shape,[2] and we are told that the essence of modern *technology* is revealed in the human challenging forth of the whole of nature with the "unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such" (QCT: 14). The resources of nature are, thus, the standing-reserve (*Bestand*), stockpiled for future use, and "enframing" is the hidden self-understanding on account of which humans see nature and challenge it forth as a whole to be resource for their use and that alone (Young 2002: 49). It is to be marked that technology's essence is "an ontotheologically rooted self-understanding" (Thomson 2005: 58), and Heidegger considered technology as the essential way in which Western metaphysics progressed and completed itself in modern times (OM: 93).

Enframing as the essence of technology, for Heidegger, is definitive for Western *modernity* as such. What is essential to late modernity is not that the human being becomes the subject and world the object, as it was for early modernity (AWP: 84), but even the interplay between subjectivism and objectivism is "a

---

[2] Vallega-Neu writes that in the thirties and forties (notably with *Contributions*) Heidegger developed his understanding of the end of the first beginning of Western intellectual history in the metaphysics of boundless subjectivity, and Nietzsche as the last great exponent of it, and "[l]ater on, he develop[ed] his thought of machination in what he calls '*Gestell*'" (2003: 62).

consequence of the self-establishing essence of technology, not the reverse" (WP: 217). Modernity means self-assertion of the modern Western subject, for whom the world is disclosed as "the entirety of objects that can be produced", and in relating to the world and herself, remarkably "surges up … as the producer who asserts himself and establishes this insurgency as absolute mastery" (WP: 216). It is not nature alone that is viewed as resource for self-assertive production, but the human being "becomes a human material that is applied… to goals that have been set out before him" (WP: 217), and modern natural science, the total state, human science, ethics, art and religion are all overridden by and sucked up into the menacing sway of enframing. Self-assertive human manipulation of reality leads Western modernity, as would light in darkness, through the history of the triumph of sciences and the new politics of planetary conquest, both overtly militaristic and covertly persuasive. The essence of technology is not a "human doing", but it is "the call of unconcealment" of Being, which has already claimed the human being and to which she merely responds (QCT: 19). The epochal change of technology means that "what is unconcealed no longer concerns man *even as object*, but does so, rather, *exclusively as standing-reserve*" and the human being, the modern subject of all objectivity, "the orderer of the standing-reserve", the lord of the earth herself "comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve" (QCT: 26–27). Kant's being of unsurpassable worth thus comes to be resourceful material and asset par excellence for production and distribution in the market.

But what is dangerous in the essence of technology is not the erosion of human dignity, but it is a kind of "tunnel vision", the tendency of enframing to crowd out competing visions. It "banishes man into that kind of revealing which is an ordering. Where this ordering holds sway, it drives out every other possibility of revealing" (QCT: 27), and so "it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth" (QCT: 28). The tunnel vision is sustained and secured by the veiling of technology's essence as the revealing of Being out of its own accord and by projecting technology as mere human-controlled instrument for our lordship over nature. The tunnel vision prohibits us from experiencing the subjugation and transformation of human essence by the technological understanding of Being. Technology is the ontotheological abground of late modernity which determines the modern understanding of beings as a whole.

I shall emphasize three aspects of the essence of technology for the purposes of this chapter's theme: (i) humanization, (ii) seductiveness and (iii) warlikeness.

According to Heidegger, modern humanism—the rise of the subject for whose gratification is all-that-is—has its origin in the interweaving processes of humans becoming the subject (subjectivism) and world the object (objectivism). With subjectivism teachings about the world themselves become "a doctrine of man… anthropology… [and thus] humanism first arises where the world becomes picture" or representational object (AWP: 70). This early modern transformation of human essence and its far-reaching consequences are fully secured with the new transformation of human essence by the unconcealment of the essence of

technology as enframing. Modern humanism is human-centrism. Enframing or the reduction of beings to their disposability is also a process of *humanization* in the sense of making everything handy for human employment, enterprise and gratification. It means controlling and taming rebellious nature, and making it meekly docile for human handling. Enframing is the ontological vantage point upon which the real is disclosed as exploitable material. Humanization operates primarily as control. Phenomena are objectified, mastered and subjugated for human gratification. In this picture, the lived "mineness" characteristic of human existence is compromised, and the good life is seen as something that things, reduced to their resourcefulness, do to the "subject". Not that our selfhood is an interior castle into which we can take a temporary retreat. As being-in-the-world, our "mineness" itself can only be our lived way of being affected by the world, but not merely in the objectness and resourcefulness of the world but in the truth of "the very way in which it shows itself from itself" (BT: 58) in terms of its onto-historical horizon. Control makes human existence "air-conditioned", cosy and object-dependent in a definitive sense. With complete humanization "the impression comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct … [and it] seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself" (QCT: 27). Humanization in this sense comes to mean strong and radical social constructivism and anthropocentrism.

The other side of control, experienced as power and gratification, however, is our being held hostage and all the more entrenched within the sway of enframing. That is, control has a paradoxical effect; when we twist, turn and master phenomena in order to have control over them, although we take ourselves to be masters, they in turn do sway us in their readiness-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*), as *Being and Time* has set forth, and in their resourcefulness. So, with control and power comes also certain powerlessness. What is meant by this powerlessness is the discomforting thought that human essence itself is transformed by the essence of technology rather than the reverse. The subject–object relation, which is one of the hallmarks of the modern worldview, establishes its purely relational character wherein "both the subject and the object are sucked up as standing-reserves" (Heidegger 1977: 173). With this the subject–object relation reaches the condition of "most extreme dominance" as ordained by the call of the essence of technology to understand all that exists as resource for use. For Heidegger, the pathos and the pathology of the human condition is the defencelessness of the human being against this powerful current of a disclosure that is foreign to all previous epochs, and yet a development out of those epochs. Within this tide, the human being among all beings is the most unshielded. As the openness-for-Being, the human being is drawn towards Being and its articulation; this is her essence. The essential powerlessness of the human being is this: impelled by technological understanding, she obstructs the openness of Being, which is, in any case, already obstructed, for Being essentially calls upon the human being from its previously enframed essence to give it articulation, form and substance as producible material. There is a mutual appropriation of Being and the human being in the obstructive closure of Being's openness as it is the case with all revealing-concealing play of Being.

It is not that the human being freely chooses to look at all beings purely as resource for manipulation, but she is overwhelmed by a revelation of Being. The modern human being is a mere "functionary of technology" and is locked up in an essentially obstructed ontological sphere. Here, Heidegger is speaking about Rilke's poetry, the poet of the destitute times, and is speaking lyrically about the desolation of the world that the destitution of human essence has brought about:

> The essence of technology is dawning only slowly. This day is the world's night made over as the purely technological day. This day is the shortest day. It raises the threat of a single endless winter. Man now forgoes not only defense, but the unbroken entirety of beings remains in darkness… The danger consists in the menace that bears on the essence of man in his relationship to Being itself, but not in accidental perils (WP: 221–22).

Drained of the pre-modern sense of the holy, of the sense of connectedness with all that is, overtaken by a singular forgottenness of Being, deluded by the speciesist sense of the pre-eminence of its being and its lordship over all that is, human essence, homeless but defiant, turns upon itself and its world to reduce all that is to material to be bought and sold in the marketplace. Such a frame of representation nullifies human agency, projects modernization as the only goal of development and forbids the coexistence of various conceptions of good life. However, the powerlessness of the human being in the face of the revealing of Being as resourceful material is not a human imperfection that can be corrected by further technological innovation. "The powerlessness is metaphysical, i.e. to be understood as essential; it cannot be removed by reference to the conquest of nature … this domination of nature is the real proof for the metaphysical powerlessness of Dasein, which can only attain freedom in its history" (MFL: 215). The historical difference of technological understanding is, while erstwhile Western metaphysical epochs let flourish the emergence of beings in manifold ways and let coexist marginal understandings of Being, technological understanding in its inherent violence forces them out of history by their delegitimization and disparagement.

The danger hidden in enframing is all the more challenging because the all-encompassing and humanistically articulated revealing of the essence of technology is a *seductive* and enticing phenomenon for humans to resist successfully. "The hex cast by technology", Heidegger writes, "and by its constantly self-surpassing progress is only *one* sign of this bewitchery that directs everything toward calculation, utility, breeding, manageability, and regulation. Even 'taste' now becomes subject to this regulating and is entirely a matter of being 'high class'" (CP: 98). For the most part, this sway is irresistible and never can it altogether be denied. In fact, a denial of the essence of technology is uncalled for, as it is a perfectly legitimate way for phenomena to come across to us, if only the incompleteness of technological understanding is available to our grasp. As modern subjects, viewing phenomena in their resourcefulness alone is not one of our options, but constitutively, we are enslaved to such an ontological relation to beings, especially because of the adept smoothness with which we are able to find our way about the world under the spell of technological understanding. The seduction of enframing takes off the human agenda what is mysterious, wondrous, heroic and ambiguous, and manages existence efficiently by simplifying what is complex. Furthermore,

the seductive appeal of technology is maintained securely by the "moral balm" it applies to guilty conscience. Technological relation to beings appears to humans as the only way to ease their existence in its original forms of pain and strife. There is "lack of a sense of plight" or distress (*die Not*) (CP: 99) because the technoscientific way of relating to the world is irresistibly seductive.

Heidegger considers the essence of technology as unfolding in a coercive, *warlike* fashion. As early as in 1928, he spoke of technology as raging about "in the 'world' today like an unshackled beast" (MFL: 215). The most explicit statement of the violence inherent in the understanding of reality as resourceful material for production in Heidegger's whole oeuvre is perhaps in *Mindfulness* (1938–39). War itself is seen here as the "uncontrolled machination of beings" and peace its seeming suspension (M: 11). Besides, the work of machination or enframing is described in its indiscriminate annihilative power.

> *Machination* means the accordance of everything with producibility … machination adjoins beings as such to the space of a play that continually plays into machination as an ongoing *annihilation*. Already constantly annihilating in the very threat of annihilation, machination expands its sway as coercive force. By securing power, this coercive force develops as the immediately eruptible and always transformable capability for subjugation that knows no discretion.… Under all kinds of disguises of manifold coercive forces machination fosters in advance the completely surveyable calculability of the subjugating empowering of beings to an accessible arrangement (M: 12).

The essence of technology that rules modernity manifests itself in the "power of technicity over beings" (M: 13), the impetus behind extreme self-assertion. This warlike power hidden in enframing is the secret force that sets up the human being as the one who "grasps himself as a nation, wills himself as a people, fosters himself as a race, and, finally, empowers himself as lord of the earth" (AWP: 84). The total dispersal of the power of enframing means "the planet as a whole is 'used' as a product of power" and it means "detecting a planetary opponent" (M: 14). Heidegger thought of the technological age as just beginning, and its advancement as increasing "the utilization and exploitation of the earth, as well as the breeding and training of human beings, into currently unimaginable states whose coming cannot be prevented, or even delayed, by a romantic recollection of earlier and other states" (CP: 122). According to him "the atom bomb and its explosion are the mere final emission of what has long since taken place, has already happened" (T: 164)—that is, the historical unfolding of the essence of technology. Machination is "the producibility of beings". The last epoch of Western metaphysics can complete itself only when what is "disconcerting within the epoch", machination, does not cease but "*begins* the foundational domination … [and] raises Being in the sense of machination to such a 'domination'… [that] the beings of such nature are pursued as the only unconditionally secured representing and producing" (M: 20).

However, violence of the power of machination like machination itself is more covert than overt. The power of machination works through the sphere of all beings without showing itself. This is what Heidegger calls the "self-overpowering of power". Through cunning, stealthy permeation and assimilation of the

powerless "machination impels all the forces capable of power and of transform-ing power to total unleashing into self-overcoming of power" (M: 13). Modern technology, points out Heidegger, arises out of the crafty and manipulative power fostered by machination. Civilization and culture are also domains of dominat-ing beings and upholding "man's massive way of being". In these descriptions of the anonymous, inconspicuous trails of the violent power of machination, we are surely reminded of Foucault (see Milchman and Rosenberg 2003; Dreyfus 2003). "Foucault's technologies of power function anonymously in much the same way as Heidegger's account of enframing suggests modern technology prevails" (Sawicki 2003: 65).

Enframing in its "humanizing" progress operates paradoxically in a warlike and seductive fashion, achieving its astonishing results without fail. The essence of technology as the ontotheological self-understanding of the west is "the presup-position of its planetary dominance" (OM: 90). I shall argue in the next two sec-tions that enframing is warlike in its developmental manifestation and seductive in development's promissory manifestation, and in both these manifestations its complete holding sway is dexterously established.

3.2 The Work of Development

"Development", as far as the human yearning is concerned, is nothing but the *flourishing* of human life in a variety of ways, good life variously conceived, but primarily a life lived in terms of one's landscape of meaning. Doubtless, the word "development", besides its post-war connotations, holds within it a sense of move-ment or a sense of human ascent from less humanly desirable to more humanly desirable forms of life (Goulet 1973: 333). But development, seen in this way, would also mean taking a reflective step back sometimes and redirecting the flourish in imaginative and meaningful ways, just as it means moving ahead. The "ahead" is an "ahead" of significance, and not of material accumulation or tech-nological sophistication. The planetary domination of the ontotheological essence of technology dwarfs the significance-dimension of the good life and makes it impossible to take any reflective step back. The sway of machination means, first and foremost, "the *era of the complete unquestionableness of all things*" (CP: 97). Alternative conceptions of development cannot gain a place in modern imagination because of the warlike and yet seductive and cunning domination of enframing.

With the planetary conquest of the essence of technology, the idea of being happy in terms of various forms of human flourishing has gone out of favour. The favoured idea, rather, is *modernization*, which is the concretion of the work of reducing the real to its resourcefulness. Although alternative conceptions of devel-opment are available, the domination of enframing darkens their plausibility in global imagination. Development as modernization, the complex but speedy pro-cess of economic and societal evolvement through technological props, became a

global programme after enframing demonstrated its warlikeness in the projects of European nationalism, colonialism and mastery over nature since the seventeenth century. The global sway of the essence of technology draws people everywhere, even postcolonial subjects, the erstwhile victims of warlike enframing, with the new and seductive promise of salvation.

For Heidegger, the metaphysical dimension of the technological age is that "Being itself is faced with the challenge of letting beings appear within the horizon of what is calculable" (PI: 35). There is inherent violence in this because the human being is "forced to secure all beings that are his concern as the substance for his planning and calculating; and to carry this manipulation on past all bounds" (PI: 35). The most fundamental form of the metaphysical dimension of setting things up within the calculable frame is *representation*, which is nothing but producing the world in its objectivity for the subject. Representation is the most primordial war because in the objectification of all beings for the unconditional human will they appear in their Being within the technological frame as "object of the attack" (NW: 191). Levinas characterizes the reduction of the irreducible face of the other human being to representations of the self as "imperialist domination", "tyrannic oppression", "war" and murder (1979: 47). Both Levinas and Heidegger consider representational knowledge as grounded in a metaphysics of violence, though Levinas takes Heideggerian ontology to task for subordinating the incomparable relation between human beings to Being.[3] For Levinas, this primordial violence has any ethical significance only vis-à-vis the human face. However, both the unprecedented human and environmental violence of the modern age can be seen to have the same representational ground. The violence of objectification reinforces the warlikeness of enframing.

What is the justification for the characterization that development as modernization is the *concretion* of enframing? For sure, by the name "technology", Heidegger is characterizing "a fundamental condition of the essential development of metaphysics in general" (OM: 93), and he is optimistic that this characterization, the name technology, would adequately reflect the worldwide dominance of Western metaphysics. Technology is not a name for Western technologies and techniques but for Western metaphysical prioritizing of Being's presencing in modern times within the calculable frame, which allows Western technologies and techniques to come to the fore in the first place, show themselves to human beings and have sway over their understanding all over the world. The non-west is enamoured by the miracles wrought by the frame of calculative understanding. As I pointed out in the last chapter, Heidegger observed in a 1962 lecture that modern technology in its metaphysical sense or "Being as presencing in the sense of calculable material"

---

[3] As Derrida has argued, this is a misrepresentation of the Heideggerian position. "To precomprehend or explicate the implicit relation of Being to the existent", Derrida explains, "is not to submit the existent (for example, someone) to Being in a violent fashion. Being is but the *Being-of* this existent, and does not exist outside it as a foreign power, or as a hostile or neutral impersonal element…. Being is not … an *archia* which would permit Levinas to insert the face of a faceless tyrant under the name of Being" (Derrida 2001: 170).

had established its rule over the whole world, but non-Westerners are not aware of this development nor do they want "to know of the origin of this determination of Being". This impatience, Heidegger says, is especially seen among the "busy developers" in the global south (TB: 7). The busy developers are none other than the beneficiaries of the globalizing technological society in both the north and the south. Technology in Heidegger's sense is ontological; modernizing development is its ontic manifestation. Doubtlessly the global concretion of technological understanding is embraced eagerly as inarguable truth by the cultural–political left, the right and the centre in countries such as India. Whether in the name of the socialistic system of industrial production, the proto-religious framework of cultural nationalism, or in the name of inclusive development, that which is being established everywhere is the technological understanding of reality.

Technological understanding reduces all beings to disposable items for human manipulation. But the *human being* is not outside the reduction. "The only thing we have left", Heidegger insists, "is purely technological relationships" (GS: 106). Liberal humanism reduced human beings to atomistic self-units with only self-interest to commune with others, and Marxist humanism, in the hands of real communism, dealt a death blow to justice and freedom, while valorizing community (Nancy 1991: 2). The subject of modernization is the individual, related thinly to the nation-abstraction. Happiness for the individual is freedom to manoeuvre beings in order to make them pliable and resourceful for the sake of human gratification. This happy freedom is contrasted with the unhappy cultural memory of scarcity, which is acutely felt anew in contrast with the future of beatific contentment and carefree overabundance, mediated through the reality of modernized present. Since development as modernization and the notions of efficiency and speed are intertwined, there is all the more possibility for boredom because of the lack of time for the unfolding of something in its time. The levelling of the value and meaning of all beings in terms of resourcefulness makes them strangely equivalent, banal and meaningless. This aspect of modern experience is termed nihilism.

Nation-states can be seen as the most gigantic and organized machine for the technological reduction of beings to their usability. Nationalism is humanism's political expression. Like religion for the pre-moderns, the political state is the organizational structure of life for the moderns. Driven by enframing, humans do not become individuals in a vacuum but in territorially specific, emotionally bound nation-states. The liberation of the human being from the supersensible order in modern times led her to technologically aided "conquest and domination of the world" and positioned her at its centre. The new order detached her from the original order of organically grown nature and natural community and placed her in definitive affinity with the mechanical understanding of nature and the new social order. According to Heidegger, the new social order "receives the character of society, that is, of an association. Here is the origin of the new concept of the State (social contract)" (2009: 119). Rising up as a nation and becoming a state is, thus, humanization itself, which is a way of making phenomena available and reserved for the sake of the human being, and without the total organization of the modern nation-state, this reduction would have been impossible.

Development of nations, as the organized concretion of the hidden essence of technology, is overtly and covertly warlike in its unfolding. A nation on the developmental path is either forthrightly combative or allies with forces big enough for war. Development as modernization reveals itself primarily as expanding the power, both economic and political, and influence of the nation undergoing it outside its borders. In doing so, it entices other nations to undertake modernization primarily in self-defence before its other possibilities dawn on them. *Militarization* and determining the militarization of non-militarized zones have been modernization at its best. After the successful experiment of Britain, development as modernization was always set in motion by the intrusion of a foreign power in a nation's affairs; it did not originate from a desire to improve the quality of life of people, but from a sense of "reactive nationalism" and wanting to increase national power (Arndt 1987: 13).[4] The hidden warlike essence of technoscientific rationality that drives modern culture, discloses development as combat. Rabindranath Tagore was a well-known enemy of warlike nationalism as the epigraph to this chapter says. In his 1917 lecture, *Nationalism*, Tagore criticized the nation-machine as a consequence of the long Western intellectual history of privileging the "gigantic abstractions of efficiency" and cultivating the professional human being to the detriment of the personal (1996, Vol. 2: 430).

For sure, Heidegger is speaking about the ontological understanding that gives rise to the violent ethos of late modernity rather than any particular instance of modern violence and war. His thesis is the ontological violence of reductive technological understanding, but his eyes were not closed to how this violent ontology concretized itself ontically in terms of the destruction of the earth, technological transformation of the human animal and the terrible devastation brought about by the atom bomb. His remark that the atom bomb is less deadly as a particular apparatus of death than it is as the sign of the death of human essence since long propelled by "the absoluteness of his sheer willing in the sense of his deliberate self-assertion in everything" (WP: 221), culminating in Nietzsche's metaphysics of the will-to-power, is also to be seen in ontological light. But, in our study of the planetary dispersal and concretion of the essence of technology, the willing national acceptance and the coercive-persuasive international dissemination of the historical form of technological ethos in the name of development in essentially but subtly violent ways throughout the global south is of prime concern. And so,

---

[4] Arndt's claim refers to his research on how economic development became a political programme in Japan, China and India. If the Meiji Restoration in Japan began in response to European colonization in the region, China's modernization began similarly in reaction to colonization but not in the Japanese top-down fashion but as a popular movement led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. In India, though M. K. Gandhi and several other thinkers of the anti-colonial struggle questioned the ethos of warlike modernization, independent India gradually succumbed to militarization and even nuclearization in the hope of increasing its prestige in the international arena, although according to the same techno-efficient calculation, India is home to the largest number of world's poor. (For a devastating attack on India's nuclear tests, see the essay Arundhati Roy wrote in the *Outlook* Magazine in August 1998, immediately after India's successful nuclear tests [see Roy 2002]).

it is to be affirmed unequivocally that the entrenchment of the violent essence of technological understanding in modern culture is reflected not only in the devastation of the earth through technological means but also in the increasing incidence of violence against humanity, especially powerless humanity.

What do we, then, make of Kant's influential opinion that democracies will usually be shy of war? Empirical evidence seems to suggest that "there have been no significant differences between democratic or non-democratic states in terms of the proportional frequency of their war involvement or the severity of their wars" (Levy 1988: 661). Moreover, democracies have the tendency to look self-righteously at conflicts of interest as moral crusades aimed at complete victory and propagate "their own vision of the morally proper international order" (Levy 1988: 659). John Ulric Nef's post-war study, *War and Human Progress* (1950), argued that the new regulative ideals for societal transformation, efficiency and abundance, which replaced the transcendental values of the Christian civilization, was the underlying reason for the militaristic environment of his times (Nef 1950). In the next year, Herbert Marcuse published a largely positive review of Nef's book without concealing his surprise at Nef's benevolent view of the Christian civilization. Marcuse agreed that Nef could show "how the very same process which created the preconditions for a civilization without scarcity and repression came to refine and perpetuate—eventually by total war—scarcity and repression" (1951: 98). That is, in the pursuit of "ever more quantitative production of commodities under the incentive of profit and toward ever greater efficiency" the industrial society lost sight of all other goals but the goal of transforming "man as well as nature into efficient and exploitable material" (Marcuse 1951: 98–99). The glorification of military service as the noblest mission of the citizen and nationalism as the new religion, in effect, paid homage to the essence of technology.

While the overtly combative angle of modernization is problematic, the *war-like ethos* it creates covertly in the whole political spectrum is even more troubling. The sense of inevitability about war cultivated in political rhetoric, carefully couched in reason, necessity, morals, urgency, and the eschatology of peace brought about by war alone, has made war a virtue. The fact of war is unimportant; war in fact may not be waged at all on the frontline. What peace-by-war aims to create inevitably gets created: gigantic military buildup, jubilant battle-readiness, fear of the unknown, polarization of the allies and the enemy-other, and creation of the weapons market. The unholy alliance between war and development is reflected in the dubious relationship that exists between market and war. Heidegger calls war and peace "the two sticks that savages rub together to make fire", and finds something disjointed in the logic of war securing peace and peace eliminating war. "How is peace to be secured by what it eliminates?" he asks. "Against this war-peace…", he observes, "we launch a peace offensive whose attacks can hardly be called peaceful" (WCT: 83). President Kennedy's inimitable utterance on the peace-by-war dialectic in 1961 is well-known: "only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed" (2010: 328).

   The central aspect of modernity, *emancipation*, is not merely emancipation from the immaturity of "inability to make use of one's intellect without the direction of another", as Kant famously argued in 1784 (2006: 17). To be modern in the "modern" sense also means to emancipate oneself from the power nature has over human materiality and from the power human sociality has over the individual. Development as modernization, thus, turns out to be both conquest of nature and victory of the individual over society. Charles Taylor sees the emancipation thesis as gone awry when he characterizes modernity as driven by instrumental efficiency and the atomistic attitude, both based on a technoscientific outlook towards the world and society (1991: 97–98). While the "humanizing force" of the emancipation thesis is undeniable, the human being's interconnectedness with the web of nature and community has come to be ruptured with the progress of humanizing-modernizing development. This two-pronged rupture revolves around an inauthentic conception of time. Modernization is a relentless striving to catch up with a future that has no authentic relation with the past and that forgets its finiteness.[5] In its warlike haste and yearning to make perfect the imperfect, development as modernization runs against the very finiteness, historicity and fragility of the human condition. The human condition is not something that perfectly transcends the non-human; human transcendence is itself finite. There can only be a contingent human emancipation, and not a perfect liberation of humans from their materiality and sociality. What is contested in development as modernization most fundamentally is the finitude of Being.

   Human emancipation from the uncontrollable forces of *nature* and positively restraining these forces is the primary work of development as modernization in its work as concretion of enframing. It is not merely that the mammoth nuclear power plant has taken the place of the lowly windmill. What has changed most fundamentally is the way of manifestation and the human outlook towards nature: the earth as a "coal mining district", the soil as a "mineral deposit", the river a "water power supplier", agricultural activity on land as "mechanized food industry" (QCT: 14–16). The technological view of nature today is no more a prerogative of the west; peoples everywhere are engulfed by the exigency to produce

---

[5] In *Being and Time* Heidegger writes about authentic and inauthentic historicality: "In inauthentic historicality … the way in which fate has been primordially stretched along has been hidden… Lost in the making present of the 'today,' it understands the 'past' in terms of the 'Present'. On the other hand, the temporality of authentic historicality, as the moment of vision of anticipatory repetition, *deprives* the 'today' of its character as present and weans one from the conventionalities of the 'they.' When, however, one's existence is inauthentically historical, it is loaded down with the legacy of a 'past' which has become unrecognizable, and it seeks the modern" (BT: 443–44). Regarding Dasein's finite temporalization towards its own end in death, Heidegger writes: "This entity does not have an end at which it just stops, but it *exists finitely*. The authentic future is temporalized primarily by that temporality which makes up the meaning of anticipatory resoluteness; it thus reveals itself *as finite* … [Dasein's] finitude does not amount primarily to a stopping, but is a characteristic of temporalization itself. The primordial and authentic future is the 'towards-oneself' (to *oneself*!), existing as the possibility of nullity, the possibility which is not to be outstripped" (BT: 378–79).

strategies and technologies ad infinitum to violently tame the powers of nature and manage/expand human capacities.

Emancipation of the individual, paradoxically, subserves to objectify the *human subject*. Although humans are not transformed into "mere standing-reserve", for they are also participants in the revealing of Being as resource alone (QCT: 18), in the sway of enframing, they too become defined by their resourcefulness. Nothing, not even the invincible modern human subject, is specially protected from the sway of enframing. "[H]e himself and his things", Heidegger observes, "are exposed… to the growing danger of becoming mere material, and mere function of objectification" (WP: 220). Technological understanding and its planetary avatar transform the essence of the human being: "man's nature and essence is adapted and fitted into the barely noticed Being of beings that appears in the nature of technology" (WCT: 238). Besides, humans become material as patients for a clinic, workforce for a factory, passengers for a train, wood suppliers for the timber industry, but more so as objectified population groups to be subjugated, colonized and normalized—normalized primarily for the healthy upkeep of the productive mechanism. The work of development makes the human being the essential worker. The primal violence here is the violence of representing-producing.

The war–peace logic is fundamental to the upkeep of the modern order, although the amenities of modern life are not realistically accessible to many. As I have argued, the question is not about the intrinsic flaw of modern flourishing; rather, the question is about manifold ways of flourishing, especially the non-efficient, non-technological forms of flourishing. Swayed by the violent essence of technology and its humanizing underpinning, the class of elites, who are the beneficiaries of the modern order across the globe, come together as the missionaries of modernization and protect it politically in warlike zeal. Why is this *problematic*? Primitives did go to war; the modern generation has not invented a new way of encountering the other. But the modern endangering of life—human and non-human—and the earth arrests the flourish of human ascent unprecedentedly. This devastation jeopardizes human life; furthermore, this is a grievous moral flaw because if we imagine our species as developing from less desirable forms of life to better forms, the mutually reinforcing relationship between development and war is problematic. It is also worrisome that the logic of warlike modernization rejects peaceable human flourishing within the world with others as an unwieldy, absurd idea. The violent power of the essence of technology is the hidden power behind the paradox of development-decadence.

3.3 The Work of Promise

Why does the warlike work of development as modernization go unchallenged? The Heideggerian answer revolves around the all-encompassing sway of enframing which crowds out other ways of encountering reality. It can be argued further that this sway works in the concretion of enframing as modernizing development

in terms of the *promise* to heal existence of its native struggle and strife. I take Heidegger's phrase "technologized animal" to mean existence deprived of its native strife and thus impoverished by the regimentation of the senses and moods, mechanical disciplining of the body and artificial isolation of existence from its constitutive "with".

There is an inalienable *strife* native to the human condition. Dasein—the onto-logical characterization of the human being in *Being and Time* in her/his concern for own existence—is a movement stretched between birth and death, and as such Dasein's existence is in no way considered tranquil. For sure, what is meant here is an ontological restiveness, but "the roots of the existential analytic, on its part, are ultimately *existentiell*, that is, *ontical*" (BT: 34). David Farrell Krell's excellent account, *Daimon Life*, brings to light Heidegger's debts to life-philosophy, and dwells on the turbulent nature of the human condition. "Existence bottoms out," he remarks, "life plummets without cease, until death" (1992: 152). In Krell's reading, Heidegger does not visualize "an effortless existence, not even for ani-mals" (1992: 250). In an early lecture course on factical life, Heidegger calls the movedness of life "ruinance" (*Unruhe*); he remarks that ruinant life constantly lacks something, and the determination of the "lack" is impossible (2001: 115). The notion of ruinance is an early version of *Being and Time*'s notion of *Verfallen* (existence turbulently falling into the world). Dasein can never abandon the strife of ruinant life, arising from its uncertainties regarding future possibilities, which have roots in Dasein's necessities (its own thrown past). Making authentic choices is a struggle, and "[o]nly in communicating and in struggling does the power of destiny become free" (BT: 436). As a bounded, finite stretch of possibilities, Krell tells us, there is an inalienable strife hidden in life as it constantly succumbs to possibilities which can degenerate. Stretched between the modalities of necessity and possibility, life's reality "will always be a bleak one… Life is loaded… and is self-burdening" (Krell 1992: 40).

But, the restive movement of life has a *counter movement* which limits and stabilizes ruinant life. This counter movement is the world-forming trait of Dasein. The world or horizon means "setting limits to the unfolding occurrence of life with a view to stabilizing the onrushing and oppressing torrent. The vital-ity of a living being does not cease with this *limiting* scope, but constantly takes its start from it" (N III: 86). The struggle takes off from Dasein's world but con-stantly moves forward towards death as immanent in the sense of being always already there and in the sense of being on the verge of advent (Krell 1992: 237). Ruinant, falling movement, strife and death—these are essentially characteristic of the human condition, and any promise to heal existence of its essential strife is a denial of its finitude.

Distress in the *Contributions* is also a distress of machination in its *denial of death*, of finitude of Being, of the primordially incalculable in the event of mani-festation of Being. In this sense, enframing and its organized manifestation as modernizing development is a struggle against the fundamental movement of life. What we are thus led to is what Heidegger calls "transition to the technologized animal" and becoming coarser of human instincts (CP: 78). Distress arises from

the lack of possibilities to break free of this tangle and, more bizarrely, distress means being attuned and eerily homely in mechanical comportments.

The work of enframing, in its avatar as modernization, gives rise to the belief that by the "peaceful release, transformation, stockpiling, and delivery of natural energies, man could make man's being bearable for all and happy in general" (WP: 221). This enticing humanistic promise is inherent in the notion of development and progress. The peace of this "peaceful exploitation" manifests as strife, but the strife is constantly covered up in the optimism that if certain other aspects of human life such as religion and ethics are retained unaffected all would be well. Such optimism is false because technological understanding is the essential human comportment towards the whole of Being and nothing stands outside its purview. Enframing is the dominant form of revealing or disclosure of entities within modernity, and smothers all other forms of revealing under its calculative, representative advance.

The warlike struggle against the turbulent currents of existence aims towards the stillness and harmony of getting existence firmly within *control*. The dystopian elements of this utopia of development as modernization become apparent in the boredom and anxiety of "technologized existence". Heidegger remarks that "the genuine unrest of the battle remains concealed, and in its place has stepped the restlessness of constantly more ingenious activity, which is pushed forward by the dread of becoming bored with oneself" (CP: 96). Anxious boredom defeats the tranquillity of existential rest, marked by the insulation of the human condition from its natural and social dimensions. This is nothing but the announcement of the strife of existence itself.

Freedom to live the spontaneous life of the individual, sheltered from the other person's interference by a set of rights, is a central aspect of the promise of modernizing development. And yet, ontologically, human identity is inevitably entangled within a social web. While Heidegger recognized this aspect of the human condition in his analysis of *Mitsein* (Being-with) and in characterizing authentic existence as a modified way of approaching everyday existence with others in *Being and Time* (BT: 224), he did not give a proper account of how technological understanding distorts the social dimension of the individual. The later Heidegger's turn of focus on Being rather than Dasein did not permit him to do so. In *Being and Time,* he considered the social (*das Man* or the They) as overburdening the individual. Emmanuel Levinas, on the other hand, takes off from this supposed lack in Heidegger's analysis of Dasein, and for him, sociality, the self's encounter with the Other, is not just definitive for its identity, but is the very challenge posed on the atomistic self's project of spontaneous life. "I, the same," he says, "am torn up from my beginning in myself, my equality with myself" (1991: 144). The ethical move within the self, according to Levinas, is contesting the ego's self-sufficiency. Modernizing development, which seals the self off from its sociality, can, thus, also be considered as a promise to ease the original ethical conflict within the self.

But, unfortunately, Levinas does not see technological reductionism even as a possible source for modern atomistic individualism. For him, the source, rather, is the Western representative understanding of cognizing the world and others, which

he does not see in any way as linked to technological reductionism. His humanism of the Other embraces technology because it "breaks idols and tyrannies", and "will someday make it possible for bread to be provided to all the men, women and children far and near who hunger", (2007: xvii), although in the hands of evil humans technology can become an instrument for the "accumulation of useless wealth" (2007: 84). But the twofold critique of modernity I have enunciated (that is, the ideal of the atomistic, self-contained individual, insulated both from the other person and from nature, leading to the deteriorating human relation to the social and the environmental worlds) can be seen as converging on the understanding of modernity as powered by representative objectification and the warlike essence of technology. Development as modernization, with its promise to heal existence of its native struggle, subserves the planetary dissemination of the essence of technology, and as such hides within itself possibilities for laying waste the human and the environmental worlds.[6]

The immediate danger before us today, thus, is the intensification of this ontological "tunnel vision" and its *appropriation all over the world*. In the essay, "Letter on Humanism" (1946), Heidegger called the oblivion of the way of manifesting of Being "homelessness", and ventured to state that this oblivion "is coming to be the destiny of the world" (LH: 258). Everyone is a Westerner today, even if imperfectly, and no one is unswayed by the seductive, morally tranquilizing, humanistically constructed essence of technology. Globalization of the market in its obviousness is nothing but the essence of technology finding its home everywhere. With the completion of the planetary sway of the essence of technology in its promissory sway, the danger of irreparably damaging the planet itself and the life it sustains has become real.

To be sure, we are beings that technologically intervene in nature from the start, for technology eases the strife of existence. Wear and tear, death and decay, pain and vulnerability, corruption and corrosion, and degeneration and death form the elemental region whereupon existential strife unfolds itself. The overwhelming, annihilative play of elemental strife has to be restrained, and the frail human existence has to be guarded from these powerful currents. Our technological dealings with the world are redemptive ways to tide over the elemental fury of existential strife. *Being and Time* already pictured the human being as primordially relating with things in their readiness-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*). Our everyday comportments towards the world in terms of care form the fundamental realm of meaning as such. Our primordial technological comportment has, in modern times, become a colossal struggle against existential strife. Development as the manifestation of the essence of modern technology attacks the earth, its living beings, and human life in its essence, and excludes the possibilities of encountering an exterior being *not* as a resource for manipulation from the site where it appears. Modern humans face a double bind: the seductive promise of eliminating existential strife and the warlike essence of technology as the means bestowed upon existence for achieving

---

[6] I shall revisit the question of sociality and community from a Heideggerian ontological perspective in Sect. 4.4.

this. Development as human flourishing, on the other hand, is being at peace with the strife inhering in being human and encountering strife *as* strife. It involves making peace with the curtailment of the self's free spontaneity in the face of the Other.

3.4 The Work of Subversion

"Technology", Heidegger remarks, "… most certainly will not be destroyed" (TT: 38). It cannot be wished away, and no one can revisit the site of no technology and no science. "What is dangerous is not technology", he states unequivocally. "There is no demony of technology, but rather there is the mystery of its essence. The essence of technology, as a destining of revealing, is the danger" (QCT: 28). Humans intervene in nature through technological mediums as workers and producers. Their intervention transforms the natural and eases the existential strife. The danger is the stealthy percolation of the essence of modern technology into every form of human understanding and its complete holding sway. The good news is, essences are dominant historical manifestations of Being, and there could be epochal transformation of essences. With such *transformation*, a new site of understanding could be granted to humans, and a different way of relating to the world could open up. However, the event of Being's manifestation is not a human creation, and so, can we meaningfully speak of the role of the human being in it? Do we merely stand and wait or act and usher in historical change?

I want to suggest that the mainstream interpretation of the later Heidegger's view of human agency as quietistic and fatalistic does not fully appreciate the inseparable bond that exists between Being and the human being according to his account. Being is not an entity; without the human being and her language, Being is mute and naught. Heidegger nowhere denies the ontologically exceptional status of the language-wielding being. "The world cannot be what it is or the way that it is through man, but neither can it be without man" (GS: 107). Human *agency* is not caprice but free response. An epochal ontological transformation is not a human creation ex nihilo, but, at the same time, a new understanding of Being cannot meaningfully come to be without the human being either. The point of emphasis is the way exterior phenomena impinge upon the human being in the process of the generation of meaning. Meaning is not created independently by humans but by negotiating with phenomena that affect them. Humans interpretively, ponderously respond to the event of Being's manifestation, and their subversive responses to the prevalent scheme of intelligibility and receptive responses to the new manifestation of Being are integral to the event itself. This means radical transformation of the respondent's existence (Thomson 2005: 64).

To be sure, technological understanding is the metaphysical (ontotheological) basis of the modern age and not one of the symptoms of its decadence. We are already in the time of the distress or "the compelling plight of forgottenness of beyng" (CP: 85), "a desolate time" (WP: 201), "the time of foundering" (GS: 107),

a time of waiting for the advent of a new manifestation of Being. An epochal onto-
logical transformation arises from radical critique, which is responding to "dis-
tress". Heidegger did not believe that modern humans are hopelessly entrapped in
technological understanding, but that they can "achieve an adequate relationship
to the essence of technology" (GS: 111) with the help of incisive thinking. Being
"needs man for its revelation, preservation, and formation" (GS: 107). Heidegger's
laying bare the hidden essence of technology is already a response to the distress, a
response to the devastation of the earth and the gross objectification of the human,
though the essence of the new manifestation of Being itself is still unclear; it has
not been granted to the thinker. The work of subversion presently is, thus, criti-
quing, thinking and poetizing, which is the way to keep ourselves ready for the
advent of a new understanding of Being (GS: 107). Nevertheless, Heidegger did
envision possibilities of existing which are subversive of technological nihilism
in a more proactive sense than thought as such. "Releasement towards things and
openness to the mystery", he writes, help us dwell "in the world in a totally dif-
ferent way", and "endure in the world of technology without being imperilled by
it" (MA: 55). But notice that releasement or openness is nothing but thinking as
responding to the historical disclosure of Being.

The work of subverting the war hidden in development as modernization, the
most visible facet of the hidden essence of modern technology in the global south,
takes into account the human responsibility for the flourish of all beings in terms
of Being, a "humanism that thinks the humanity of the human being from nearness
to Being" (LH: 261). The warlike impetus of societies to achieve modernization
can be subverted in any meaningful manner only if the enframing paradigm itself
loses its charm. Incisive critique is the first step in this regard.

If Heidegger's intuition that the saving power also grows in the site of danger
itself is right, the work of subversion should begin in the west, though in the age of
"the planetary imperialism of technically organized man" (AWP: 84), when "the
abandonment of beings by being" (homelessness) is "coming to be the destiny of
the world" (LH: 258), "the west" has significantly lost its territorial sense. "The
west" today is enframing itself, the planetary revealing of Being. But the modern
west, the north Atlantic world, is the site where the sway of Being's manifestation
as enframing first set sail and achieved its enticing miracles. Since the modular
centrality of the west holds true, a broadly understood Western subversive turn in
the warlike understanding of Being as resource for human manipulation is the con-
dition for the possibility of the work of subversion as such.[7] Other visions of
human flourishing cannot make their case in any meaningful manner, as long as
the global fascination with the ideal of development as modernization, grounded
in enframing, holds sway. Imperialism in the postcolonial times is predominantly
the imperialism of enframing, and its visibility as modernization. Technicity holds
the imperial subject under its seductive spell. The war that hides within enframing
would defeat the other understandings and reduce them to its own calculative,

---

[7] I shall engage further with the question of the centrality of the West in this regard in Chap. 7.

warlike essence, but paradoxically, these isolated resistances are the only ways to start, for their defeat bring to the fore the distress of human beings in the face of the reductive essence of technology.

The war on experiments and tendencies, traditions and ways of being outside the logic of the technological society is the unconsciously accepted morality of the current age. An example with regard to the matter of development is the way the story of the failure of Julius Nyerere's experiment of rural socialism (*Ujamaa*) in Tanzania is constructed. Nyerere's idealism is often singularly blamed for the failure, but it is forgotten that "as a way of teaching Tanzania a lesson and preventing other African countries from following her example, Western countries and the international financial institutions which they controlled, were bent on ensuring the failure of Ujamaa" (Ibhawoh and Dibua 2003: 72). The havoc wrecked by the policies of IMF and the World Bank go unnoticed in such constructions.

Development as human flourishing is living firmly on the earth, being awake to human community, mortality and fragility, and forsaking the illegitimate dream of a world without the strife of existence. Needless to say, development is also grappling with the fragility and strife of our existence, and for this, technological interventions are necessary. But the dream of overcoming the finiteness of the human condition itself, which seems to be guiding the development goal of modernization, is a denial of the human flourish.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

I shall end this chapter by calling to mind the cultural setting of seventeenth-century Europe where the ontological understanding spoken of in this chapter first began to come to the fore. Between two revolutionary publications took place a tremendous change of worldview, something unanticipated by the average European of the fifteenth century: the cleric Copernicus's *De revolutionibus* (1543) and Newton's *Principia* (1687). These were both works in natural philosophy, the new groundbreaking branch of knowledge that explained the operation of the cosmos in terms of direct observation of the natural world justified through mathematical argumentation. What happened between these two books is today called "scientific revolution", which, we must remember, was a major historical–cultural change, a change in the way Europeans and, later people all over the world, came to understand the world. Since then human understanding of the world has been transformed unrecognizably. A powerful, dominant new "truth" was born. But at the beginning of the scientific era, which is now a fully established, all embracing matter of fact for us, Copernicus hesitated to publish his magnum opus until his very last year and, that too, with a dedication to Pope Paul III to fend off ecclesiastical fury; his more illustrious successor, Galileo, who boldly published in defence of Copernicanism, was forced to recant his views before the inquisition and spent the last nine years of his life under house arrest. Without their intention, Galileo and Copernicus were participating in the Baconian project of creating knowledge for the "relief of man's estate", for they unravelled a view of all-that-is, of reality as such, which is reducible to a calculable and formulaic system. Today the humanistic strain of this understanding of Being in its emancipatory and egalitarian sociopolitical forms is a powerful way in which

reality itself is disclosed to us and the unprecedented force of this disclosure can no longer be experienced as trivial and dispensable. From here, the road to what Heidegger speaks of as that human relationship with all-that-is, which reduces everything to producible material, is not long. To be sure, for Heidegger, modern science is possessed by the essence of technology rather than the reverse, and it is the understanding of beings in terms of their resourcefulness that in his account guides both modern science and the incessant production of the miraculous apparatuses of technology.

I have recounted the difficult path that Copernicus and Galileo had to tread at the unsure beginnings of the scientific revolution only to say that another revolution, if it really is a response to contemporary phenomena, will have to tread the same difficult path. It has to beat incredulity and confront ridicule; it will have to be called the untruth, for our truths depend on our age's total interpretation of beings. Our truths are created by our tutored understanding, and understanding is trained by the dominant ontological vision of our age. Strangely, at the very moment, when the world created by the ontology of seventeenth-century Europe is gaining acceptance even in the global south as development/modernization, the contradiction and the impossibility of this world is also coming to the fore. Its violent logic, which Tagore describes as "this mad orgy of midnight with lighted torches", is to be faced, defied and transformed. That there is no transparency at present about the shape of this transformation should not prevent us from questioning and resisting this ontology. Tireless critique, bold acts of dissent and every little subversive gesture will contribute to its transformation. An epochal ontological transformation is like the rise of an anthill. After being in prolonged germination, a new understanding of Being unfolds stealthily so that we know that it is there only when it is already well set.

If technological understanding is about a closed field of disclosure, what is invoked as subversive of it is the open field of disclosure or simply openness-for-Being, which the human being in fact is. Technological culture and its violent and yet enticing ethos obstructs the openness, and so its subversion is invoked to open up the essence of the human being in order "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself" (BT: 58).

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Arndt, H. W. (1987). *Economic development: The history of an idea*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Derrida, J. (1964) 2001. Violence and metaphysics: An essay on the thought of Emmanuel Levinas (A. Bass, Trans.). In *Writing and difference* (pp. 97–192). London: Routledge.
Dreyfus, H. L. (2003). "Being and power" revisited. In A. Milchman & A. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Foucault and Heidegger: Critical encounters* (pp. 30–54). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Gandhi, M. K. 1960–94. *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, in 100 Vols. New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Goulet, D. (1971) 1973. *The cruel choice: A new concept in the theory of development*. New York: Athenaeum.

Heidegger, M. (1954) 1977. Science and reflection. (W. Lovitt, Trans.). In *The question concerning technology and other essays* (pp. 155–182). New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1921–22) 2001. *Phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into phenomenological research* (R. Rojcewicz, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1934) 2009. *Logic as the question concerning the essence of language* (W. T Gregory & Y. Unna, Trans.) Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ibhawoh, B., & Dibua, J. I. (2003). Deconstructing ujamaa: The legacy of Julius Nyerere in the quest for social and economic development in Africa. *African Journal of Political Science, 8*(1), 59–83.

Kant, E. (1784) 2006. An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?. (D. L. Colclasure. Trans.) In P. Kleingeld (Ed.), *Toward perpetual peace and other writings on politics*, *peace*, *and history* (pp. 17–23). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kennedy, J. F. (1961) 2010. Inaugural address. In A. M. Schlesinger & F. L. Israel (Eds.) *My fellow citizens: The inaugural addresses of the presidents of the United States*, *1789–2009* (pp. 324–329). New York: Infobase Publishing.

Krell, D. F. (1992). *Daimon life: Heidegger and life-philosophy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Levinas, E. (1961) 1979. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*. (A. Lingis, Trans.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1974) 1991. *Otherwise than being*, *Or beyond essence* (A. Lingis, Trans.). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1988) 2007. *In the time of the nations* (M. B. Smith, Trans.). London: Continuum.

Levy, J. S. (1988). Domestic politics and war. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 18*(4), 653–673.

Marcuse, H. (1951). Review of *War and human progress*: *An essay on the rise of industrial civilization* by John Ulric Nef. *The American Historical Review, 57*(1), 97–99.

Milchman, A., & Rosenberg, A. (Eds.) (2003). *Foucault and Heidegger*: *Critical encounters*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Nancy, J-L. (1986) 1991. *The inoperative community*. (P. Connor, and others Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Nandy, A. (1981). From outside the imperium: Gandhi's cultural critique of the 'west'. *Alternatives, 7*(2), 171–194.

Nef, J. U. (1950). *War and human progress: An essay on the rise of industrial civilization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Roy, A. (2002). The end of imagination. In *The algebra of infinite justice* (pp. 1–42). New Delhi: Penguin India.

Sawicki, J. (2003). Heidegger and Foucault: Escaping technological nihilism. In A. Milchman & A. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Foucault and Heidegger: Critical encounters* (pp. 55–73). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Tagore, R. (1996). In S. K. Das (Ed.), *The English writings of Rabindranath Tagore* (Vol. 2): *Plays*, *Stories*, *Essays* (Vol. 3): *A Miscellany*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Taylor, C. (1991). *The ethics of authenticity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Thomson, I. (2005). *Heidegger on ontotheology: Technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vallega-Neu, D. (2003). *Heidegger's Contributions to philosophy: An introduction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Young, J. (2002). *Heidegger's later philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 4
Capital, Individual and Development

…development, when it revalues aspects of culture traditionally latent or peripheral, usually ends up by underwriting the psychological demands of modernity—hard this-worldly individualism, unrestrained achievement needs, aggressive competitiveness, priority of productivity principles over the expressive ones, acceptance of a mechanomorphic view of nature, and so on. These traits were not unknown to the non-modern cultures in the pre-developmental times. However, there were elaborate cultural checks on the expression of the traits.
—Ashis Nandy, "Culture, Voice and Development", 13.

Abstract One of the demands that the technological understanding of Being makes on the human respondent is to "gather" the meaning of phenomena in terms of the logos of efficiency. Two manifest forms can be noticed by way of which the logos of efficiency is set to work: understanding all phenomena in terms of the calculative intelligibility of capital and understanding the human respondent in terms of the efficient agency of the atomistic individual. In this way, we can make sense of the liberal–capitalistic society in its global developmental form in line with the planetary impetus of the technological understanding of Being. Community or our primordial sociality may still be the only human form of restraint that can question, subvert and disrupt both the capitalistic measure of reality and the asocial and individualistic measure of the human being. However, the thought of community is commonly fraught with the same essentialist dangers as the militant, individualistic rule of capital, which is finding global acceptance in the name "development." Hence, Jean-Luc Nancy's Heideggerian notion of community without communion, a community that never can coagulate into a communal substance may be seen as a possible way of responding to the global reign of capital and individual.

Keywords Individualism · Capitalization · Technologized animal · Distress · Community · Sociality

The ahistorical and violent ontological trail of the technological understanding of Being in its pan-global manifestation as modernization has been the subject matter

of the last two chapters. In this chapter, I want to look at a third onto-historical trail of the new, modernist way of understanding all-that-is—efficiency logic. Efficiency logic stays afloat in modern cultural consciousness as the urgency to achieve the desired outcome, whatever be it, in terms of the economy of time and resource/input. Modernity's preoccupation with the shortening of time and space, and reduction of complexity at all levels to knowable, manageable, controllable and logically express-ible extents means the coming to play of efficiency logic in perceivable forms. In this way, the reality of phenomena comes to be attached to their manipulability and efficient ordering. Developmentalism firmly sets in place the cultural logic of effi-ciency. Two palpable forms of the logic of efficiency are: globally mobile capital and the abstract individual. The calculability of the real in terms of ever gainful and effi-cient capital, and the deworlding of the human being as the efficient individual (the technologized animal), who is herself sucked into the cultural logic of capital, I shall argue, have their ontological abground in the technological understanding of Being. Development as modernization operates unobtrusively to culturally institute the logic of efficiency. The calculative, cumulative logic of global capital, which lets be the modern individual, free and efficient, I believe, clarifies the several layers of the efficiency logic itself and its grounding in the technological understanding of Being.

My focus in this chapter is in fact on the transformation of the human agent as *homo economicus*, ontologically the technologized animal, alongside the establishment of the universal authority of formulaic thinking and efficiently growing capital even with regard to the great mass of humanity that does not stand to gain from this transfor-mation of human essence. In this transformation, an essential rupture is coming to play, a rupture of the essence of the human being as that being who fulfils herself amidst and with others. I argue that this rupture points towards the limits of the economic individ-ual and towards the truth of community, which have positive impacts on the texture of good life, however variously conceived. In this constructive move in the later sections of the chapter, I am wary of the danger of the fascist potential concealed in attempts to revisit the notion of community, as in Heidegger's encounter with National Socialism.

The first two sections of the chapter discuss the onto-historical trails of gain-ful capital and efficient individual. These two discussions are followed up with an examination of the dangers and disaffections arising out of the understanding of the human being as economistic and efficient individual. The alternative to the economistic, resourceful and efficient individual discussed in this chapter is both an understanding of the constitutive sociality of the individual and is an under-standing of community without the fascist trap. The techno-capitalistic reduction of things to their resourcefulness alone and an alternative ontological understand-ing in relation to that are taken up for discussion in a later chapter.

4.1 Capital: Intelligibility as Calculability

A conspicuous absence in the massive and manifold Heidegger oeuvre is a seri-ous analysis of capital. The obvious omission among German thinkers Heidegger seriously engages with is Karl Marx. However, the later Heidegger's view that late

moderns understand what-is as producible material to be bought and sold in the market is certainly addressing the Marxian concern regarding capital, although for Heidegger the apparent forms of capital and market are to be ontologically traced to technology. For him, communism, fascism and democracy are all essentially technological approaches to beings in their totality. Taking this lead, I proceed to show how capital as the disclosure of all beings in their calculability and capitalizability (Being/intelligibility as calculability) is an essential and planetary manifestation of the technological understanding of Being, and how Being in its calculability is taking its planetary form through development as modernization. My attempt here is to "follow Heidegger on his path of thought, which always means finding the phenomena about which Heidegger is thinking" as Dreyfus and Spinosa (2003: 316) recommend.

In *Contributions* (1936–38), the technological understanding of Being, referred to tentatively as machination, is understood in terms of makeability, as I have pointed out in the last chapter. The modern understanding of Being as object and even the medieval understanding of Being as created thing are conceived as arising out of the "concealed machinational interpretation of beings" (CP: 100).[1] Machination, however, frees beings to appear within a thoroughly restrained space of intelligibility, which is "[t]he schema of thorough and calculable explainability, whereby everything draws equally close together to everything else and becomes completely foreign to itself" (CP: 104). This gross levelling and standardization, the ontological restraint on beings to emerge and manifest themselves in their deep difference, the equivalence of beings as resource, and the authority gained by the phenomena of calculation, speed and massiveness Heidegger calls "the forgottenness of Being" or nihilism. The forgottenness of Being by human beings is an abandonment of beings by Being. It means both that "beings are deprived of their very essence (being) in what Heidegger conceives as the present era of machination" and that Being is "experienced to sway essentially as withdrawal, yet a withdrawal through which beings may become manifest as such" (Vallega-Neu 2003: 57).

---

[1] Heidegger understands machination/enframing as arising out of the long Western history of the Platonic–Aristotelian interpretation of Being as idea, stretching up to Nietzsche's notion of the will (CP: 100). This interpretation is conceived as weakening and gradually subverting the pre-Socratic understanding of Being as *phusis* or emergence. Heidegger says that "*phusis* as emergence" can be experienced everywhere as in the rising of the sun, the surging of the sea, the growth and flowering of plants, coming forth of animals from the womb and so on. But *phusis* or the emerging sway for the early Greeks, he adds, is not one process among others, but "Being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable" (IM: 15). Heidegger's understanding of the essence of the human being as the openness for Being or the space for disclosure, and his understanding of truth as unconcealment are all rooted in the early Greek understanding of Being as *phusis* or emergence. According to him "for the Greeks, disclosure and emergence prevail in the essence of every originarily emergent being (1992a: 106), which he named 'the clearing' or disclosedness in *Being and Time*. Heidegger's notion of 'another beginning' as opposed to the decadent tradition means confronting the 'unsurpassable' first beginning, emergence or disclosure, and repeating it by reaching ahead and encroaching "differently each time on that which it itself initiates" (CP: 45).

Among the three authoritative ways of manifestation of phenomena in the modern epoch—calculation, speed and massiveness—the calculative interpretation of Being comes to the foremost of all in the global dispersal of the techno-scientific manner of mathematical reasoning. In the global fascination with clear rules, principles and formulas, with planning and ruling, with the certainty, speed and size of production, with the priority of organization, and with the denouncement of any "freely developing change", calculative machination comes to the fore. In this way, what is presently incalculable is to be subsequently mastered in terms of calculability. With the abandonment of beings by Being, there is no power whatsoever that can reveal the limits of the calculable. This too is nihilism. Heidegger's point is regarding calculation as a human comportment in general towards what-is and not as the achievement of a personal skill or talent, or our deliberate calculations, which "pertain to all human proceedings" (CP: 96). Hence, the technological understanding of Being manifests itself in terms of a transformed human essence. The human being is transformed from being the openness to the incalculable mystery of ontological difference to the closed field of Being's manifestation as the calculable, the speeding and the gigantic.

The logos of efficiency or effectiveness lets us encounter phenomena in a predominantly calculative, efficacious and utilitarian manner. Efficiency is the power to actualize, "the capability to be effective, to make secure, to calculate and arrange successes" (M: 167). That which cannot be actualized efficiently in terms of the calculative comportment is meaningless and less than real according to the logos of efficiency, or the versatile, dynamic and creative prowess put at the service of effective, successful producing. Because modern intelligibility is inundated in the power of calculated, speedy and successful achievement, the logs of what Heidegger calls "essential thinking" cannot become manifest. The powerlessness of such thinking and the solitude of such thinker, therefore, are causes for celebration, for the immediate ineffectiveness of essential thinking marks it off from the dominant logos of efficiency (CP: Sect. 18).

Throughout *Contributions* and its sequels, *Mindfulness* and *The Event*, several everyday consequences of the calculative comportment, arising out of the technological understanding of Being or machination, are discussed. The calculative comportment pushes people to the cities and to the factories for work. Workers are thus "torn out of homeland and history", and farmers are turned into "wage-earners". For Heidegger, the capitalistic transformation, arising out of the machinational understanding of Being, is not a constructive change, just as for Marx it is exploitative.[2] "What sort of transformation of the human being is setting in here?"

---

[2] But for both it is a destiny—the dialectical unfolding of historical materialism for Marx and a long chapter in the unfolding history of Being for Heidegger. The difference is, for Marx and Hegel the dialectic unfolding of history is lawful and necessary, but for Heidegger, as we saw in the second chapter, historical unfolding is neither simply freakish nor scientific and law-abiding. Historical unfoldings can be hermeneutically traced to history's beginning and to the interpretive vagaries following out of history's beginning. For Marx, although capitalism is exploitative, it is nevertheless progressive. For Heidegger, capitalism, rather, is regressive from the point of view of the abandonment of beings by Being at the end of metaphysics, although capitalism arises out of the essential unfolding of the history of Being.

asks Heidegger. "Machination and business. The huge number, the gigantic, sheer expansion and ever-greater leveling down and emptying. The inexorable deterioration into what is ungenuine, into kitsch" (CP: 310). Undoubtedly, the industrialized, technologized and capitalistic society in its pan-global avatar is Heidegger's concern. The global attuning and training of human beings in mechanics, machination and business is his focus. In the machinational sway, sweeping all the earth, the worldly/cultural character of things is replaced with their object/resource character. In this global sway, all things appear as producible–deliverable output within the frame of industry–market network. Heidegger writes:

> What is human about humans and thingly about things is dissolved, within the self-assertion of producing, to the calculation of the market value of a market that is not only a global market spanning the earth but that also, as the will to will, markets in the essence of Being and so brings all beings into the business of calculation, which dominates most fiercely precisely where numbers are not needed (WP: 219).

The entrapment of modern human understanding within the logos of efficiency and calculation is realized concretely in the productive–distributive system. Thus, modernization means securing the essence of the human being, the essence of the thing and the essence of Being as such within the productive–distributive system, powered by the logos of calculation and efficiency. Essential thinking (philosophizing about essences in their historicity) also is increasingly becoming infested with the need for efficient output, numbers and calculation. In short, the entrapment of moderns within the industry–market network with the compulsion to produce and distribute efficiently is the most concrete manifestation of enframing.

The hegemony of calculability, efficiency and capital in various aspects of contemporary life is too obvious to mention. In *The Principle of Reason* (1955–56), Heidegger shows how the Leibnizian principle of sufficient reason ("nothing occurs without sufficient reason"), the calculability of all-that-is and the technological understanding of Being are intimately intertwined. "Modern technology pushes toward the greatest possible perfection. Perfection is based on the thoroughgoing calculability of objects. The calculability of objects presupposes the unqualified validity of the *principium rationis*" (PR: 121). Quoting approvingly from the American magazine, *Perspectives*, Heidegger concludes that the late modern human being has moved from "the production of goods to the earning of money in order to be able to purchase and enjoy goods" (PR: 122). The quantum of goods and the quantum of purchasing power are both dependent on the ability of the worker–consumer to calculate and enumerate sufficient reasons. Contradiction-free scientific theorizing, which is able to split atoms and produce an unimaginable quantum of atomic energy, Heidegger says, is once again dependent on the spotless manner of calculating and rendering sufficient reasons. He also characterizes mid-twentieth century as the "information age", where information means "the appraisal that as quickly, comprehensively, unequivocally, and profitably as possible acquaints contemporary humanity with the securing of its necessities, its requirements, and their satisfaction" (PR: 124). The order of information also obeys the demand to calculate and the compulsion to enumerate sufficient reasons.

But the entanglement of modern human consciousness in the demand to render calculable value for all-that-is, even plainly in terms of capital, is probably most apparent in something like the insurance price tag attached to human life. Life insurance is a monetary method of attaching calculable value to a particular life. All these aspects of modern life, held secure in a calculative-reasons-rendering-frame, Heidegger argues, further plunge modern existence into the most insidious form of violence, which, paradoxically, makes life itself insecure and uninsured. He ironically remarks in parenthesis that "Leibniz, the discoverer of the fundamental principle of sufficient reason, was also the inventor of 'life insurance'" (PR: 124), probably to link up hermeneutically the strange ways of the technological understanding of Being in terms of which it holds together its various trails such as calculability, rationality, capitalization[3] and the insured sense of security arising from the fundamental violence concealed in enframing.

Capital is the transactional form of calculative intelligibility, which establishes global confidence in the viability of the technological age in equivalent terms everywhere. This call is heard in the global south today as "development". In this sense, what is established by modern capitalistic, communist or fascist political systems is nothing but the reign of capital's abground—the kernel dimension of enframing, namely calculative intelligibility.

According to Marx, the universal essence of capital is money that is transformed into commodities and back again into money in order to be perpetually in circulation for the sake of gathering upon itself a surplus value or a value that is disproportionate to its original value (1954: 146). On the basis of the above exposition of Heidegger's account of calculative intelligibility and its more apparent forms manifested through the productive and distributive system, I argue that capital defined in the Marxian fashion is yet another manifestation of the technological understanding of Being rather than the reverse, although Heidegger's own encounter with the Marxist theory of capital or with any theory of money was extremely limited to say the least. Levinas complains that Heidegger did not phenomenologically examine money because "the notion of exchange as such reflected too explicitly on the Jews" (2001b: 190). Herbert Marcuse is unsure "whether Heidegger ever really read Marx, whether Heidegger ever read Lukács" (2005b: 166). But Marcuse was confident in the beginning of his career that a new Marxist analysis of capital could take off from a Heideggerian ground (Marcuse 2005a), and Habermas thought that this early phase of Marcuse "was not simply a whim … that it is impossible to correctly understand the Marcuse of today without reference to this earlier Marcuse" (quoted in Wolin and Abromeit 2005: xi). I maintain, on the other hand, that even without any direct engagement with Marx or Lukács and even if Heidegger's theorization of capital is extremely limited, it is possible to show within the terms of Heidegger's understanding of the essence of technology that the most important form of the efficiency logos of the technological

---

[3] Capitalization is used here in the sense of converting what is disclosed to one into its money value or into capital.

understanding of Being, manifested in the privilege enjoyed by calculative thinking in the late modern age, is the elusive and yet real, globally mobile capital. If technological understanding means an understanding of Being as resource that can be stockpiled for human use at will, and if such stockpiling of the energies of nature and human beings has increasingly become invisible and virtual, quantifiable and tradable, then, undoubtedly, the ever mobile, perpetually circulating, cumulatively growing capital is one of the most significant, effective and at the same time mysterious manifestations of technological understanding.

Jacques Ellul observes in *The Technological Society* (1964) that technical consciousness precedes every special interest that feeds and drives that consciousness, "but not necessarily any particular interest; say, the capitalistic interest or the moneyed interest" (1964: 53). Ellul emphasizes that the capitalist interest is in no way central to technical consciousness. He uses the term "technique" to mean rationally arrived at methods for the sake of achieving absolute efficiency. For Ellul, technique is the all-encompassing modern "technical consciousness" that powers modern pursuits after spiritual techniques, capitalistic techniques, statecraft or artistic and educational techniques. Heidegger and Ellul agree on the fundamentality of technology/technique for modernity, although Heidegger is not speaking about "technological consciousness" but about "technological understanding of Being". If we look for the differences between Heidegger's and Ellul's understanding of technology, as Taylor and Harris do (2005: 63–65), other than the ontological difference, for Heidegger, the capitalistic interest seems to be central to the calculative dimension of the technological understanding of Being, as I have shown. Communist and democratic political arrangements are essentially the same in reducing all beings and thus the Being of beings itself into quantifiable, cumulatively multiplying, ever mobile and circulating, world-conquering capital. The calculative advance of capital in increasingly virtual, indiscernible and, at the same time, banal but factually effective forms across the globe is grounded on the long-drawn-out sedimentation of the technological comportment, which has become ontologically definitive for humanity.

A closer look at Heidegger's stress on *the essence of technology as nothing technological* is helpful to get at the centrality of capital as the effectively and cumulatively growing calculative intelligibility with which technological modernity advances. The essence of technology is not Ellul's technique: the "totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency" (1964: xxv; emphasis removed). It is not Bruno Latour's "philosophy, or the reflection, or the science about techniques" (2005: 125). Rather, the essence of technology is a particular, culturally and historically locatable revealing or disclosure of everything-that-is, whether gods or idols, women or men, nature or animals, arts or artefacts, and sciences or technologies/techniques to the human being as resourceful material, which is increasingly turning out to be a planetary disclosure. A demand placed on the human being to calculate, measure, quantify and reduce phenomena to the objective–rational form is constitutive of the technological understanding of Being, and this demand urges the human being to produce increasingly bigger, faster and more complex forms. In terms of this demand and the consequent

human comportment, a technological device can and does sometimes appear less technological than a non-technological item of the world. To a manager in a factory, steeped in technological disposition, a perfectly skilled worker could appear more technologically productive than a piece of machinery.

Hence, the essence of technology is nothing technological; it is not a technological item or object; in fact, the essence of technology is not an entity at all but the way of presencing of entities or Being. Technological disposition can reduce a spiritual quest like yoga to a technique, an objectifiable and measurably expressible form (see Strauss 2002). Technological revealing can reduce even what is resistant to reduction to an objectifiable form. Since technological revealing is primarily representing–producing, capital and capitalization are central to the reductive/productive process. Accordingly, something like yoga could take a global form, be deworlded, objectified and commodified as a technique of body and mind mastery, a multimillion dollar business, and can be projected as "the spiritual logic of late capitalism" (Urban 2003: 254). Similarly, Christianity is appropriated as the lighted, noble path to capital by way of what is called "the Protestant ethic". These trajectories of capital have been much studied. According to Heidegger, the colossal hegemony of calculative intelligibility can be overcome "only when we do not set up our essence exclusively in the precinct of production and command, of utilization and defense" (WP: 223). Modern self-understanding as "deliberate self-assertion along the ways and by the means of absolute production" means the global expansion of the rule of the essence of technology by means of the calculative logos of capital.

Heidegger argues that the essence of modern materialism is the "metaphysical determination according to which every being appears as the material of labour" (LH: 259), or production or "objectification of the actual through the human being". Accordingly, the modern subject attains her essence through labour/production/objectification/representation. In Heidegger's history of Being, the essence of modern materialism is concealed in the essence of technology because if materialism is the disclosure of what-is as material for labour, then this disclosure is possible only within the more primordial disclosure of what-is in terms of enframing. Communism and capitalism are two different political forms of the same essence of technology and of materialism. They are paths by means of which the essence of the modern western understanding of Being can take a global form, as the technological understanding of Being is in "the essential course of a dawning world destiny that nevertheless in the basic traits of its essential provenance remains European by definition" (LH: 259–260). However, it is not really as philosophy that European metaphysics goes global, points out Heidegger. Thinking or philosophy is falling behind and is ending "in the sense of its complete dissolution into the sciences", is unified in "cybernetics", and European metaphysics as science and cybernetics is gaining in power all over the world, the dominating trail of which "cannot be stopped by an intervention or offensive of whatever kind" because the sciences and cybernetics arise out of the world-destined planetary essence of technology (LH: 259, n.a). Both communism and capitalism pay homage to the dissolution of thinking into the sciences, as they concretize the essence of technology in terms of modernization and increased production. Their difference seems to lie in the way the communist strives

to arrest the magical, cumulative and gain-making power of capital in the hands of the capitalist. This classical Marxist solution is in no way awake to the danger inherent in the essence of technology. In fact, it is possible to think that the Marxist way, on account of its thoroughly technological understanding, is or can be never fully divorced from the logos of capital, as real communism, as in China for example, would make us believe (see Coase and Wang 2012). At the same time, any subversive intent regarding the planetary trail of technological understanding cannot even take a single step ahead without a similar intent regarding globally mobile capital.

Laurence Paul Hemming's excellent recent book *Heidegger and Marx: A Productive Dialogue over the Language of Humanism*, is centred on the important question of "the fate of Europe and that very *being* of Europe which has become a global affair" (2013: 275). At a point in his study, Hemming expectedly enquires into Heidegger's understanding of capital. He begins with observing that for both Marx and Heidegger, the machine is a historical event, not merely a tool. Referring to the untranslated GA-76 on the metaphysics of modern science and technology, Hemming sees Heidegger also thinking like Marx that the introduction of the machine and the "machinic generation of goods" historically produced the class of humanity called the "proletariat" as it became acceptable that "the masses are the ones who can least do without this means of production". Referring to Heidegger's remark, "with machine-production—command over men, accumulation of 'capital' and at the same time expansion of the proletariat" (quoted in Hemming 2013: 51), Hemming asks if it is not a hint that Heidegger, like Marx, is recognizing that the misery of the proletariat arises from the historical development of capital. But he observes that for Heidegger *the misery of the proletariat arises from the technological understanding of Being*, leading to Being's forgetfulness: "technology does not save and make 'work' easier in a particular sense, rather, it only transforms it and through the essential alteration of work it carries out the reinforcement of the forgetfulness of Being" (quoted in Hemming 2013: 51).

But Hemming recognizes the fundamental connections Heidegger makes between work, technology and capital, all of which arise out of technological understanding and the consequent forgetfulness of Being. When frenzied accumulation of capital drives human beings to war and inhumanity, domination and possession for the sake of it, fabulous achievements and unimaginable sophistication, the essence of technology is their overwhelming framework of meaning their interpretation of beings as a whole. They understand things, people and events as meaningful or meaningless according to the regulation and governance of calculative intelligibility; everything appears to them in one manner or another, capital as well in its remarkable feats, according to the light shed on them by technological disclosure. Enframing or technological understanding is marked out from all previous and yet unmanifested revealings of Being in this that "it drives out every other possibility of revealing" (QCT: 27). Capital, thus, in its dexterous, undecipherable, ever-transforming forms, is the play of technological understanding coming to its own.

While analysing what he calls the "informational economy of relations" Krzysztof Ziarek argues that "capital itself has become informational in nature … [whereby] all that exists appears to be constituted into a form of availability, into an existence that has an informational structure, in principle open to manipulation

and reprogramming" (2007: 56). Notice that in such a conception, the essence of capital itself is taken to be what Heidegger calls enframing or *Gestell*. Ziarek, thus, invokes Michael Eldred's suggestion of a postmetaphysical (read Heideggerian) understanding of the Marxian notion of capital. But Eldred's attempt is an interesting manner of outwitting Heidegger's tendency to "subsume Marxism underneath the standpoint of his thinking of the essence of technology as a 'destiny of the history of Being'" (Eldred 2011: 12–13) by offering a Heideggerian ontological analysis of capital. According to Eldred, the essence of capital is nothing economic or capitalistic just as the essence of technology is nothing technological. It, rather, is what Eldred calls "the win", the gainful game, which is "neither profit nor winnings nor a purely economic magnitude, nor the successful result of a human struggle or human labour, but the gathering of the gainable" (2011: 70). This essence of capital according to Eldred just like the essence of technology opens the world in its meaning for the human being and appropriates her essence.

The win as the essence of capital effectively means calculative intelligibility itself; that is, the loss of ontological solidity for realities that cannot be drawn into the circuit of cumulative valorization and profitability. Eldred subordinates Heidegger's conception of the technological understanding of what-is to the gainful intelligibility of capital with the observation that Heidegger "wastes not a single word about the subsumption of things and humans … underneath the value-forms or the competitive compulsion to valorize economically" (2011: 75) and that for him economic issues, which are primary for Marx, are merely ontic (2011: 17). Our above analysis shows however that the former claim of Eldred is not an accurate description of Heidegger's oeuvre, while the latter is, because for Heidegger, the ontological abground of the productive processes of the market and economy, as discussed in "Why Poets?" (1946), is the technological understanding of Being, and not the reverse, as Marx held. However, calculative intelligibility and cumulative gain are, for Heidegger, socio-economic forms that arise out of the efficiency logos of technological understanding. Without the logos of efficient capitalization, the understanding of what-is as resource for manipulation cannot be allied with the modern sense of subject–object relation. Hence, taking the Heideggerian history of Being seriously, the win that singles out the dexterous designs of capital according to Eldred may be considered as the logos of efficient capitalization concealed within the ontologically near and ontically distant "enframing". Further ontological layers as the win and ontic realities as the market and economy can be traced to enframing.[4] Without the calculative intelligibility of

---

[4] As we read in *Being and Time*, "entities can be experienced 'factually' only when Being is already understood, even if it has not been conceptualized" (BT: 363). Heidegger's efforts since 1936 at least have been to characterize the deeply hidden ontological layers of the historical west. The phenomenological rule that "[t]hat which is ontically closest and well known, is ontologically the farthest and not known at all; and its ontological signification is constantly overlooked" (BT: 69) is operational in the analysis of *Gestell* as well. The phenomenological task is to lay bare the structures of the ontologically significant phenomena, lying more buried and concealed than something like capital and the economy, which are palpably real in comparison with the essence of technology as enframing.

the technological understanding of Being neither is money capital nor is the machine technology in the way both capital and technology are central to modern existence. Heidegger's analysis, even if it failed to dwell adequately on key ontic manifestations of technological understanding as capital, economy and the market, the argument about the reductive understanding of all-that-is as resourceful material for production is widely recognized as far-reaching and significant.

"Technological development", observes Frederic Jameson, "is however on the Marxist view the result of the development of capital rather than some ultimately determining instance in its own right" (1991: 35). Heidegger reverses this Marxian view just as he reverses the historical view that technological modernity is an after-effect of the age of science. Further, for Heidegger, the Marxian understanding of human alienation in the face of the capitalist mode of production is rooted in the homelessness of modern humans arising from the forgetfulness of Being. But Marx's experience of human alienation, says Heidegger, lets him see an essential dimension of Western history more insightfully than Husserl or Sartre, and thereby "that dimension within which a productive dialogue with Marxism first becomes possible" (LH: 259) is denied to both phenomenology and existentialism. For Heidegger, a productive dialogue with Marxism demonstrates that its materialistic metaphysics, just as Nietzsche's metaphysics of the will, are ontological expressions of the humanism hidden in the technological understanding of Being. Since communist materialism means the disclosure of what-is as material for labour and capitalist materialism means the disclosure of what-is as material for production, "the self-establishing process of unconditioned production… is the objectification of the actual through the human being, experienced as subjectivity" (LH: 259). Indeed, Marx envisaged the ultimate communist society as the ultimate victory of the human subject. We read in the "Critique of the Gotha programme" (1875):

> In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; *after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual*, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: *from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!* (Marx 2000: 615; my emphasis).

The ideal communist society of Marx is a technological society. In the final communist society, through technologically aided processes, labour not only produces its goods but ultimately produces subjectivity itself anew. Hemming writes:

> Marx's concern with technology arises precisely because through the technical control of the means of production the productive forces can be heightened and allowed to advance, such that communism itself can be ushered in—this communism which is above all a certain relatedness and production of the *individuum*, the subject as such (absolute subjectivity) (2013: 253).

Hence, for Heidegger, both communism and capitalism are distinct sides of the same Western history of Being, and as such, both are manifestations of the

technological understanding of Being. Both glorify self-assertive unconditional production, though from varied stances of emphasis, namely labour power and capital power. Both obey the calculative logic of the technological understanding of Being, and both assert the human domination of all-that-is with no or insufficient appreciation of the counterdomination of the human essence itself by the essence of technology. Both communism and capitalism further entrench the logos of technology albeit under two distinct rubrics.

I have been arguing so far that a meaningful postmetaphysical and posthuman engagement with the logos of capital can meaningfully subsume that logos under the deeper ontological layer of the technological understanding of Being in terms of its calculable intelligibility as such. However, Heidegger's seeming reduction of the problem of justice, the intuitive force of which Marx brought to the fore and championed inimitably, to the merely modernist (and thus passing) phase in the history of Being, anchored on the dualistic and humanistic metaphysics of subjectivity, to say the least, calls for further interrogation. To this end, I shall here make only two remarks, which will be taken up for detailed questioning in the next chapter on ethics, justice and development.

 (i) Heidegger's postmetaphysical reversal of Marx's subjective materialism does not mean at all that he was thereby looking towards something like an objective view of consciousness. His postmetaphysical, post-Cartesian move aims to break with the subject–object, inside–outside and mind–world dualism. *Being and Time*'s most celebrated anti-Cartesian move gives us an account of ourselves as always already impinged on by the outside, by the world, by society and culture, and by everything concrete, fascinating, troubling and engaging, which we appropriate in our self-engagement in terms of the possibilities they hold for us. Self-understanding is concretely located within its milieu. To the abyssal Being of the person is attached an abground—a thereness/hereness. Such is the meaning of the concept of Dasein.

(ii) If this were so, Heidegger's attempt to break with binaries such as realism–idealism, naturalism–anti-naturalism or materialism–spiritualism is to be considered a genuine attempt to go beyond them, and we should not fail to see in this going beyond binaries also an equally genuine attempt to go beyond Marxism without having to relinquish the Marxian concern with justice and alienation. In the 1970, essay Levinas observed that both "the most influential philosophic thought of our century" (Heidegger's philosophy) and the social sciences (structuralism) rejected subjectivity by "sending the subject, the individual, his unicity and his election back into ideology, or else rooting man in Being, making him its messenger and poet" (2006: 61). Levinas rejected, writes Richard Cohen, "the legerdemain of the anti-humanist naturalism that drives Heideggerian ontology" (2006: xxviii). I contend that Heidegger rejected the modern humanistic triumphalism of Hegel and Marx without thereby embracing "anti-humanism". As being-in-the-world, Dasein is meaningful self-interpretation (and so not something naturalistic as such) by way of transcendence towards the world (and so not something spiritual as such), made meaningful

through its engagements with human and non-human phenomena that matters to it. For Levinas and for the whole modern tradition, which includes Marx, the human element has priority in the constitution of the self, whether it be the other or the ego. Levinas's claim that Heidegger compromised this priority does not hold water when we look at *Being and Time*'s discussion of the "who" of Dasein (§25), of Being-with (§26) and especially of historicality (§74). Heidegger's later postmetaphysical, post-technoscientific and posthuman turn emphasizes our care-invested being towards the world as a response towards presencing rather than as construction or projection of meaning upon it. His response to modern humanistic triumphalism in relation to the destructive materialistic progress of history is "distress". In this progress, he sees the dissolution of what is "human about humans and thingly about things" (WP: 219), and "care" (the primordial way of being human in terms of taking issue with Being) itself transforming into "deliberate self-assertion along the ways and by the means of absolute production" (WP: 223). The modern way is alarmingly disclosing everything as mere material for production, distribution and consumption. This is the meaning of machination or enframing. Heidegger's critique of Marx in the Letter originates from such a concern. I shall argue in the next chapter that a genuinely critical encounter with the question of justice is opened up by the Heideggerian concern and that such an encounter has immense meaning for the contemporary critical discourse of development.

In the hyper-critical, *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (1992 and 2010), surprisingly there is no entry titled "capital". And yet, on almost every page of the Dictionary, the cumulative proliferation of capital, with the global north continuing to be its privileged point of ultimate arrival, sucking into its self-referential orbit the ever-depleting resources of the planet, is a constant theme. Wolfgang Sachs writes in his Introduction to the first edition of the Dictionary that President Truman's invention of the "underdeveloped world" in 1949 had little to do with justice or global fraternity but was a ploy in the gainful game of capital.

> The rising influence of the Soviet Union—the first country which had industrialized outside of capitalism—forced him to come up with a vision that would engage the loyalty of the decolonizing countries in order to sustain his struggle against communism. For over forty years, development has been a weapon in the competition between political systems (2010a: xvii).

It appears that without the miraculous cumulative capacity of capital, there cannot be development—a term that has itself inherited capital's cumulativeness and unstoppable growth momentum. But Heidegger's preoccupation with the calculative intelligibility of enframing does not point towards the dispensability of capital in the conduct of economy and exchange. Every historical form is necessary in as much as total epochal interpretations of Being come into presence, and every historical form is contingent in as much as epochs of Being withdraw from presence. Heidegger's musings, rather, are a distressed response towards the planetary "fate" of technological understanding in its calculative valorization of beings in terms of capital.

According to Heidegger, something specifically European is overwhelming the world in various guises somewhat inevitably. Behind the mask of justice and fair play, development as modernization, powered by the techno-modernist rule of cumulatively growing, flexibly virtual and globally mobile capital, is already indigenized and idealized as the goal of societies everywhere. For Heidegger, these changes stand for the invisible force of technological understanding as he puts it ponderously:

> In all areas of his existence, man will be encircled ever more tightly by the forces of technology. These forces, which everywhere and every minute claim, enchain, drag along, press and impose upon man under the form of some technical contrivance or other—these forces, since man has not made them, have moved long since beyond his will and have outgrown his capacity for decision (MA: 51).

What Heidegger points towards is the contemporary Western epoch of Being in its planetary trajectory, and thus, the birth of new truths all over the world, tailor-made for that understanding of Being. In this way, what was previously revealed as meaningful forms of good life to people of the global south have to be now weighed against the logos of efficiency, objectivity, calculability and individuality. This is certainly a loss, a loss cheerfully accepted by people all over and the full extent of which is still unclear. What is called for is reflectively encountering this loss, which could bring to the fore another disclosure of the real. That there are incalculable, invaluable aspects to existence is effortlessly clear to non-modern people. But incalculable aspects of existence are today questionable and probably are gradually becoming illegitimate even in the global south. Can these aspects, withheld from Being by enframing, once again shine in their presence? Can societies of the global south, still only partially engulfed by enframing and thus still able to see the dying embers of the incalculable, help humanity retrace its steps? These questions I believe are central to Heidegger's philosophy.

Global optimism regarding the success of technological society, centred on the calculability of intelligibility (and also on the inviolability of the individual as I argue in the next section), is often undercut by the fashionable assertion that technological society is "unsustainable". The question concerning sustainability is really a question about sustaining "resources" for optimal technological exploitation. The Marxist critique of capital and technology merges the question of sustainability with the question of equality and justice. Heidegger's proposal is to abandon the question of sustainability and unsustainability and to focus on letting beings appear in their Being as distinctly and variously as they come to presence. "To let beings be" means to care about their flourish just as they come to presence from themselves and not as objects of representation or resources for production. The question of justice need not be absent from this proposal as I shall argue in the next chapter.

Contemporary world destiny may be characterized in terms of two crises: the human crisis (a sense of alienation, dehumanization, nihilism/meaninglessness and impending social dissolution) and the ecological crisis (a sense of devastation of the earth, permanent endangering of life and the apocalyptic despair about the fate of the planet), both wrought by technological modernity. Looking at development

as modernization from the point of view of these crises nurtures within itself a certain sense of suspicion. This suspicion, I argue in the following section, arises not only out of the global designs of capital and calculative intelligibility but also out of the very conception of the modern human being. The question of justice or equitable fulfilment of human want and the ecological problems arising from the modern conception of the human being will be addressed in detail in a later chapters. So, what the spell cast by technological understanding, calculative intelligibility and the capitalization and resourcification of beings does to the ontologically open and affected human self is my concern now.

4.2 Individual: The Technologized Animal

A being's identity as something, as that same thing, is mediated in terms of the already given understanding of Being. This mediation of the identity or meaning of entities happens within the field of openness to Being provided by the human being as the constitutively historical and language-powered entity. The human entity as Dasein means the open field for the circulation of meaning or the space whereupon the relation between the language-powered entity and Being occurs. Being is that on the basis of which a being becomes intelligible and manifest, and the human being is the field of openness for intelligible disclosures of Being to come to pass.

Hence, Being and the human being belong to each other. For Heidegger, the distinctive feature of the human being is: "he, as the being who thinks, is open to Being, face to face with Being … Man *is* essentially this relationship of responding to Being, and he is only this" (PI: 31). The understanding of the human being as responding to Being and "only" this responding is not a limit but an "excess" because reaching out towards and responding to Being is "existence" or standing out into meaningful disclosure. Being and the human being appropriating each other, or the irrepressible human response to the invitation of Being's manifestation, Heidegger calls *Ereignis* or the event of appropriation. Being is not another entity or a being; Being "belongs to us; for only with us can Being be present as Being, that is, become present" (PI: 33). This is the meaning of the aphorisms of the Letter: language is the house of Being; human being is the shepherd of Being. But the human being "does not create Being" (LH: 257), nor is it intentional "consciousness that makes it possible for the human being to stand open for beings" (IWM: 284). Meaning is not our construction because as soon as we come to take issue with our Being, we are already attuned towards an understanding of Being, a scheme of intelligibility, and are *in* the space or world wherein intelligibility dwells. We let beings manifest themselves as meaningful entities in terms of this understanding of Being. Hence, neither Being nor world comes to be through our intervention, though Being and world cannot be except through the clearing provided by us.

Heidegger seriously undercuts the Cartesian emphasis on the human capacity for mental representation and cognition as definitional for the human being. The human being, on the other hand, is the clearing or openness for Being (meaning or

intelligibility) on account of its condition as the absorbed (lost or fallen into and fascinated by the present world/everydayness), attuned (thrown into the world and affected by the past/facticity) and understanding (opening up towards and projecting into the future possibilities of Being/existentiality) Being-in-the-world (BT: Division I, Chap. 5). We are primarily engaged and involved beings rather than disengaged, insulated spirits. Our absorbed, attuned and understanding existence is held together ever so nebulously in a dynamic interplay of meaning-invested temporal moments or ecstases (present/everydayness, past/facticity and future/existentiality), which Heidegger calls *care*, defined in temporal terms as "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-a-world" (BT: 237). Care stands for our constitutively mattering or involved way of taking issue with beings in terms of Being in one way or another even in the most mundane of our engagements. But our care-endowed engagements always unfold in the direction of something *present* to us now, but present to us in terms of the *past*/history/tradition/background whereupon we have been entangled, and now made meaningful anew in reference to an open field of *future* possibilities that are not yet but are projected upon what we take issue with. This is the structure of the temporal dynamism of our care-endowed engagements. Care unifies everydayness, facticity and existentiality in a structure of interpenetrated temporal moments. But since care itself is nothing but the unity of meaning-endowed temporal moments, Heidegger speaks of temporality itself as the meaning of care and of Being itself. We have already seen in Chap. 2, Sect. 2.1, how the hermeneutic structure of human understanding operates. As care-structured beings, our primordial understanding of ourselves is always affected by our world and our understanding of the world is similarly affected by our understanding of ourselves.

For Heidegger, the human being is openness for intelligibility. A historical people form the space for the circulation of meaning, and its ground, a total interpretation of beings or Being. Humans are stewards, shepherds and caretakers of the play of Being's manifestation. Reality is outside of us and prior to us, but the event of its meaning/intelligibility/Being occurs only within the openness provided for it by us. There is manifoldness in the dynamic ontological play of the event of Being. The Being of beings *need not* appear in the same way to all people everywhere. There is this possibility that the same thing can manifest itself differently across cultures and histories, contexts and ages. When a dominant understanding of Being wanes and withdraws, beings could appear differently in their meaning in terms of a different historical epoch of Being. Similarly, manifold understandings of Being coexist simultaneously across cultural–linguistic groups of people. In the 1953–1954 text "A Dialogue on Language", which originated out of a conversation with a Japanese professor, Heidegger points out that if language indeed is the "house of Being", as per the 1946 formulation of the Letter, and if by virtue of language, human beings dwell "within the claim and call of Being, then we Europeans presumably dwell in an entirely different house than Eastasian man" (DL: 5). This conversation did not thereby conclude that a dialogue between two cultural–linguistic traditions was impossible, but it underlined the challenge. Heidegger's ontology of the human being is philosophically one of the most rigorous and path-breaking accounts of cultural difference and cultural constitution of

the essence of the human being. Meaning of beings appears in one way or another not on account of us as individuals or communities, but at least *through* our thinking and linguistic articulation. Hence, "To be *seeker, preserver, steward*—that is what is meant by *care* as the fundamental trait of Dasein" (CP: 16). The concept of "care" in *Being and Time*, thus, means preserving beings in their Being. The most primordial human responsibility is *letting beings be*.

Now, the technological understanding of Being is the monolithic event of Being's disclosure in the present age, wherein intelligibility of everything is maintained. The central characteristic of the technological age is the erasure of the difference/manifoldness inherent to Being as such so that beings could appear equivalently across the globe among historical groups of people as producible, capitalizable material. And so, the technological constellation of intelligibility has a sixfold danger: (i) it "puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such" (QCT: 14)—that is, the powers and beings of nature become reducible to a vast reserve of resources, and that alone, available for human exploitation, wilful production and use on call; (ii) it "drives the earth beyond the developed sphere of its possibility into such things which are no longer a possibility and are thus the impossible" (OM: 109)—that is, technological willpowers beings beyond what is allotted to them within the sphere of their possibilities of emerging and perishing, and hence towards impossibilities; (iii) it takes the human being to "the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve" (QCT: 27)—that is, the human being itself, the subject together with all its objects, becomes one among the reserve of resources, a human resource according to current management parlance, available for optimal exploitation, production and use; (iv) it "banishes man into that kind of revealing which is an ordering … [that] drives out every other possibility of revealing … [and] conceals that revealing which, in the sense of *poiesis*, lets what presences come forth into appearance" (QCT: 27)—that is, human essence as the open space for the manifold meanings of Being is itself transformed into a guarded enclosure for the circulation of the singular, mono-logical meaning of all reality as the representable object reducible to a reserve of exploitable resources; (v) it "conceals that revealing which … lets what presences come forth into appearance" (QCT: 27) and through its "successes the danger can remain that in the midst of all that is correct the true will withdraw" (QCT: 26)—that is, the deft and handy products of technology make us blind executors of the technological will, unmindful of its dominating essence, and thus undermining our agency and subversive comportment towards what we consider mere tool or instrument;[5] and finally, (vi) it gives rise to "[t]he unconditional *uniformity of all kinds of humanity of the earth* under the rule

---

[5] About concealment of the danger, Heidegger writes: "We experience the danger not yet as the danger. We do not experience positionality [or enframing] as the self-pursuing and thus self-dissembling essence of Being… Instead of referring us to the danger in the essence of Being, the perils and plights precisely blind us to the danger. *What is most dangerous in all this lies in the fact that the danger does not show itself as danger*" (2012: 52; my emphasis). The innocuous appearance of technological understanding of Being is the danger.

of the will to will" (OM: 110; my emphasis), a uniformity arising from the merely technical relation of humans to beings as a whole that "long remained unknown in other continents… former ages and histories" but established itself in seventeenth-century Europe (MA: 50), which is Greek essentially or metaphysically in its origin (HEH: 201) and stands for "the European aspiration to the planetary" (E: 288).

"The Greek" for Heidegger means in the hermeneutical sense "that dawn of destiny as which Being itself lights itself up in beings and *lays claim to an essence of humanity*, a humanity which, as destined, receives its historical path … [which comes to pass as] the Greek, the Christian, the modern, *the global* …" (AS: 253; my emphasis). That is, from the perspective of Heidegger's epochal history of Being, "the beginning of the epoch of Being lies in what we call 'the Greek'" (AS: 255). The Greek or the beginning is the dawn of destiny, not only of the west but also of the global. "The global" is nether the spatial earth as such, nor the whole humanity, nor beings of the earth in their totality, nor shrinking space and shrinking time, nor a single economy and market, nor even a single world-government. Rather, the global means the "Greek" or the experiencing of beings after the Western fashion in terms of the technological understanding of Being, which has its origin in the Greek beginning of metaphysics, still endures in the various epochal manifestations of Being, has dissolved into the sciences and "has taken hold of all peoples and nations on this planet" (HHI: 48); it means "the global epoch of humanity" (PI: 30). The global means the claim made on the essence of humanity as such by the destiny of the original Greek understanding of Being that survives through its various revealing–concealing historical epochs.

Now, one of the basic teachings of *Being and Time* is that human essence is not a frozen given but is *existence* (BT: 67), which is nothing but standing out into or transcending towards or taking issue with the openness or world wherein the meaning of Being circulates. Accordingly, the later Heidegger speaks of the essence of Western humanity as defined by the historical epochs of Being because "[t]he epochal essence of Being appropriates the ecstatic essence of *Da-sein*. Man's ek-sistence [*Ek-sistenz*] sustains the ecstatic thereby preserving what is epochal in Being, to whose essence the *Da* [there], and therefore *Da-sein*, belongs" (AS: 255). That is, the human being and Being mutually appropriate each other in each epoch of history, whereby the essence of the human gets defined and the essence of Being gets preserved. The mutually appropriating event means that the human being is the openness for Being or is the reception of Being's revealing. As for the transformation of the essence of the human being in the techno-modern epoch, it is certain that this transformation impacts global humanity, for that which inspires it, the technological understanding of Being, is itself the global dispersal of the Greek.

According to the startling phrase of *Contributions*, the transformation of human essence wrought by the techno-modern epoch is *the technologized animal* (CP: 78). Human instincts are said to grow weaker with technicity. More essentially, that which governs the transformed essence of global humanity is the disclosure of all beings, including the subject herself, as endlessly available resource. Accordingly, the human being is the orderer or executor of the reserve of

resources, which includes her own essence, represented, produced and made available. The technologized animal is the perfect executor of the reserve of resources. As such, what was previously unavailable for calculation, objectification, machination and thought to be elemental aspects of our pre-cognitive being like race, character, instinct and deed now become "what especially has to serve as a means of equipping and ordering and must be 'rationalized' through 'legislation'" (E: 93). Such rigorous, wilful disciplining is thought necessary to the executor of the reserve of resources, who is the final outcome of the techno-modern age. The technologized animal is Herbert Marcuse's one-dimensional human being, who by the "radical acceptance of the empirical violates the empirical, for in it speaks the mutilated, 'abstract' individual who experiences (and expresses) only that which is *given* to him (given in a literal sense), who has only the facts and not the factors, whose behavior is one-dimensional and manipulated" (1991: 187).

Heidegger sees Nietzsche's thought as the final metaphysical expression that foreshadowed the wilful human executor ordering the global reserve of resources. But he recognizes that Nietzsche's overman is nothing like the post-war developmental subject because what the overman discards is "precisely our boundless, purely quantitative non-stop progress" (WCT: 69). The overman is even poorer, simpler, tenderer, tougher, quieter, sacrificing, reticent and tentative, but all these out of her own will, for the overman is "the expressly willed negation of the previous essence of man" (N III: 217). According to Heidegger, the rational animal of the tradition is inverted by Nietzsche as the wilful animal who negates reason and its products. He sees the consummation of subjectivity in German idealism as the impetus for the wilful overman. Heidegger understands the transformation of the human being from rational animal to the wilfully self-shaping animal as a transformation that "absolutely empowers the essence of power for *dominion over the earth*… [whereby all values] are posited and realized through a total 'mechanization' of things and the breeding of human beings" (N III: 230). Heidegger's Nietzsche is not foreseeing the human being as the technologized individual but is responding to the ontological transformation of absolute subjectivity into absolute will, which is, for Heidegger, the preparatory ground for the technologized animal.

Calculative intelligibility and capitalization are primary characterizations of the technologized individual. In 1946, Heidegger said the following about the human individual understood as the capitalist or the merchant:

> The self-willing man always calculates with things and people as he does with objects. That with which he has calculated turns into merchandise. Everything is constantly changed into new orderings … [and] man moves in the medium of businesses and 'exchanges'. Self-asserting man lives by his will's stakes. He lives essentially in the hazard of his essence within the vibration of money and the validity of values. *Man, as this constant exchanger and middleman, is 'the merchant'* (WP: 235).

In such passages, we need to "hear" a sense of the dynamic interplay between technology, capital and the essentially transformed human individual. Intelligibility as calculability means reducibility of things and humans to capital, whereby they become not just objects but merchandise for trade and business. The technologized human individual thus becomes the self-willing estimator and auditor of beings.

The ontological epoch of the resource-frame, says Heidegger, has had a long period of germination with the Platonic interpretation of Being as idea and especially the medieval interpretation of Being as *ens creatum*, whereby beings became creatures of an absolutely evident, knowable, creator God, who, in turn, is related to creatures through the calculative logic of causality. With modernity, beings, formerly "made by a creator God", became the dominion of the human maker-subject and began to be interpreted through the logos of representation and calculation as objects of human machination (CP: 88). "The faith in Christianity's Church-regulated grace-mediating institution," writes Heidegger, "is merely a prelude and a subplot to modern technicity for which, in return, engineering constitutes the one-sided 'pre-form' insofar as engineering only *seemingly* differentiates itself from 'history,' propaganda, and other forms of 'mobilization'" (M: 153). Hence, for Heidegger, Christian dogmatism, objective history, modern propaganda machine, bureaucratic juggernaut, organized political mobilization and governmental machinery just as engineering have all their ontological grounding in calculative machination of beings. The "absolute rational animal" is completed, according to him, in Hegel's notion of absolute subjectivity and its inversion in Nietzsche's notion of the uninhibited body of the wilful animal (M: 21, 304).

To be technologized animal means to be fine-tuned in order to be exposed to the disclosure of beings as resourceful material for calculation, production and consumption. The wilful use of logic and reason for the calculative ordering of beings defines the technological epoch. The logos of such rational ordering are fact-centric and follow the mono-logical propositional form of thinking characteristic of techno-modernity. It embodies the one dimensionality of the technologized animal. Herbert Marcuse points out the essential flaw of such a procedure. The propositional form of thought does not highlight that which can be dialectically negated about reality. According to such thinking, truth is that which is given and represented according to wilful reason and logic. Dialectical thinking, on the other hand, contradicts that which is given and opposes it with a negation. When we say, for example, that human beings are free beings in an essentialist fashion, dialectical logic can challenge this by the claim that human beings in fact in many historical contexts are not free; they are not free even when they apparently seem to be in the technological society (Marcuse 1991: 136–137). Marcuse begins *One-Dimensional Man* with the observation that the apparent establishment of freedom in industrialized Western societies brings along with it an unfreedom which is "a token of technical progress" (1991: 3). Propositional-representative thinking is not able to see the dialectical nature of reality because it is a presence-centric mode of thinking, founded on a metaphysics of presence, which does not assign any meaning to the absent, the withdrawn, the concealed and the negative.

Heidegger hermeneutically unveils that which is concealed but is the abyssal ground of that which is disclosed and experienced. For him, every disclosure is based on that which is withdrawn from disclosure. The opposite or the negative just as well and even more significantly than the positive or the identical contributes to disclosure. We can grasp identity itself only in terms of its dissimulation and mediation of differentiation, as Hegel taught. Our average, everyday

inauthentic mode of Being is meaningful only because its opposite, the authentic mode of Being,[6] is possible and this possibility as such drives existence, even if the authentic mode is never fully realizable on account of the very temporal structure of existence.[7] Comparably, and stepping aside from the presence-centric propositional form of thought, Heidegger argues that techno-modernity and its much-hyped dexterity seductively deny us alternative forms of intelligibility. Many modernized Indians cannot any more experience the sacredness, splendour and blessing of a river unlike their ancestors because they have grown into the understanding of water bodies as huge reservoirs of several wonderful facets like hydroelectric power, hydraulic resources for irrigation even of far-flung arid lands, tourist potential and the like. To be technologized animal means to come under the sway of the resource-frame of understanding the real rather irreversibly.

There is the work of promise entrenched within the technological understanding of Being, as we saw in the last chapter, which is a promise to do away, once and for all, with the strife and struggle native to human existence. This promise, thus, is ultimately a promise to do away with death. In Michael Lewis's interpretation, what constitutes the 'technologized animal' is this very desire to do away with death, "merely an inconvenient disruption of production". The evident paradox of this desire, indeed of the resource-frame as such, was historically manifested in the efficient arrangement of the Holocaust death camp, "a death that would leave no trace of its occurrence, a death that would not exceed the positive fact of its actuality" (Lewis 2005: 90). According to Lewis Heidegger's supposedly callous pronouncement about the Holocaust foregrounds the essence of technology in its cunning logic of efficiency in terms of which the pathos and tragedy of genocidal death is reduced to a deworlded fact to be reckoned with quickly, technically and unobtrusively.[8]

Heidegger is not merely pointing out an essential human transformation in a neutral way; he is anxious and distressed about this transformation. Forgetfulness of Being, abandonment of beings by Being and withdrawal of Being mean that the progress marked by the glorification of logos as idea and reason has reached

---

[6] Heidegger writes: "But only in so far as it is essentially something which can be *authentic*—that is, something of its own—can it have lost itself and not yet won itself" (BT: 68).

[7] Michael Lewis writes the following about the impossibility of total authenticity and total inauthenticity: "If there were such a thing as an authentic Dasein then it would no longer be Dasein, for Dasein exists as the process which stretches *between* the authentic and the inauthentic, pulled towards its own death but also pulled in the other direction, towards a birth which is common to everyone and which amounts to our factual arrival in a particular world. Without these two vectors tugging at one another the tearing that is Dasein would not occur. Every tearing requires *two* contradictory vectors. Utterly inauthentic Dasein would not be Dasein, and nor would utterly authentic Dasein, since this entity would be dead. *There is no such thing as authentic Dasein.*" (2005: 15).

[8] The much-discussed remark of Heidegger is the following: "Agriculture is now a mechanized food industry, in essence the same as the production of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockading and starving of countries, the same as the production of hydrogen bombs" (2012: 27).

its zenith, intelligibility itself has come to mean calculability, and thus beings are constrained to manifest themselves only as resources for production. Onto-historical epochs do change, but there is distress arising from the apparent sense of irreversibility of the resource-frame, its global dissemination and embrace, the unprecedented manifestation of the will to hold it in presence, and the sense that what we have seen of the resource-frame so far (television, cinema, speedy transportation, global media, medical and nutritional technology, atomic energy) is "only a crude start", set to advance "faster and faster and can never be stopped" (MA: 51).

The technologized animal is an essential transformation of human essence, so essential that it is an essential rupture, something like a dialectical contradiction, within humanity's historically filtered understanding of its own essence. Hence, another essential understanding of the human being, true to the original Greek understanding of Being as emergence (*phusis*) and yet manifestly distant from the historical nearness of the technologized animal to the same Greek beginning, can be seen gathering tentative expression in Heidegger's philosophy. I can think of at least three distinct elements in this thinking of human essence: (i) human being is openness for Being as such, (ii) human being is the only being capable of death, and (iii) human being is that being capable of "dwelling" on the earth. Unpacking these three essential elements of human existence, I believe, can help us appreciate the meaning and the danger of the disclosure of human essence as the technologized animal.

The human being alone "exists" (ek-sists) by way of ecstatically (ek-static or standing out into) transcending towards the openness of Being. To be human *is* this very transcending-towards, and in human transcendence, "the clearing" of Being's manifestation occurs within language (BPP: 299). Such is the meaning of Dasein. Other beings—rocks, trees, animals, angels and gods—*are* but they do not exist in this sense (IWM: 284). They cannot be the field of openness wherein meaning as such circulates. Human freedom is not caprice but "ek-sistent, disclosive letting beings be" (ET: 147). The essence of human being as technologized animal is the very denial of such an understanding of human essence. Reductive calculation and resourcification constrains human relation towards self, others and non-human entities. As a hegemonic understanding of what-is, technicity measures, regulates, secures and confines every manifestation of Being. Moreover, technological understanding conceals from itself its own truth as one of the possible and hence contingent forms of Being's revealing. With this essential contingency concealed, technological understanding "blocks the shining-forth and holding-sway of truth" (QCT: 28).

Technicity, as we have discussed, attempts to deny or at least compromise the human capability *for* death. Only humans are capable of death as death in the sense of Being-towards-death constantly as long as they exist; other beings perish but are incapable of death as death. "To be a human being means," writes Heidegger, "to be on the earth as a mortal" (BDT: 145). Technological understanding is a manner of saying "no" to death, of forgetting death, of becoming incapable of Being-towards-death and, thus, of compromising human finitude.

To exist means "standing in the openness of Being, of sustaining this standing-in (care), and of enduring in what is most extreme (being towards death); for together they constitute the full essence of existence" (IWM: 284). Death is the opposite of existence, and yet existence is sustained by it, for "[a]s the shrine of Nothing, death is the shelter of Being" (T: 176). If existence opens up the "there" or world (the open space of Being), death closes off the "there." "Death, as the extremity of the 'there,' is at the same time what is innermost to a possible complete transformation of the 'there.' Also lying in this is a reference to the deepest essence of nothingness" (CP: 257). For Heidegger, what is deadly for human essence is neither machine nor technology, but "the absoluteness of … sheer willing in the sense of … deliberate self-assertion in everything" (WP: 221), for "self-assertion of technological objectification is the constant negation of death" (WP: 227). By the "will to objectify the world" Being-towards-death or human finitude is "obstructed and withdrawn"; by being otherwise death "touches mortals in their essence and so places them… into the entirety of what has already placed" (WP: 228), that is, Being. Forgetfulness of death is forgetfulness of Being or Being's dissolution into material for production and the consequent technologization of the human animal.

According to Heidegger, "[t]o be a human being means … to dwell" (BDT: 145), and "to dwell" means to care, to preserve and to save beings among whom mortals dwell. As stewards, shepherds, guardians of Being, as the very openness for Being, humans dwell among things caringly or by taking issue with their being. "To dwell, to be set at peace," points out Heidegger, "means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. *The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving*" (BDT: 147).[9] Heidegger-inspired ecophenomenology is centred on this single idea of the human being as the caretaker of and the openness for Being to come to pass.[10] Dweller is the engaged being for whom things matter, are meaningful, and not merely materials for production. Techno-modernity, Heidegger argues, obstructs the essential human dwelling on the earth. He ends the 1951 essay "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" alluding to the essential homelessness of modern humans, which means their inability any more to dwell caringly upon the earth. Heidegger spoke of dwelling "poetically" upon the earth, meaning to say that to dwell caringly means to "let beings be", to let beings come forth to presence in their Being. In *Contributions*, the foundering of the west and its abandonment by Being, the phenomenon of the death of God, is referred to as uprootedness from the ground, which is equalled with modernity. This homelessness, Heidegger says, is veiled by what is called "progress" or "discoveries, inventions, industry, machines … mass society, desolation, impoverishment, everything as detachment from the ground" (CP: 94). Not to dwell or care means uprootedness, disengagement and denial of openness for Being,

---

[9] I discuss in detail the notion of "dwelling" in Chap. 6.

[10] See: Foltz 1995: 154–180 (Chap. 8, Dwelling Poetically Upon the Earth: Toward a New Environmental Ethic). For a synoptic–critical view of Heidegger and contemporary environmentalism, see Zimmerman (1996, 2003).

whereby beings appear as meaningless, equivalent, disposable and replaceable resources. Such a disclosure of Being as such means technologization of human essence.

Heidegger asks whether transformation of the human being into technologized animal is really the end of human existence, whereby "even the original animality of the inserted animal" is lost, or whether technology can be considered a sheltering of Being, a form of Being's revealing, so that it can be a ground for the human being in the modern age (CP: 216; emphasis removed). He clearly endorses the latter in the Technology essay. The "irresistibility of ordering" and the "restraint of the saving power" draw past each other like meteors, but the fact of their "passing by" shows that with every revealing, there is also the "saving power", hidden in that which is withdrawn and concealed but can come to presence and save. Seeing the danger and nurturing the mood of distress it triggers, humans come "to hope in the growing light of the saving power". How do we cultivate the saving power? "Here and now and in little things, that we may foster the saving power in its increase. This includes holding always before our eyes the extreme danger" (QCT: 33). Hence, in each revealing of Being, however obstructive it is to the ontological openness provided by the human being, there lurks the possibility of a saving grace, a different revealing and a more primal truth.[11]

According to the putative view, the single most important contribution of modernity is freeing the human individual from the authority of the church and the state, and vesting her with inviolable rights and dignity. It is when she becomes individual that she becomes "modern", "enlightened" and ready to obey the law out of enlightened reason. Collectivistic/communitarian notions are supposed to be pre-modern. In 1784, Kant famously defined enlightenment as "the human being's emancipation from its self-incurred immaturity.…" For him "'*Sapere aude*! Have the courage to make use of your own intellect!' is, hence, the motto of enlightenment" (2006: 17). In *Contributions,* Heidegger analyses the trajectory of Platonic idealism, which leads up to the modern experience of "the individual, the individual soul, the individual human, the 'I'" in its eminence as the "most real being." Accordingly, the Cartesian *ego cogito* is possible only within this development of the real as the individual or the unique or the absolutely certain universal, as against the collective or the manifold or the different in any way. Heidegger observes here that the assertion *cogito ego sum* refers to "the certainty of the mathematical relation between *cogitare* and *esse*; *the axiom of mathesis*" (CP: 166). Although Heidegger observes that "the machinational essence of beings" is difficult to trace historically, he points to its condition for possibility as "the collapse of *aletheia*". He links up several absolutized pivotal notions of unique individuality in Western thinking like idea, *ens creatum* and lived experience to the collapse of *aletheia*. With Descartes, the calculative/machinational essence of Being achieves definiteness in the unity between *ego cogito* and *certum*. Thus, truth as unconcealment or *aletheia* is definitively overcome by the notion of truth as

---

[11] I shall return in the concluding chapter to this saving grace hidden within the technological understanding of Being.

correctness or certainty (CP: 104). Hence, for Heidegger, it is the calculative logic of machinational thinking that dominates the modern world which believes in constructing the fully individualized essence of the human being.

Kant's characterization of enlightenment as emancipation of the individual or universal subjectivism, thus for Heidegger, is merely a foregrounded version of the philosophical history of modernity. Such a characterization does not take into consideration, for example, that modernity is also the age of objectivism/science and collectivism/nationalism. In 1938, when *Contributions* was being completed, he also wrote:

> But it remains just as certain that no age before this one has produced a comparable objectivism, and that in no age before this has the non-individual, in the shape of the collective, been accorded prestige. Of the essence here is the necessary interplay between subjectivism and objectivism. But precisely this reciprocal conditioning of the one by the other refers us back to deeper processes (AWP: 66).

That the human being becomes the subject of all objectivity and truth is central for modernity, and Heidegger argues that this transformation is possible only with the pivotal transformation in the understanding of Being as representedness. The subject is the one capable of representing the world or reducing it to picture, which is, according to Heidegger, an understanding that gradually developed since Plato's interpretation of reality as idea. Early Greeks considered the human being as the receiver of beings, not their representer. The position of the human being as the subject of all beings is a position of ultimate human centrality which allows her to secure that position for herself and make it "the basis for a possible development of humanity", according to which she comes to occupy a realm of human capacity conceived as "the domain of measuring and execution for the purpose of the mastery of beings as a whole (AWP: 69). Within the dominion of subjectivism, the individual becomes possible. With the opening up of the possibility of subjectivism, several questions become important:

> [I]s it as an 'I' that is reduced to its random desires and abandoned to an arbitrary free-will or as the 'we' of society; is it as individual or as community; is it as a personal being within the community or as a mere member of the body corporate; is it as a state, nation, or people or as the indifferent humanity of modem man, that man wills and must be that subject which, as the essence of modernity, he already is? (AWP: 70).

Subjectivism aspires to "the conquest of the world as picture", is fascinated by the "big" and the calculable, and is becoming the technologized animal with late modernity, who understands all beings as producible material. Metaphysically, the modern individual is the technologized animal.

With the hegemony of technology and capital, there is in fact a rupture within human essence. What is meant by this rupture? For Heidegger, it is not enough to see that human essence cannot be conceived in terms of "the solidity of an occurrent corporeal Thing"; any kind of understanding of the human self as a 'spirit thing' comes from "the kind of Being which belongs to something present-at-hand", for the essence of the human being is not "spirit as a synthesis of soul and body; it is rather existence" (BT: 153). While the human being is an entity, its self

is not; the self is rather "a way of Being of this entity". As a way of Being, the self comes to be in accordance with the ontology of its age. To this extent, the essence of the human being is solely the "relationship of responding to Being", which can come to pass "only as it concerns man through the claim it makes on him" (PI: 31). Since our self-understanding is a receptive response to the ontology of our age, Heidegger argues that the essence of planetary humanity in the technological age is dominated by that understanding, resulting in "the technologized animal."

The modern liberal individual, thus understood, is sustained by the logic of efficiency and the expediency of capital, both individually and politically. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels ridicule the bourgeois morality of the individual, which bemoans the communist's abolition of private property, capital, free trade, free selling and free buying as the "abolition of individuality and freedom". They point out that in fact when labour cannot be changed into capital and individual property cannot be changed into capitalistic property, "individuality" as constructed by the capitalist ethos also vanishes. "You must, therefore, confess," Marx and Engels taunt the bourgeois opponent, "that by 'individual' you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way and made impossible" (1988: 225). Marx and Engels thus point out the concrete forces that historically produce the liberal individual.

The liberated modern individual is an "atom" insulated from others, legitimized and sanctioned as such on her own terms. The terms of the sanction are set by the calculative cultural logic of capital. According to a distinct trend in the formation of modernity, writes Zygmunt Bauman, "modernity charged the individual with the task of 'self-construction': building one's own social identity if not fully from scratch, at least from its foundation up" (2005: 27). As a result of this development, responsibility for both opulence and penury is placed upon the individual. Meritorious individual industry leads to opulence and unjustifiable individual idleness to penury. Since opulence is the ideal of good life according to the cultural logic of capital, penury is to be definitively overcome, and hence, the promise of a world without poverty and want becomes central to modernity. The cultural logic of capital, grounded in a thoroughly technological understanding of all-that-is, comes to legitimize the view that if everyone becomes the atomistic individual and embraces the new work ethic of discipline and industry, opulence would become the feat of global humanity. In this narrative, if penury still does not disappear, the philosophy of individual work ethic would not become flawed thereby. The compound cultural logic of capital and individual compels modern humans to understand that the new work ethic is "ineffective only because its commandments are not properly listened to and obeyed" and that "this failure to listen and obey can only be explained by either moral defectiveness or criminal intent on the part of those who fall out (that is, the poor)" (Bauman 2005: 77; my gloss). The discontent given rise to by this peculiar intertwining of capital, individual and the more basic technological understanding of reality as the limitless reserve of resources is my next concern.

4.3   Capital, Individual and Distress

I have argued so far in this chapter that the planetary phase of Western metaphysics is completed through the unobtrusive cultural institution of the efficiency logic of *homo economicus* (the transformed understanding of the human being as "technologized animal" or efficient individual) and of globally mobile capital. This type of globalism establishes the universal authority of enframing even for the great mass of humanity that does not stand to gain from it. However, this "fate" of humanity is not a final destiny, for our understanding of Being and experience of essential humanity change together across historical epochs. However, technological modernity brings with it the danger of a deep rupture produced in our understanding of the human as that being which fulfils itself amidst and with other humans and the things of the world. The one-dimensionality of enframing technologizes human essence itself. And yet, the saving grace lies in this very rupture, for it points towards the limits of the economic individual, "the technologized animal," and, thus, towards the truth of community. I shall now deal with these matters of my study and show how they have positive impacts on the texture of good life, however variously imagined. In this constructive move, I want to be wary of the danger of the fascistic potential concealed in any attempt to revisit the notion of community, as is evident in Heidegger's encounter with National Socialism. I shall now turn to these two issues: (i) limits of the economic individual in this section, and (ii) the truth of community and its fascistic danger in the next.

It is not the case presently that our contemporary culture is ruled in a full measure by the logos of efficiency. However, this logos is being accepted everywhere as the path to good life, even where it is still not fully entrenched. Heidegger's work can be read as a thoughtfully critical philosophical account of the world-takeover of the Western logos. In *What is Called Thinking?* (1951), Heidegger ponders over how Western thinking came to be overshadowed by "logic", giving rise in the modern times even to symbolic logic that aims to stipulate the definite routes of thinking. According to him, such formal systems cannot ask how they themselves came to be possible. He calls this development of logic *Logistik* (logistics). He writes that "*Logistik*" has become in the twentieth century a privileged and specialized area of knowledge that especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries is "considered the only possible form of strict philosophy, because *its result and procedures yield an assured profit for the construction of the technological universe.* In America and elsewhere, logistics as the only proper philosophy of the future is thus beginning today to seize power over the spirit" (WCT: 21; my emphasis). In India too, philosophy is first and foremost detached analysis aimed at achieving absolute clarity of the impartial spectator, besides the same clarity in relation to classical Sanskrit texts, even though literary, anthropological, political, cultural and sociological studies are all constantly drawing upon the Heidegger-inspired approaches to text, context, thought, culture, identity, society and human being. "Just because at one time the calling into thought took place in terms of the *logos*," Heidegger complains, "logistics today is developing into the global system by

which all ideas are organized" (WCT: 163). The critical project is to be acknowledged as perennially in the margins of mainstream philosophy and the sciences.

The humanities and some members of the family of social sciences that insist on the problematic sides of the straightforwardness of the techno-modernist logos, the constitutive impossibility of absolute clarity with regard to most things human, the critical component in our knowledge repertoire that constantly lay bare complexities not seen by the logic of calculation and technical ordering are increasingly losing their space in what is to be taught and learned in the modern educational curriculum. Departments of critical philosophy are being closed down since they do not figure within the calculative frame like a bioethics, a business ethics or a philosophy of economics. According to the techno-modernist logos, every matter of authentic significance, such as the matter of the content of education, is to be decided by the will of the individual or more simply self-interest, which is supposed to come forth spontaneously and without restraint as decided objectively in the unmediated sphere of the market according to the calculative law of demand and supply. Nothing is as trustworthy as the market. Unflinching devotion to its laws will provide us with prosperity and happiness in equal measure to all. Significance is a product of individual caprice, the social form of which is made known through the laws of the market.

When we say modern universals are inviolable individual and self-governing capital, both legitimized by the tacit background understanding of the techno-modernist logos, what we have in mind is the social sedimentation of certain forms of being human. What we have in mind is the manner in which these lately entrenched universals are subjugating unconquered intellectual–conceptual realms, geographical areas and peoples, making it impossible for alternatives to show up anymore, by manifesting themselves seductively as that which is most significant for human existence everywhere. Heidegger insists that this is not a consciously chosen destiny but a received one and that self-assertive will itself arise out of the essential technologization of humanity rather than the reverse. Because our way of being human and our discursive terrain are themselves held captive under the spell of the logos of calculation and competition, Heidegger realizes that we can have a sense of what is happening only as the absence of distress in distress. There is distress because all beings have become meaningless stuff and exploitable material. There is absence of distress because we are attuned in our techno-modern way of being human to understand what is distressful as that which soothes and secures. In *Contributions,* distress or plight (*die Not*) is understood as the uncanny disaffection and lack, experienced in the event of the technologization of the human animal and the calculative valuation of everything that is in terms of the logos of capital.

Referring to the Marxian notion of alienation and in response to the global entrenchment of the technological understanding of Being, Heidegger writes that "[h]omelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world.… This homelessness is specifically evoked from the destiny of Being in the form of metaphysics, and through metaphysics is simultaneously entrenched and covered up as such" (LH: 258–259). For him, planetary homelessness is the coming to fruition and the

complete holding sway of European nihilism everywhere. With the death of God and the disappearance of the erstwhile universals, the anchor of meaning for the European is contingent human individual (subject) and the logos of capital (that which fulfils the subject). Nihilism means the loss of the unconditional anchors of meaning and the construction of contingent anchors as the new, human-centric global basis of meaning for people everywhere after the model of the erstwhile unconditional, non-human-centred anchors. Nihilism also means the impossibility of becoming aware of the contingency of our anchors of meaning, and the impossibility of making meaning out of contingent anchors without vesting them with false universality. For Heidegger, the anchors of meaning are contingent, historical products; nihilism arises from our denial of historicity to these and vesting contingent constructions with universality and certainty in accordance with the techno-modern logos. According to him, what is fully entrenched is also fully covered up and what is nearest is also the farthest. And so, in 1955, he wrote that nihilism is the most uncanny of all guests "because, as the unconditional will to will, it wills homelessness … as such. This is why it is of no avail to show it the door, because it has long since been roaming around invisibly inside the house. The task is to catch sight of and see through this guest" (QB: 292).

I will now look at a crucial passage of 1938 in an attempt to foreground the several intertwined aspects of onto-technology, capital, individual and distress. The following is the passage:

> In the planetary imperialism of technically organized man the subjectivism of man reaches its highest point from which it will descend to the flatness of organized uniformity and there establish itself. This uniformity becomes the surest instrument of the total, i.e., technological, dominion over the earth. The modern freedom of subjectivity is completely absorbed into the corresponding objectivity. By himself, man cannot abandon this destining of his modem essence; he cannot abolish it by fiat. But he can, in thoughtful anticipation, ponder this: that mankind's being a subject is not the only possibility of the primal essence of historical humanity there has ever been or ever will be. The shadow of a passing cloud over a hidden land—that is the darkening which truth as the certainty of subjectivity (a truth prepared for by the certainty of salvation of Christianity) lays over an Event [*Ereignis*] that it remains denied to subjectivity to experience (AWP: 84).

In 1938, we are already told that there is the planetary imperialism of technologically organized humans or world-takeover of Western metaphysics. This planetary phase is the only surveyable phase of Western metaphysics, but this is neither a completed phase nor a phase anywhere near to completion, but a phase "just beginning". This phase has already sown the seeds of the end of philosophy as metaphysics. But the positive sense of "the end of philosophy" means that it has given rise to "philosophy as thinking" rather than "logistics". The danger of the global dispersal of metaphysics means that all human beings everywhere begin to experience what-is as a huge reserve of resources. Heidegger notes that the efficient unlocking of the energies of nature and humans is "always itself directed from the beginning toward furthering something else, i.e., toward driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense" (QCT: 15). This ultimately capitalistic goal is at the back of the technological understanding of all-that-is. Coal is mined

not for just keeping it unearthed but for delivering on call the heat of the sun stored within it so that it can in turn be ordered "to deliver steam whose pressure turns the wheels that keep a factory running" (QCT: 15). The calculative logos of capital serve the efficient individual, who is the subject of all political rights. But at the dawn of modernity, the politics of the individual subject was bounded within the political community of the nation (a "closed system" in the phrase of John Rawls).[12] It was not so very clear why justice and fair play, the greatest social goods within "my" society, could not be denied to someone from a different political community. It was not also so very clear in what ways the "individual" of the market society could be considered equal when she had no means to live like the others. These intertwining processes of the dissolution of Western metaphysics in the sciences and the entrenchment of the calculative logos of capital and efficient individual, according to Heidegger, "lasts longer than the previous history of metaphysics" (OM: 85).

The passage above also makes clear that the planetary phase of techno-subjectivism, seductively imperialistic but unopposed, cannot be wished away. Technology is the planetary meaning of Being in the modern times, and hence, it "will not be struck down; and it most certainly will not be destroyed… Technology, whose essence is Being itself, will never allow itself to be overcome by men" (TT: 38). And yet, we are not doomed to technological nihilism. Even though an all-embracing understanding of Being holds sway in an epoch, "holding sway" is not exactly compulsion because human freedom means freeing beings (letting them come into presence) on the basis of Being. Freedom cannot be and need not be mindful of the oppression of an understanding of Being, for without it entities cannot appear as such (QCT: 25). The seductiveness of techno-modernity is nothing but fallenness into the modern world. An understanding of Being is overcome by another that comes to pass from within the revealing–concealing play of Being. It cannot be predicted, planned, constructed and brought into being through a revolution. Revolutions and their concept of the new and progressive arise out of the bounds set by the dominant revealing of Being. But, at the same time, humans are participants in Being's revealing, for without their role as stewards of Being and without their language as the house of Being, Being cannot reveal itself. Heidegger does not see how the cultural logic of capital and individual, and the more basic technological understanding of the real, will in any near future be overcome. Critical philosophy can only help us understand that subjectivism and individualism, the logos of capital and enframing itself, have not been "the only possibility of the primal essence of historical humanity there has ever been or ever will be" (AWP: 84).

Contemporary critical philosophy, therefore, attunes itself to the mood of distress in relation to the epoch of techno-modernity. "Only questioning and the

---

[12] Rawls makes it very clear in the second section of *A Theory of Justice* (1971) while maintaining that for international justice, a different set of liberal principles would be required. "I shall be satisfied if it is possible to formulate a reasonable conception of justice for the basic structure of society conceived for the time being as a closed system isolated from other societies" (1999: 7).

decision in favour of question-worthiness can be set in opposition to 'worldview'" (CP: 34). Worldview is a fixed ontic interpretation of beings in their totality. Philosophy means the constant unsettling of such frozen worldviews, and philosophy in contemporary times is the anxious, disquieting questioning of the worldview of technological understanding, which, by its world-takeover, is fast turning out to be *the* planetary worldview. In the 1953–1954 conversation with a Japanese professor, Heidegger calls this world domination "the complete Europeanization of the earth and of man" (DL: 15). This dominance is considered the triumph of reason, "confirmed by the successes of that rationality which technical advances set before us at every turn", and Heidegger's response to this planetary situation is "we are no longer able to see how the Europeanization of man and of the earth attacks at the source everything that is of an essential nature" (DL: 16). This utterance speaks the mood of distress. The ponderous conclusion seems to be that there have been and will be different and manifold ways of being human than as the subject of all objects, flexible and resourceful for the gratification of global humanity.

I have been trying to show how capital and individual can be understood to be arising out of the technological understanding of Being and how these forms of enframing give rise to ontological distress. Frederic Jameson has made popular the view that "postmodernism is not the cultural dominant of a wholly new social order … but only the reflex and the concomitant of yet another systemic modification of capitalism itself" (1991: xii). He sees postmodernism as modernism and realism "rewrapped in the luxurious trappings of their putative successor". For him, postmodernism in its embrace of difference and impurities should be "like capital itself, it must be at internal distance from itself, must include the foreign body of alien content". Does Heidegger's concept of *Gestell*, which we have used as a vantage point to understand planetary modernization, itself arise out of the broad Marxist problematic of capital as Michael Lewis alludes to in the preface to *Heidegger and the Place of Ethics*? Heidegger was for sure pondering over techno-modernity as the ontological abground of the problematic of capital and was looking beyond the edifices of techno-modernity, seeing no hope in technologization and calculative valuation of human and non-human reality. In this sense, Heidegger is not offering a luxuriously wrapped version of capitalism or modernism. This will become clearer in our sixth chapter. Heidegger's is a posthuman and hence post-Marxist critical meditation on both capitalism and modernism.

In its previous historical phase, namely colonialism and nationalism, capital probably was the handiest vantage point for problematizing the global south. In the present historical phase of globalization and international development, the problem is not one of colonization per se or concrete domination by real conquerors. Colonization has in fact paved the way for seductive desirability of globally mobile capital among the erstwhile colonized subjects. The total interpretation of Being as resource available at hand for humanity everywhere has been gaining acceptance through the gigantic economic, political and social processes of colonization and modernization. The valiant critics of the development discourse, postdevelopment scholars, many of whom joined hands to bring out the now-famous

Development Dictionary in 1989, realized this the hard way. They thought in 1989 that the lighthouse of development "shows cracks and is starting to crumble. The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape" (Sachs 2010a: xv). When the same scholars decided to bring out a second edition of the Dictionary in 2010, the optimism about the crumbling discourse of development had in fact waned. With globalization, some countries from the south like China rose from the status of money-scarce to money-rich economies. They finally had a sense of having arrived on level with the white man, a reactive sense of justice and recognition. India is following suit. Development, which the Dictionary's contributors vilified and denounced on every page, they realized, is fully acceptable to the global south. Wolfgang Sachs writes in the preface to the second edition in a pensive, apologetic mood:

> [W]e had not really appreciated the extent to which the development idea has been charged with hopes for redress and self-affirmation. It certainly was an invention of the West, as we showed at length, but not just an imposition on the rest. On the contrary, as the desire for recognition and equity is framed in terms of the civilizational model of the powerful nations, the South has emerged as the staunchest defender of development. Countries in general do not aspire to become more 'Indian,' more 'Brazilian' or for that matter more 'Islamic'; instead, assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, they long to achieve industrial modernity (2010b: viii-ix).

Hence, it should be underlined that neither the discourse of progressively more exploitative capital nor the discourse of externally imposed development, I think, can any longer help us make sense of "development" as a phenomenon and a discourse, which benefits only some sections of humanity in the global south, despite the fact that a growing and aspirational middle class has joined hands across boundaries under the banner of globalization and liberalization of the economy. There is no doubt anymore that "development" as a societal ideal—modernization—is becoming acceptable to more and more people everywhere in the world, even to the permanent underclass of the developmental state.

Ramachandra Guha, the social ecologist and environmental historian from India, derides the idea of tenured academics in prime northern and southern universities writing obituaries to the notion of development. "They imply that development is a nasty imposition on the innocent peasant and tribal, who, left to himself, will not willingly partake of Enlightenment rationality, modern technology, modern consumer goods" (2008: 241). I think, we need to assume, like Guha, in favour of the majority that given a chance most people would like to be the "global omnivore" (Guha's reckless global consumerist) rather than the "ecosystem person" (Guha's tribal/peasant who lives in close proximity to the land). At least, the current global trend that developed in the last hundred years would compel us to believe so. A desire for "development" in some sense, I shall argue in the sixth chapter, is inherent to human self-constitution, way of Being and motivation. Further, the question of justice does call for redress, even if wanton human desire has no moral significance and the manner of redress always calls for questioning.

But several questions remain in what Guha forces us rightly to reconsider. How does the desire of people everywhere to have a better life for themselves

(development as good life) and those who matter to them transform into a uniform way of participating in the market society and certain types of profligate lifestyle? How do traditional societies, which were not eager to replicate the white man's world and his goods at a certain point in their historical encounter with the west, later take up that very project as their societal and personal ideal? How does a monistic conception of the good life, devastating for the planet and detrimental to the human being as we know it, gain ground simultaneously with identity politics, discourses of cultural difference and indigenous rights, and the waning of the political and economic monopoly of the west? How does the question of justice, the moral impetus for the idea of development, drag even the most disadvantaged people towards its magnetic orbit of expectations, even though there is not even a semblance of global equity even now? How does it happen that justice, called "fairness" in its best known formulation in the twentieth century (Rawls 1999), can lend itself to concretion only with paying the heavy price of laying the planet to waste and turning the human being into the technologized animal wherever its advent is near? According to the Heideggerian argument we have been tracing, the entrenched technological understanding of Being, once a culturally locatable metaphysics in the west and now on its world-dominating trail in the dissimulated forms of capital and individual, is disclosing human and non-human reality as exploitable material to people everywhere.

As we have seen, the uncanny sense of the loss of freedom to challenge the many disquieting effects of the technological understanding of Being is named "distress" in Heidegger's works of the late 1930s and early 1940s. He invites our attention to the sense of the word "distress or *die Not*"—lack, privation, evil, something unfavourable. The sense of freedom from distress is experienced as good, well-being, progress and prosperity. An unbroken supply of things of use and enjoyment removes this sense of distress. Progress (and, thus, development too) means lack of distress. Heidegger adds that such progress has no future since it is a constant acceleration and augmentation of the exploitation of beings. His preoccupation, rather, is with the plight wrought by the forgetfulness of Being and the withdrawal of truth on account of technological understanding. This he calls the abandonment of beings by Being, which is characteristic of the technological age as Being itself is understood technically, resulting in the withdrawal both of Being as such and the Being of technology. "Machination itself withdraws, and thus beyng itself withdraws, since machination is the essential occurrence of beyng" (CP: 101).

The abandonment is distressing because humans are banished into a monistic, monolithic, one-dimensional understanding of Being, namely the machinational or the technological. Other realities withdraw from their world. While this is distressing, "the greatest plight [is] *the lack of a sense of plight in the midst of this plight*" (CP: 90). Heidegger calls the absence of distress in distress variously as the unsurpassable sense of self-certainty, self-assertive will, calculative understanding and lack of questioning. The lack of distress in distress he characterized in the 1966 interview in the following way: "Everything is functioning. This is exactly what is so uncanny, that everything is functioning and that the functioning

drives us more and more to even further functioning… The only thing we have left is purely technological relationships" (GS: 105–106). The theme of the essence of technology and machination, of the eerie lack of distress and the abandonment of beings by Being, finally amounts to also obliterating our own self-understanding or, as Dennis Schmidt says, "the erasure of history from our self-understanding" (2001: 40). The technological understanding of Being, in effect, subdues our powers to question it, challenge it and shape its various layers of manifestation. This problematic aspect of the technological society is dealt with in detail in the critical theory of society of the Frankfurt School, energetically invoking the yet possible emancipation of human consciousness from all that enslaves it.

In his study, *Žižek and Heidegger: The Question Concerning Techno-Capitalism* (2008), Thomas Brockelman, who, broadly speaking, gestures appreciatively towards the Zizekian stance against the anti-subjectivism of Heidegger and the Frankfurt School, observes at a point in his study that Heidegger, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Arendt and those of their ilk critique the techno-capitalist society in order

> … to underscore the *difference* between unfreedom in traditional worlds and the 'danger' facing us today. The proposition that we *do* face a loss of freedom today, even in societies where consumer choices multiply or where few people face immediate threats of force or even direct interference with their lives, and *that* this threat above all robs us of the very language with which to criticize our contemporary reality or suggest alternatives to it, lends a common urgency to these otherwise various critiques (2008: 68).

Brockelman is right about the loss of freedom *even* in affluent industrial societies, where needs are fulfilled and situations of coercion are rare.

The global south is defined by "various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice" (Sen 2000: xii). But does the global south also experience *the same loss of freedom* in the face of the increasing entrenchment of the technological understanding of Being? I argue that it does. Even in societies like India, there is the loss of freedom to recognize and challenge the increasing techno-capitalistic invasion of social, economic, political and cultural life. It is not only when societies become affluent, stable and well-ordered that technologized existence can appear "normal". It is becoming the explanatory apparatus and the tutored common sense of the disadvantaged all over the world in terms of what they consider as their authentic possibility. It is becoming the measuring rod of success and failure, good life and bad, and reality and appearance. The poor peasant's experience of incredulity about the explanatory apparatuses of calculative intelligibility is borne silently for the sake of the possibilities it offers whether for oneself or for generations unborn. Bearing with incredulity involves anxiety, perplexity and loss of meaning, both personal and collective. They live in two worlds: their own world of significance and the world that silences them with the glow of its promises. The ever eclipsing but constantly intruding world of technological understanding is eerily distressing for the disadvantaged of the global south, just as the loss of freedom to critically examine techno-capitalism amidst abundance is distressing for people of the north. But the loss of freedom is more gripping for the disadvantaged because they suffer it as the unfreedom to *be* and to *have* according to their own

sense of significance. That is, they neither have the "new" techno-modern freedom to have the abundance of goods of their choice and be the individual of their design, nor the freedom to challenge and reject a disclosure of reality that promises them much, delivers not, and shatters their own world of significance. What is to be abandoned under the new logic of capital and the individual are often the most priced things—a sense of solidarity and community, a sense of sharing that has stood them in good stead despite inhuman destitution. Such techno-modern trails in the global south disappear from view because they are experienced by silent sufferers who come to understand their own suffering as meaningless in the face of the new world opening up before them. This is distress.

When Sachs writes that all nations desire to achieve industrial modernity, he does not mean that development therefore establishes the just society. By means of the international neoliberal order "development came to mean the formation of a global middle class alongside the spread of the transnational economic complex, rather than a national middle class alongside the integration of a national economy" (Sachs 2010b: vii). A transnational winner class of similar tastes and preferences is developing in the same mould as the Western consumer society. The strength of this consumer class, according to Sachs, is roughly the same in the global south as in the north. Wielding its hegemony over society, economy and polity, the transnational consumer class shapes public culture after its own image, interests and benefits. Experiences and disclosures of meaning of other classes and communities thus fade away from the cultural horizon of significance. Spaces for their expression and demonstration simply shrink, and their disappearance is labelled defeat in the market competition for tastes and preferences.

The selective suppression of disclosure of meaning was unequivocal in previous eras. In the techno-modern era, such suppression is equivocal, hidden and ambiguous, and so the experience of suppression itself has become unintelligible and invisible. According to Heidegger, without the background structure of intelligibility, it is difficult for an experience to show itself unequivocally. David Morris recognizes that even "the experience of pain is not timeless but changing, the product of specific periods and particular cultures" (1993: 4). Hence, the selective suppression of the disclosure of meaning of disadvantaged communities is equivocal for even themselves and rather invisible to others. That is why Paulo Freire's *conscientização*[13] (2005: 35) became the foundational idea of the critical pedagogy movement. Critical philosophy has the duty to understand and bring to the open not only the hidden structures of experience but also of the impossibility of experience. This is the meaning of Heidegger's understanding of philosophy as attunement to distress in the era of the abandonment of beings by Being.

Any effort at imagining good life outside the iron cage of techno-science first of all needs to attune itself to the distress arising out of technological nihilism, calculative intelligibility and atomistic individualism and take up a posthuman

---

[13] According to the translator of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "[t]he term *conscientização* refers to learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire 2005: 35, n.1).

perspective of the relation between humans and nature. Following Martin O'Connor (1993), Arturo Escobar argues that the social phase of capital, the first contradiction of capital arising from the exploitation of labour by the capitalist, has stabilized itself during the modern period. However, the second contradiction of capital, arising from the exploitation of nature by the capitalist, is now stabilizing itself during the postmodern ecological phase of capital. According to Escobar, focusing on the conditions of production, both social and ecological, is important because techno-capitalism impairs both these conditions of production (labour and nature) and capitalist restructuring like "sustainable development" can only take place at the expense of these conditions.

> If with modernity one can speak of the progressive semiotic conquest of social and cultural life, today this conquest is extended to the very heart of nature and life. Once modernity is consolidated and the economy becomes a seemingly ineluctable reality—a true descriptor of reality for most—capital must broach the question of the domestication of all remaining social and symbolic relations in terms of the code of production (1995: 203).

The discourse of sustainable development, says Escobar, is nothing but the semiotic conquest of nature as a mode of capital to be sustained and conserved as biodiversity resources, stewarded by the individual. Such resilience of capital and individual is possible only in terms of the logos of efficiency. The world of the individual, ruled over by the logic of market and founded upon the logic of technicity, means "the circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption" (OM: 107) and understanding reality as "the uniformity of calculable reckoning … [whereby humans also] must enter monotonous uniformity in order to keep up with what is real" (OM: 108).

The atomistic individual is in many ways a strange avatar for the global south, especially for the least advantaged. The ideal of the individual does help banish the disadvantaged to their own burdens when it suits the state and the advantaged. Communal oppression and political repression gave rise to the liberal individual, but the solution has developed its own contradiction as the vigorous contemporary communitarian and postmodern critique of liberal individualism confirms. Charles Taylor, a foremost critic and advocate of the political possibility of liberal communitarianism, raises the issue in a historical–hermeneutical vein in the essay "Legitimation Crisis?" (1985). Taylor argues that "the self-contained life" of individualism is not simply a negation of the erstwhile sense of community, but a constitutive element of modern western understanding of human identity, for modern identity, "has stressed individual autonomy to the point where the necessity of social mediation has been lost to view" (Taylor 1985: 274).

Ontologically, human beings are *with* others in a constitutive sense even when they strive towards being authentic and become one's own self as *Being and Time* has powerfully argued. Dasein is already Being-with; its individuation as the authentic self is a "modification" or negotiation of its constitutive sociality. Our sociality does not escape us even when we are factually alone, are pained by our loneliness, want to be left alone or are striving towards the definitive individuation of authentic selfhood. Selfhood is a modification of our sociality rather than

our sociality being a modification of our individuated selfhood. Heidegger points out that resolutely authentic existence "does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating 'I' … Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concernful Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others" (BT: 344). When we are pre-/non-cognitively engaging with others and with the things of our world, at once we are interpreting our self in terms of our world of engagement, and our world in terms of the self. This circular two-way interpretive traffic is named "the hermeneutical circle" within which is caught up, whether for good or ill, human existence as such. What is called the "objective" interpretation is a derivative of the more primordial hermeneutically circular self-understanding. Hence, our essence as self-aware human beings is to be self-interpreting beings, but self-interpretation is itself socially mediated.

Charles Taylor has consistently argued that modern identity, which too is constitutively self-interpretive, has been developing in a way that denies or covers up its social constitution. A particular acculturation process of Western societies is behind the production of the ideal of "the atomistic individual". Accordingly, the cultural ideal of understanding existential fulfilment in disengaged, technologized individuality finally negates sociality and trivializes all social relations in accordance with the centrality of the individual. According to Taylor, the late modern Westerner's dwindling interest in the political community of the nation state (legitimation crisis) arises from his/her essential understanding of radical individuality. A society that fostered the ideal of individuality is itself negated in its members' attempt to achieve total individuation. The society of the absolute individual, says Taylor,

> … has a fateful tendency to sap the bases of its own legitimacy. The very institutions and practices which express and entrench the modern identity in its successive phases—the capitalist industrial economy in a liberal polity—are also undermining participants' faith in this identity, or in these institutions as fit carriers of this identity, or both (1985: 288).

Taylor warns that legitimation crisis cannot be fully grasped if we only look at injustice in the distribution of benefits, for it is seen not only in the most vulgar forms of capitalism but also in "most hitherto attempted models of socialism". And modern Western political system, whether capitalist or communist, tends "to export its contradictions to the international sphere" (Taylor 1985: 248). Thus, the planetary trail of Western social and political ontology seems to arise out of the onto-technological forms of capital and individual.

Taylor refers to modern individualism as a culture of narcissism. With the waning of real communism, the culture of narcissism seems to be taking the upper hand everywhere. The culture of narcissism means the following for Taylor: "the spread of an outlook that makes self-fulfilment the major value in life and that seems to recognize few external moral demands or serious commitments to others. The notion of self-fulfilment appears in these two respects very self-centred, hence the term 'narcissism'" (1991: 55). As does Heidegger, Taylor calls these cultural developments "the slide to subjectivism" and "radical anthropocentrism". He

observes astutely that the Nietzschean, broadly postmodern, tendency to deconstruct and reconstruct all values, to see no reality outside constructions "cannot but exalt and entrench anthropocentrism" (1991: 61). This tendency makes "the ideal of self-determining freedom" the most attractive ideal. Taylor sees two problems if we begin to talk of individual freedom as "the arrival point" at universal human enlightenment and maturation, forgetting the historical acculturation process that gave birth to it. Firstly, such a view denies the moral power that gave birth to the ideal of individualism, namely the inviolable dignity of every person.[14] Secondly, such a view forces us to hold the narcissistic–ethnocentric belief that a historically earlier age or a different cultural group is a dark age or a culture groping in falsehoods (Taylor 1995).

The techno-modern ideal of individualism is meaningful only if citizens can be individuals in fact, only if they in fact have the capacity to determine things for themselves. Zygmunt Bauman argues that in most contemporary states, citizens are individuals only de jure and not de facto because control over their lives is not genuinely within their hands. They are "individuals by fate: the factors that constitute their individuality—confinement to individual resources and individual responsibility for the results of life choices—are not themselves matters of choice" (2002: 69). Herbert Marcuse has demonstrated that the lack of de facto freedom in industrialized societies arises from the social entrenchment of instrumental rationality and consumer society that invisibly regulates one's choices. This is true also of the swelling number of elites in the global south.

But what about the disadvantaged people of the global south (and the north)? They are oppressed by deprivations; they are oppressed by the new philosophy of individualism that politically encompasses them without actualizing their rights as individuals in any meaningful sense; they are oppressed by the expectations of the elites of democratic polities to behave as orderly members of the civil society. The most disadvantaged among them are in fact outside what Partha Chatterjee prefers to call the bourgeois realm of "the civil society". Most of them are not "rights-bearing citizens in the sense imagined by the constitution" (Chatterjee 2004: 38). As the democratic process cannot overlook them, they occupy the space Chatterjee calls "political society" so that their rights as the governed reach them in some form through the "messy" political mobilizations of political parties and not through the sophisticated methods and practices of the civil society. The fact that the government reaches out to the political society is deeply resented by the civil society. Chatterjee notes:

---

[14] Taylor has argued consistently in his major works such as *Sources of the Self* (1989) that a sense of the good powers our cultural ideals, whether individualism or instrumental rationality. About the moral source of contemporary ideals that have even lost their moral force, Taylor writes: "Learning to be the disengaged subject of rational control… is accompanied, even powered by, a sense of our dignity as rational agents.… But insofar as the sources now lie within us, more particularly, within certain powers we possess, the basis is there for an independent, i.e., non-theistic morality" (1989: 315).

> There is widespread resentment in the cities of the populism and corruption of all political parties which, it is said, are driven principally by the motive of gaining votes at the cost of ensuring the conditions of rapid economic growth. There is no doubt that this reflects the hegemony of the logic of corporate capital among the urban middle classes (2008: 62).

He is of the view that this is the condition of "popular politics in most of the world".

Chatterjee emphasizes that members of the political society are no rights-bearing individuals. Referring to groups of "illegal" settlers in land allotted to the Indian Railways in Kolkata, who lived under permanent threat of eviction, Chatterjee notes that an important aspect of popular politics is "*to give to the empirical form of a population group the moral attributes of a community*" (2004: 57). The settlers came from different castes and religions, backgrounds and places but what united them was a sense of solidarity in the face of the odds they were facing. "The categories of governmentality were being invested with the imaginative possibilities of community, including its capacity to invent relations of kinship, to produce a new, even if somewhat hesitant, rhetoric of political claims" (Chatterjee 2004: 60). This sense of community among the most disadvantaged sections of humanity, I believe, attests our essential Being-with and leaves a glimmer of hope for our ability to imagine contemporary notions of community.

Atomistic individualism is increasingly stifling the sense of community. At the same time, community is returning in dark forms that negate and contradict itself. This strange result of the stifling of human community can be encountered only by reinventing the idea of the community as a scheme of cooperation, an open, welcoming group of cosharers. For the most disadvantaged sections of humanity, however, the philosophy of the individual that prevails within the bounds of civil society and modern politics is meaningless. They occupy the spaces of the political society by means of their sense of community in contradiction to the spirit of modern individualism. Atomistic individualism negates the ontology of the human being as Being-with. And it disallows the possibilities of tolerable and dignified existence to disadvantaged people who live as cosharers in the burdens of one another.

In what follows, I shall explore the notion of community as that way of existing which positively modifies both capital and individual. I shall also refer to a certain hidden danger in our discourses of community and propose what could still be "a positive gathering of meaning" of the notion of community.

4.4 Community: The Saving Power and the Danger

Capital means all beings divested of their cultural layers of meaning and made reducible to the calculative and incremental value of money, which is in perpetual and cumulatively growing circulation. Individual is human being undermined in its constitutive sociality and vested with absolute rights, unlimited desires and atomistic, disengaged selfhood for the gratification of that self's "authentic" possibilities.

Capital is calculative and cumulative value of producible objects or resources. Individual is abstract, independent, indulgent self of the modern subject. Capital stands for the deworlded, uniform, virtual and arbitrary reality of all beings, and individual for the autonomous, disengaged, unlimited and lordly reality of human being.

I come to a positive conception of dwelling among things in the sixth chapter. In this section, I discuss a positive conception of our dwelling with others. However, dwelling with others and dwelling among things are inextricably related in this exposition. Our common/communal disclosure of the thing in its meaningfulness alone can subvert the virtual, resource-like reality of what-is calculated in terms of capital, and our common disclosure of human identity in its constitutive sociality or coexistence alone can positively delimit our desire for unlimited resources/commodities. All self-directed attempts of restraint are negations of the possibility-driven constitution of our selfhood and thus tend to produce its opposite, namely unrestrained possession and consumption.

Charles Taylor believes that the right of the individual to design her own life according to her own inner voice is "the finest achievement of modern civilization". According to Taylor's philosophical history of modern identity, this notion of the individual arises out of the eighteenth-century notion of authenticity, contained in its germinal form in both Rousseau and Herder. Its basic formulation is the following:

> There is a certain way of being human that is *my* way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's life.… If I am not, I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for *me*" (Taylor 1994: 30).

In this conception, self-determining, self-endorsing individuality is to be carefully protected from constraining elements of its constitutive sociality. The emphasis is unmistakably on escaping conformism and producing authentic designs of life like an artist. The individual is the active, wilful maker of own self, and not the passive receiver of an identity.

Taylor, however, notes that while the ethics of authenticity introduced important personal, social and political emancipations for Western Europeans, a whole set of emphases centering on individual freedom in fact undercut and even foreclosed a vitally significant texture of human ontology—its constitutively dialogical character. The self originates dialogically rather than monologically. This is why Taylor calls modern individualism "atomistic" because it gives rise to the sense that citizens are "less and less bound to their fellow citizens in common projects and allegiances" (Taylor 1991: 112–113).

But the moral problem of atomistic individualism is secondary. Its primary problem is ontological. Emancipation from the hierarchical order of medieval society has come to mean an indefensible ontology of the human being, "generated by the scientistic outlook that goes along with instrumental efficiency, as well as being implicit in some forms of rational action, such as that of the entrepreneur" (Taylor 1991: 98). The atomistic individual is the scientist (detached theoretical observer and "impartial spectator") and the *homo economicus* (perfectly rational, self-interested and economic/calculative choice-maker) converged into

one. The massive privileging of individualism in modern culture first gave rise to a sense of triumphalist accomplishment about it and later a resigned sense of ineluctability. For Taylor, atomistic individualism is "the modern social imaginary", something like a pre-understanding of Being as such that lets us make sense of several particular features of our world. Without it neither the modern theory of rights nor of law would make sense.

According to Taylor, "the dark side of individualism is a centering on the self, which both flattens and narrows our lives, makes them poorer in meaning, and less concerned with others or society" (1991: 4). Contemporary political science knows that Westerners in general and others like affluent Indians are increasingly showing less interest in important political matters like voting. Accordingly, we may say that the very foundations upon which are erected modern political morality, the modern nation states and the contemporary global politics of solidarity are under threat. However, prior to this, there is the deeply flawed ontology of atomistic individualism, which negates the constitutive sociality of human beings and "technologizes" that being's essence. The technologized animal is the atomistic individual.

The human being is a political animal according to Aristotle's well-known phrase in *Politics*. By this, he means that we best fulfil and make real the good life for ourselves within the polis with fellow citizens. Aristotle also claims in *Politics* that "the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part" (1984: 4). However, this questionable ontic priority of the political state over the individual is not what we mean by the sociality of the individual, although Aristotle came close to that conception when he called the human being a political animal in the sense that "a social instinct is implanted in all men by nature".

Heidegger argues that we can be selves only by way of our constitutive transcendence towards the world, by way of a converging inside–outside interface or an interstitial space, and not by way of a deep interiority dimension, an interior castle, insulated from the outside. Sociality is neither a derivative nor a separable compartmental structure of a deeper human ontology; rather, sociality *is* the very ontology of our selfhood.

But if we characterize Heidegger's ontology of the self with the term "social ontology", this is definitely inappropriate because the self for him is not merely interpenetrated with otherness but with what he names more holistically in the term "world" or "that referential totality which constitutes significance" (BT: 160)—that is, the meaningfully human world of things and others. This is what Heidegger means by "Being-in-the-world". This is the anti-Cartesian point of view par excellence. In what is supposed to be the earliest publicly presented version of *Being and Time*, a lecture given to Marburg Theological Society in July 1924, Heidegger puts his anti-Cartesian point of view rather plainly:

> Human life is not some subject that has to perform some trick in order to enter the world. Dasein as Being-in-the-world means: Being in the world in such a way that this Being means: dealing with the world; tarrying alongside it in the manner of performing, effecting and completing, but also contemplating, interrogating, and determining by way of contemplation and comparison (Heidegger 1992b: 7E).

The self is not an ego/subject separated radically from the world/object so that it can then cognitively represent the world to itself. The need to assume a separated, detached self, Heidegger says, is unwarranted.

Heidegger considers the human being as delivered over to a kind of Being by way of which *that Being* is always an issue for this entity in every case. However, the way of Being of the human entity is *Being-in-the-world*. This characterization means the following: that with which the human entity takes issue—namely Being—is in each case mine (mineness), and the essence of my Being is not a finished product but "existence" or standing out towards the world (BT: 67). That is, the interior region of the self is thoroughly entangled with what we generally consider an exterior region, but on account of the inter-penetration of the two regions, the latter region of the self is not external but is all "mine".

In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1927), Heidegger notes that world in a strictly ontological sense "is a determination of the Dasein's being. This is expressed from the outset when we say that Dasein exists as Being-in-the-*world*. The world belongs to the Dasein's existential constitution" (BPP: 296). Hence, says Heidegger, understanding the world means essentially "self-understanding" and vice versa. The emphasis is that being a self (the interior dimension) exactly means being entangled in the web of relation with other humans and handy things (the exterior dimension): "as the being which is occupied with itself, the Dasein is with equal originality Being-with others *and* Being-among intraworldly beings" (BPP: 297). Self-understanding is always already world-understanding. This unique ability of the self to turn towards itself in and through the world is called "transcendence" because it means turning towards what we usually consider the interior dimension by "stepping out" (*transcendere*) towards what we usually think of as the exterior dimension. According to Heidegger, Dasein means this very transcendence because as Being-in-the-world "it is a being which in its Being is out *beyond* itself" (BPP: 299). Transcendence or *epekeina* defines the most peculiar ontological structure of our Being-in-the-world. Transcendence means "to understand oneself from a world" and equally to understand the world from one's self-understanding. This understanding of human existence makes the Cartesian *ego cogito* untenable.

> The 'toward-itself' and the 'out-from-itself' are implicit in the concept of selfhood. What exists as a self can do so only as a transcendent being. This selfhood, founded on tran-scendence, the possible toward-itself and out-from-itself, is the presupposition for the way the Dasein factically has various possibilities of being its own and of losing itself.… Existence … always already means to step beyond or, better, having stepped beyond" (BPP: 300).

Existence therefore is not an *ego cogito*, not a monad, and is neither insulated from what is not self nor locked up inside a box-like consciousness. We are not subjects that occasionally come up against objects. No window is required to open our self towards the world; we exist always already as windowed, open beings. As openness for Being we already are "outside among other beings". This strictly ontological characterization means at the same time that the stepping out process

draws us equally inside towards our own self. The human self is a unity of three interdependent and co-originating existential movements: "Being-toward-itself, Being-with-others, and Being-among entities handy and extant" (BPP: 301).[15]

In Heidegger's conception, selfhood always means mineness, a turn towards my own self, but a turn that is possible only as someone who is already familiar with a world of meaningful things and as someone who is already in meaningful, dialogical acquaintance with others. My turn towards my own self happens through the detour to the world, and my turn towards the world happens through the detour to my own self. The unified structure of Being-in-the-world is possible, claims Heidegger, by way of our ontological overstepping or transcendence. The human being exists primarily by way of taking issue with its own self, by way of that which matters to its own self, whether explicitly or not. Heidegger insists that this existential–ontological condition does not in any way mean that the human being is practically determined "to care exclusively and primarily for itself and to use others as instruments toward this end" (BPP: 296). In fact, this way of

---

[15] Heidegger considers the existential structure of Being-in-the-world more primordial than both embodiment and sexuality. In *Being and Time,* he acknowledges that our bodily being "hides a whole problematic of its own" (BT: 143) and in *Zollikon Seminars* (given between 1959 and 1969) that the problem of the body cannot be reduced to corporeality. He observes that our bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*) "is basically *not* inanimate matter but a domain of that nonobjectifiable, optically invisible capacity to receive-perceive the significance of what it encounters, which constitutes the whole Da-sein" (ZS: 232). In this sense, our existential way of being embodied is called "bodying forth" (*Leiben*). While bodiliness codetermines Being-in-the-world, existence or ecstatic openness towards the world is Dasein in its uttermost primordiality (see Askay 1999, Aho 2009). Similarly, in *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1928), Heidegger maintains that the term Dasein is the neutral space that gives meaning to "every concrete factual humanity". This neutrality means that "Dasein is neither of the two sexes" (MFL: 136) but "harbors the intrinsic possibility for being factically dispersed into bodiliness and thus into sexuality" (MFL: 137). Defending Heidegger's ontological prioritizing of existence, Aho notes that Dasein is "an unfolding historical horizon or space of meaning that is already 'there' (*Da*), prior to the emergence of the human body and its various capacities" (Aho 2002: 3). While both Askay and Aho are interpreting Heidegger correctly, such prioritizing of the disembodied realm of meaning smacks of Cartesianism rather than its overcoming because Dasein understood as the "historical horizon or space of meaning" betrays a sense of the spiritual sphere as separated from and superior to the bodily sphere. Hence, we must rather acknowledge that both bodiliness and Being-in-the-world codetermine each other and are both equiprimordial; also that the space of meaning that Dasein is is always already sexual and gendered (see Derrida 1983). In his pursuit of these themes, Merleau-Ponty wrote that "[n]either body *nor existence* can be regarded as the original of the human being, since they presuppose each other, and because the body is solidified or generalized existence, and existence a perpetual incarnation" (Merleau-Ponty 2002: 192). He later radicalized the chiasmic intertwining relation between bodies and meaning, world and language, the visible and the invisible, in his notion of the "flesh". Accordingly, he wrote that "pure ideality is itself not without flesh… It is as though the visibility that animates the sensible world were to emigrate, not outside of every body, but into another less heavy, more transparent body, as though it were to change flesh, abandoning the flesh of the body for that of language…" (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 153). Such a conception alone, I think, can truly help us overcome Cartesian dualism.

conceiving the ontological structure of the human self should in fact lead us to the opposite conclusion.[16]

Before addressing that conclusion, I want to foreground the centrality of primordial human sociality in this understanding of the human being as the authentic outside–inside interface. Heidegger's ontological name for our primordial sociality is Being-with (*Mitsein*) and for our everyday attunement with the world, the condition of always being affected by the world, is "falling" (*Verfallen*). However, the existential movement of falling or losing oneself *in* the world makes us anxious in relation to the counter movement of winning or owning up our own existence in its uttermost individuality (authenticity/*Eigentlichkeit*). Existential anxiety is resolved by way of taking action in terms of those finite possibilities of our Being, which we have resolutely chosen in answer to the ontological call (of conscience)

---

[16] The history of continental philosophy can be seen as the story of the rise and fall of the self, the end of "transcendental pretence", with Solomon (1988: 4). However, what has come to an end really is the Cartesian self. Let me here briefly delineate three important ways in which the question of the self is addressed in European philosophy and Heidegger's contribution to all these three strains of thought on the self. (i) Dan Zahavi addresses the question of the self in a Husserlian vein as a minimal experiential dimension of self-awareness (minimal self), a pre-reflective familiarity with self, and hence rightly concludes that "Heidegger did, in fact, operate with a form of self-acquaintance that precedes reflection. When understanding his claim that no self-acquaintance can occur independently of, or prior to, our world-disclosure, it is crucial to remember that this world-disclosure contains a dimension of self from the very start and, as well, that it cannot occur independently of or prior to a disclosure of self" (2005: 84–85). That is, the three dimensions of our self-understanding (self, world and others) are codisclosed with no allusion to the temporal priority of any. (ii) The question of the self is also approached hermeneutically as an unfolding story of unity of identity (narrative self). Charles Guignon explains that according to Heidegger, we can fully achieve authentic selfhood by taking "each moment as an integral component of the overall story" (2000: 89). The danger of losing the "primordial truth" revealed in the authentic, resolute moment of vision can be remedied according to Guignon "by reaffirming one's resolute stance in the face of death throughout one's life" (2000: 90). However, we must note that in fact, there is no such thing as a completely authentic Dasein (see Footnote 7 of this chapter). Heidegger writes that "there belongs to Dasein, as long as it is, a 'not-yet' which it will be—that which is constantly still outstanding" (BT: 286); its Being is always "determined by the 'ahead-of-itself'" (BT: 279). Although Heidegger's understanding of the self is narrative (Taylor 1989: 47), it is a narrative self that never completes or fulfils itself. Kevin Aho writes: "Death, as a structural component of life, reveals the finitude and forward directionality of life; it points to the possibility of my fulfillment, even though such fulfillment is impossible" (2009: 15). Challenging Guignon's view Taylor Carman argues that "any conception of Dasein as a finished or in principle finishable self, an integrated whole, a complete occurrent entity" (2003: 267) is inaccurate. Hence, Heidegger expounds a historically unfolding, narratively structured self that constantly ruptures the meaningful unity it anticipates (see Fisher 2010). (iii) Derrida deconstructs all self-presence. John Russon understands selfhood itself as *différance* because "the nature of the 'I' is necessarily characterized by what Derrida calls *différance* and… what Heidegger analyzes under the name of 'anticipatory resoluteness' is precisely the embrace of this *différance* in which the self is properly itself: it is only in its embracing of its not-being-able-to-(yet)-be-itself that the self is properly itself" (Russon 2008: 103). Dasein is both self (in its narrative historizing anticipation) and not-self (as its anticipated narrative unity constantly ruptures in line with its structural form of the "ahead-of-itself"). This rupture of full self-identity can be called *différance*.

that comes from within our own Being. This is so because Dasein is character-
ized by both mineness (*Jemeinigkeit*) and existence (*Existenz* or standing out into
the world). The *Angst* of falling away from our ownmost self and into the world,
thus, discloses our authentic possibilities of Being in the "moment of vision"
(*Augenblick*) or the opportune moment (*kairos*). As far as our primordial sociality
is concerned, the question is whether sociality is compromised or renounced in the
authentic moment of vision.

Sociality is crucial to both inauthentic and authentic modes of existence.
Furthermore, Heidegger considers sociality as prior to and as the condition for
individuality.[17] In his treatment of human sociality, Heidegger recognizes the dif-
ference of both intensity and significance in the manner in which we are affected
by other human beings and by the handy things we deal with as far as our sense of
the self is concerned. His analysis shows that our everyday dealings with things
reveal that we are absorbed and fascinated with our world. But the absorption and
fascination with other humans in our world defines our everyday selfhood as such
(BT: 149–150). The world as such penetrates our sense of the self, but other
humans literally make up our sense of "my ownness", thus undercutting the mean-
ing of "my own self". This is why Heidegger claims that our everyday self is the
anonymous "One" (*das Man*).

Heidegger's insistence about neutral fundamental ontology notwithstanding, it
is possible to see in chapter IV and V–B of Division I of *Being and Time* a plain
indictment of social conformism. Gadamer observes that "his severe style of lec-
turing and the pointedness of his invective made it appear simply incredible when
Heidegger described the world of the 'They' and 'idle chatter' with bitter acrimony
and then added, 'this is intended without any negative meaning'" (2004: 141). As
a student Gadamer heard Heidegger's lectures as an exhortation to reject inau-
thenticity and conformism in favour of authenticity and individualism. The search
for a seminal understanding of human sociality in *Being and Time* is bound to be
struck by this emphasis on authentic selfhood—indeed a nostalgic yearning for the
authenticity ideal that Charles Taylor's philosophical history of modern identity
demonstrates as originating from the Rousseau-inspired Romantic expressivist tra-
dition (see Taylor 1989, 1991, 1994).

Even still, what is not to be missed in *Being and Time* is its insistence that reso-
lute authenticity of a moment of vision, even if it is the exhortatory ideal, cannot
mean dismissal of sociality but its resolute appropriation, for "*authentic* existence
is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only
a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon" (BT: 224). Existence
is a stretching between the two temporal points of birth and death, but a stretch-
ing that is powerfully pulled towards the finite future point of death and out of

---

[17] Stephen Crowell writes: "Heidegger conceives individuation not as prior to the social but as
a modification of it; 'authenticity' does not constitute sociality but merely occupies it in a dif-
ferent way" (2007: 56). For Heidegger, the others are "those from whom, for the most part, one
does *not* distinguish oneself—those among whom one is too" (BT: 154), and "[a]uthentic Being-
one's-Self takes the definite form of an existentiell modification of the 'they'" (BT: 312).

that point of definite possibility pulled back into the concrete particulars of one's birth. The historical past of the human being, its tradition and social practices, figure in its Being constitutively in terms of the significance that its future holds for it. Hence, Dasein "'historizes' out of its future on each occasion" (BT: 41). The freedom of authentic existence is a "finite freedom", which involves choosing to make the choice of taking over the powerlessness of one's abandonment to the particular existential history and its several possibilities of one type or another, and thus coming to clearly understand the accidents of one's situation. But because the human being is constitutively social or *with* others, its "historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as destiny" (BT: 436). Individual fates are intertwined with the community's heritage and tradition on account of human primordial sociality, not on account of the factual occurrence of many subjects together. In short, Heidegger is merely attesting the fact that humans make their choices in terms of projected possibilities of their existence but do so always by making sense of their historical past through the significance bestowed on that past by their possibilities of existence.

Theodore Schatzki points out that the focus of analysis of the early Heidegger's work is individual existence and thus "the sociality Heidegger examines in these works is the sociality *of* an individual life… sociality is treated of *only* as a feature of individual life" (2007: 233). Can fundamental ontology of sociality contribute to formulate an adequate social ontology? Schatzki thinks that it can. According to Heidegger, sociality of individual existence means first of all that individual selfhood is always already impinged on by other beings who are like oneself. Self-understanding is not an abstract, unrelated discovery about oneself. One sees and understands oneself in terms of a space of meaning within which one has grown up. Schatzki rightly observes that the authenticity–inauthenticity distinction does not weaken Heidegger's conception of sociality because it is a constitutive aspect of selfhood, whether inauthentic or authentic, as both these modes of being oneself assume sociality. Aho writes that the everyday self, the anonymous One, stands for "a totality of interconnected relations: customs, occupations, practices, and cultural institutions as embodied in gestures, artifacts, monuments, and so forth. This totality of relations gives meaning to beings; it is on the basis of these relations that things can show up or count in determinate ways" (2009: 20). Schatzki too emphasizes that the One is "a space of disclosure" and that its basic unity, commonality and publicness are essential for any understanding of social ontology. We grow into a common world of shared practices and become what we are in terms of it. Heidegger notes that this common cultural world is the public world "into which every maturing Dasein first grows" (HCT: 246). We are ontologically ruled by the inarticulate social background of a more-or-less total understanding of Being.

> Whatever the way of being it may have at the time, and thus with whatever understanding of Being it may possess, Dasein has grown up both into and in a traditional way of interpreting itself: in terms of this it understands itself proximally and, within a certain range, constantly. By this understanding, the possibilities of its Being are disclosed and

regulated. Its own past—and this always means the past of its 'generation'—is not something which *follows along after* Dasein, but something which already goes ahead of it (BT: 41).

Heidegger's argument is that entities can ontically show up only on the basis of a rather dense, indistinct and inarticulate sedimentation of social meaning. This withdrawn and unclear social meaning forms, maintains and composes our understanding of Being on account of which alone are all beings possible. This description of human sociality is probably the most significant clue towards a Heideggerian social ontology.

According to the thesis of primordial sociality, existence is always already existence with others or coexistence as Schatzki puts it. The ontological phenomenon of coexistence does not mean factual living together. Ontological coexistence does not depart from me even when I am factually alone or lonely in a crowd as in a marketplace. Indeed, I feel lonely only because I am ontologically social. It is on account of this ontological feature of my constitution that I am capable of encountering the other person, even a foreigner. It is on account of my ontological sharing of the common world with others that someone or her ways strike me as "alien" or strange, or I decide to pass another by. This being so, the problem of empathy becomes absurd according to Heidegger in its traditional formulation.[18] Not that the problem of understanding others and sharing their feelings is thus resolved; rather, it means that empathy is possible only on account of our ontological sociality and it arises from "the unsociability of the dominant modes of Being-with" (BT: 162). The traditional notion of empathy cannot be an answer to the riddle of an encapsulated spirit "feeling its way into" another such spirit. Dasein is not such a spirit. Empathy, on the other hand, relates to special cases of the apparent breakdown of our sociality. Others matter to us and we care about them solicitously. Others not mattering to us is the deficient mode of our solicitous sociality. When others in fact matter to us and we want to deal with them in positive modes of solicitude, there are instances when these ways of Being towards others might meet with perplexity, as when others are in intense pain or agony. Empathizing is a way of dealing with such instances of Being towards others when our sociality manifests itself in the form of a certain unsociability or inability to be "with" them. Situations calling for deep empathy are situations that make our sociability clueless and perplexed.

Hence, the sociality of the self first of all means that ontologically an individual self is always already communally/socially constituted as the anonymous One. Secondly, the communal constitution of the self is conditioned on the way of Being of the human or its transcendence towards the world, which means the whole sphere of my relation with my own self, others and handy things. Thirdly, ontological sociality of the individual human being does not disappear even when she/he strives to be her/his own authentic self as every form of finite freedom, even

---

[18] The traditional question of the problem of empathy is this: "Since only the lived experiences of my own interior are first given, how is it possible for me to apprehend the lived experiences of others as well, how can I '*feel my way into*' them, *empathize* with them?" (HCT: 243).

the freedom to resist social conformism and mindless levelling, has to be a way of her/his negotiation of the possibilities of the world.

Social ontology and all social phenomena, therefore, have to be grounded in human sociality as such. This is the meaning of Heidegger's view that our finite individual possibilities or fates arise from out of our communal sharing of the same common world or heritage. Our individual fates arise from out of our community's destiny. That is why resolute action is "the *repetition* of a possibility of existence that has come down to us" (BT: 436). Even our innovations are interpretive appropriations of what has thus come down to us. Hence, an authentically historical existence is indifferent to both nostalgia for the communal past and eagerness for the starkly novel and progressive future. An uncritical yoking of individuals to their community's heritage cannot be found in *Being and Time*. One of the important philosophical imports of the sociality thesis of Heidegger is that individual negotiation of present possibilities is ontologically constrained by one's inheritance or tradition as a communal being. One is not an abstract spirit that can make choices without reference to any background. An authentic choice of one's finite freedom concerns with a possibility that one "has inherited and yet has chosen" (BT: 435).

This exposition of the Heideggerian conception of sociality allows us to come back to the issue of modern individuation of the person divested of her sociality. The individual in this sense is the deworlded person, the metaphorical atom. According to this exposition of sociality, the human being is constitutively social to the extent that even when it tries to be resolutely its own authentic self, it still cannot be the authentic self asocially. If so, what development as modernization achieves is a transformation of the human being as the "technologized animal". Twentieth-century Continental philosophy since Heidegger has argued persuasively that the question of an unchangeable human essence is not phenomenologically tenable and that human essence is something that can transform across broad historical epochs. In the current epoch of the technological age, Heidegger argues that human essence is being transformed into "the technologized animal". In the *Zollikon Seminars* in 1965, while speaking about measurability in the scientific domain, Heidegger notes that the historical position of technological humanity is leading to the destruction of Western humanity on account of the unconditional acceptance of progress. According to Heidegger, accepting the irresistible power of Western civilization "the prophets of the disintegration of human Da-sein use the phrase 'Western Man' in an exclusively sarcastic manner" (ZS: 103). Is the sarcasm meant to convey the globalization of doom, the end of the human being as Dasein?

An irreversible fascination with the beginnings of Western thought and an irrepressible angst about its contemporary trajectory characterize the Heideggerian oeuvre. Dasein, the thereness of Being or the disclosive space for Being's presencing, disintegrates with the technologized animal, the deworlded atom. The human being in the technological age of individualism and capitalism is passively undergoing and actively undertaking its own ontological transformation into the technologized animal. The primary meaning of the ontological change here is that

the human being is fast transforming from *Being-with-others* into the mechanical and unaffected *Being-amidst-others*. The decline of the sociality of the self hence arises out of modern subjectivism. The modern individual awaits satiation through endless consumption of "unneeded" consumables. The quintessentially human project of meaning-weaving in community with others as the ontologically privileged talking animal reinvents the project of meaning in terms of incessant consumption. These are but some of the crucial ways in which the sociality of the modern individual is being transformed. My analysis of the ontological sociality of the individual human being in early Heidegger is significant only because of this transformation of the social being of the human into anxious, bored, technologized and asocial existence. This is the meaning of Heidegger's assertion that the import of the event of the technological manifestation of Being is "unconditional devastation", achieved through the planetary domination or the progress of the European (E: 80). The name of this domination, as it unfolds in the global south, is "development". When southern humanity achieves individualism, centred on European subjectivism, what it achieves is the technological ideal of development and the transformation of the social human being into the asocial technologized animal.

A radical reclamation of the sense of community, a meaningful retrieval of the human bond, can be seen as a restraint both on capitalization and individualization. However, the notion of community is not at all unproblematic. For this, we do not need to wander anywhere, for Heidegger's infamous signing up with National Socialism demonstrates the danger hidden in the sense of community. The Heidegger affair thoroughly unsettled the Heidegger-inspired humanities research community. Was it a concrete instance of historical Dasein choosing its "hero"? Was it a concrete instance of Dasein choosing in resoluteness "the choice which makes one free for the struggle of loyally following the footsteps of that which can be repeated?" (BT: 437). Derrida follows the trail of Heidegger's invocation of the German spirit, Western spirit and the spirit of the *Volk*, the invocation of the "spirit" (*Geist*) as such, as a way of making sense of the Heidegger affair.

In the (in)famous "Rectoral Address," *spirit* is said to be "neither empty acumen nor the noncommittal play of wit nor the busy practice of never-ending rational analysis nor even world reason" (Heidegger 1993: 33). The spirit is not the cultural world either; not even the deposit of useful knowledge, nor a people's values. Rather, and surprisingly, "it is the power that comes from preserving at the most profound level the forces that are rooted in the soil and blood of a Volk, the power to arouse most inwardly and to shake most extensively the Volk's existence" (1993: 33–34). The jargons of fundamental ontology are put to the generous use of the political articulation of the National Socialist spirit. Derrida points to the motif of the spirit in Heidegger as

> … regularly inscribed in contexts that are highly charged politically, in the moments when thought lets itself be preoccupied more than ever by what is called history, language, the nation, *Geschlecht*, the Greek or German languages. From this lexicon… Heidegger draws abundantly in the years 1933–35, above all in the *Rectorship Address* and the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, and also in a different way in *Nietzsche* (1991: 5).

Circumscribing the discourse area for a subject or collection of subjects—call it community—is a dangerous trend for Derrida, because it cannot oppose anything, except by "reinscribing spirit in an oppositional determination, by once again making it a unilaterality of subjectivity, even if in its voluntarist form" (1991: 39). Derrida hits the nail on the head when he takes the attack to an unsuspecting camp:

> The constraint of this program remains very strong, it reigns over the majority of discourses which, today and for a long time to come, state their opposition to racism, to totalitarianism, to nazism, to fascism, etc., and do this in the name of spirit, and even of the freedom of (the) spirit, in the name of an axiomatic—for example, that of democracy or 'human rights'—which, directly or not, comes back to this metaphysics of *subjectivity* (1991: 39–40).

It is this danger of the nostalgia for community consolidating and coagulating itself into the very same form as modern individualism and subjectivism that we need to be wary of. This razor of Derrida, this measure of discerning whether the amorphous, genial "We" is coagulating into a substantive, well-sealed "I", I think, calls for our attention.

Development as modernization, taking the global forms of capitalism and individualism, is at the same time constrained by the metaphysics of subjectivity, enshrined in vulgar communitarianism and modern reactive nationalism. Heidegger realized this after the Nazi fiasco and put it down in the following 1938 passage:

> Only because and insofar as man, altogether and essentially, has become subject is it necessary for him to confront, as a consequence, this explicit question: is it as an 'I' that is reduced to its random desires and abandoned to an arbitrary free-will or as the 'we' of society; is it as individual or as community; is it as a personal being within the community or as a mere member of the body corporate; is it as a state, nation, or people or as the indifferent humanity of modem man, that man wills and must be that subject which, *as* the essence of modernity, he *already is*? Only where, in essence, man has become subject does there exist the possibility of sliding into the unbeing of subjectivism in the sense of individualism. But it is also the case that only where man *remains* subject does it make any sense to struggle explicitly against individualism and for the community as the goal and arena of all achievement and utility (AWP: 69–70).

All our modernist imaginations of community, whether nation, church, Anglophones and Francophones, Hindus and Muslims, Malayalis and Marathis, and proletariat and bourgeois, arise from out of the desire to be the collective subject or the gigantic "I" in juxtaposition to or in denial of the Other, the non-self or not-I. For sure, this critique of the "same" (*moi*) or of *ipseity* cannot bypass Levinas's post-Holocaust oeuvre.

The ineluctable, irreducible alterity/otherness of the human *face* (the expressive beyond-phenomenality that demands a response) is Levinas's starting point as well as the non-thematizable theme. At the same time, and if paradoxically, Levinas's opus is informed by the injunctions of the Hebraic God: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan" (Exodus 22: 21–2). Levinas's philosophy of the Other arises from the spirituality of the landless, non-autochthonous sojourner: "I am thy passing guest, a sojourner, like all my fathers" (Psalm 39: 12). Levinas opposes Heidegger's anti-(post)-humanism to his humanism of the Other: "To shelter the

other in one's own land or home, to tolerate the presence of the landless and home-less on the 'ancestral soil,' so jealously, so meanly loved—is that the criterion of humanness? Unquestionably so" (2007: 86). Ethics, which for Levinas should found and animate philosophy and thought, is the challenge posed to spontaneous freedom of the self and identity by the Other. Neither the political state nor the community should build itself up on the presumption of individual liberty but on the assumption of fraternal relation with the irreducible Other. Every commune, confession and identity that inhabits a practical reduction, and thus an unavoid-able betrayal of the original communication of the irreducible relation of the self to the Other, which Levinas calls "saying" in opposition to the "said", should be reminded of the moral height of the Other that weighs it down at every moment of its journey within the terrain of the "I/We". Levinas opposes his thought to Heidegger's philosophy of Being as self-understanding, which supposedly reduces the Other to an aspect of the self. Sociality for Heidegger is a constitutive element of Being-in-the-world. Levinas condemned Heidegger's thought as too close to the roots and the landscape: "It is absolutely not a philosophy of the émigré! I would even say that it is not a philosophy of the emigrant. To me… he or she who emi-grates is fully human: the migration of man does not destroy, does not demolish the meaning of being" (2001c: 178). Heidegger's philosophy of technology, says Levinas, "exalts the pre-technological powers of possession" and his philosophy of Being "subordinates the relationship with the Other to the relation with Being in general… and leads inevitably to another power, to imperialist domination, to tyr-anny… Its origin lies back in the pagan 'moods,' in the enrootedness in the earth, in the adoration that enslaved men can devote to their masters" (1979: 46–47).

But Levinas's philosophy of communion with the irreducible Other, which gains its invaluable sense from the dark patches of modernity's self-circling truth of the "I" and is capable of opening up a whole labyrinth of unknown truths, should be interrogated for its fear of the "pagan" and for its location within the question concerning humanism.[19] I think that Levinas's thought cannot pass unscathed the above-mentioned razor of Derrida that interrogates all thinking that implicitly or explicitly arises from a centring on subjectivity. His pronouncements in respect of non-Western peoples and non-Judeo-Christian traditions, and his belief in the generous encompassment of "everything else in the world" (2001a: 137) within the Western tradition (unabashed Eurocentrism, Euro-triumphalism) point to this very same problem of the coagulated "We–I". This is why Levinas's emphasis on fraternity over and above liberty and equality makes Howard Caygill restless because "to privilege fraternity over freedom and equality is to engage with the very element of the revolutionary trinity that was most vulnerable to becoming a warrant for violence" (2002: 4). Derrida himself thought otherwise. Despite the difficulties Levinas's thought presents in passing from abstract tran-scendentalism of alterity to law and politics, despite signs that Levinas's humanism of the Other would fail Derrida's razor (as it would be in Levinas's 1964 essay

---

[19] See: Bernasconi (2005: 17), McGettigan (2006: 15). For postcolonial engagement with Levinas, see: Eaglestone (2010), Drabinski (2011).

"Meaning and Sense" [see Levinas 1996]), Derrida himself was convinced that the internal logic, import and spirit of Levinas's thought could challenge the cruelties of the nation state. Derrida states: "Levinas never turned his eyes away from this violence and this distress, whether he spoke of it directly or not, in one way or another" (1996: 64). However, we should not close our eyes to the fear of the concrete other hidden in Levinas's work, just as we cannot desist from harvesting the resources available in Levinas's oeuvre of starting not from the *ego cogito* but from the Other, or as Robert Bernasconi points out, of questioning "the privilege that the West accords to itself to colonize the world," and especially of Levinas's acknowledgement that self-questioning originates from the gaze of the Other (2005: 27).

Community, in opposition to bourgeois individualism, was the ultimate utopian of real communism—a classless community brought to fruition by a class, even if that class stood for the majority, for the unjustly treated. Can the amiable sense of community be really separated from the unmistakable inclination of real communities to accomplish their essence and settle uncompromisingly upon the "We-I"? What does it take to be free of subjectivism's other side—collectivism? But if all attempts to withhold the asocial transformation of the human being into the atomistic individual (the technologized animal) further entrenches the subjectivism of community, there seems to be no escape from the self-circling contradiction of the "We-I" and from the unrestrained reign of capital and individual. Thankfully, this deeply gloomy conclusion is challenged by the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy and he does so in conversation with the Heideggerian conception of sociality.

The essentialist and subjectivistic metaphysics of immanent community in contemporary communitarianism and the same metaphysics of individual rights and liberties in liberalism are both rejected by Nancy. For him, National Socialism is the exemplar of the yearning for the myth of origin,

> … the poetico-ethnological nostalgia for an initial *mything* humanity and the wish to regenerate the old European humanity by resurrecting its most ancient myths.… [But w]e shall never return to the mythic humanity of the primal scene, no more than we shall ever recover what was signified by the word 'humanity' before the fire of the Aryan myth (1991b: 46).

The western search for the mythic origin culminated in Nazism. In such search hides "the entire pretension on the part of the West to appropriate its own origin or to take away its secret, so that it can at last identify itself, absolutely, around its own pronouncement and its own birth" (Nancy 1991b: 46). And yet Nancy does not disavow community but is distressed about the techno-capitalistic politics of the individual. His distress about both essentialist individualism and communitarianism is delineated in the preface of *The Inoperative Community* (1986) by the declaration that his concern with community "comes from the left" and "left" according to him means the politics of receptivity to community as emphasized inadequately in the word "communism". Politics is not simply the space of the play of power but of the coming to play of community. However, the subversion of community by the coming to play of power in the space of politics in contemporary world is something that Nancy wants to engage with, but not for the sake of power itself, but for the sake of "what is at stake in community".

The coming to play of power is to be emphasized, he writes, "at a moment when a kind of broadly pervasive democratic consensus seems to make us forget that 'democracy,' more and more frequently, serves only to assure a play of economic and technical forces that no politics today subjects to any end other than that of its own expansion" (1991b: xxxvii). He then observes astutely that the major part of global humanity (that will have to be the global south) "is paying the price for this". Nancy's dense prefatory note in *The Inoperative Community* summarizes his intent as well as intellectual journey. Politics would not have been the contesting space of power relations if politics were not the space of community. This is so because individual existence is already "the existence of being-in-common" and it is being in common that gives rise to being a self—Nancy's quintessential Heideggerian move. Of course, Nancy's aim is not to argue that communal being is more originary than individual being; rather, his point is that being in common and being a self are co-originary and coextensive. To emphasize the Heideggerian point here:

> [T]he mode of existence and appropriation of a 'self' (which is not necessarily, nor exclusively, an individual) is the mode of an exposition in common and to the in-common, and that this exposition exposes the self even in its 'in itself,' in its 'ipseity,' and in its own distinctiveness, in its isolation or in its solitude. Only a being-in-common can make possible being-separated (Nancy 1991b: xxxvii).

The self has to do with an outside even in the deepest intimacy of its inside. Being a self already means being in common. This is the meaning of one of Nancy's titles, *Being Singular Plural*, the meaning of which he frames in the following way: "Being cannot *be* anything but being-with-one-another, circulating in the *with* and as the *with* of this singularly plural coexistence" (Nancy 2000: 3).

Nancy traces Heidegger's Nazism, the unpardonable "philosophical politics that became criminal", to his failure to begin philosophizing from the plural singular nature of all origin or the impossibility of pure origin. The political arises from the impossibility of any original narcissism, for the political begins with the common. Nancy notes that Plato and Aristotle prescribed politics not for the sharing of power or for meeting with any need, but for living well, which for them meant, sharing the "logos". The worth of logos does not lie in the calculability of reason but in the possibility of exposition and sharing. Nancy argues that this tradition of sharing and living exposed to each other has come to a close with the substantialization of community by assigning it with a common being. For Nancy, community is altogether different, for it means

> … existence inasmuch as it is *in* common, but without letting itself be absorbed into a common substance. Being *in* common has nothing to do with communion, with fusion into a body, into a unique and ultimate identity that would no longer be exposed. Being *in* common means, to the contrary, *no longer having, in any form, in any empirical or ideal place, such a substantial identity, and sharing this (narcissistic) 'lack of identity'* (1991b: xxxviii).

According to Nancy, community or being in common—being a self through and with the other—is the meaning of Heideggerian finitude. Community "is not an aggregation of individuals, but, rather crudely, something very much like

a 'feeling' at the moments of sharing in contact between irreducibly singular beings who do not even share the property of 'belonging together' in a cohesive group" (Hutchens 2005: 105). Nancy relinquishes the community of solidity and embraces the community of liquidity so that he can get past Derrida's razor and do so without having to abandon community per se.

Nancy is keenly aware of globalism and global capital. Western history is becoming planetary by means of capital without becoming universal. The global historical process is, thus, a flattening process that endangers the plural. But Being, the matter for thought, cannot be anything but the dissimilarity of Being in its simultaneity—Derrida's *différance*. And hence, for Nancy, ontology or thinking about existence today means in its concreteness thinking about globality under the designations of capital, technology, the west and the rupture of history (Nancy 2000: 46–47). This thinking is essential not because the west is anathema but because Being is singular plural and because human beings in the global times are stripped bare of this being in common.[20] Even if contingent and non-substantial, being in common means being human. The transformation of the human being into technologized animal for Nancy means coexistence or being in common merely as "co-appearance" that divests the "with" of its meaning. It means the dislocation of "the simplest solidarities" and "the most elementary proximities". It means the degeneration of communication into "the maintenance of the spectacular-market machine". Hence, "co-appearance might only be another name for capital" (Nancy 2000: 63) and "capital is the alienation of being singular plural as such" (Nancy 2000: 73).

Capital transforms the singularity of Being into neutral, interchangeable products, and the plurality of Being into the global system of commodity circulation or market. According to Nancy, the concomitance of the globalization of market and the human rights means that "these rights represent the supposed absolute value that capital claims to exchange for… itself" (2000: 74). For him, capital is deeply ambivalent, and Marxist and post-Marxist analysis does not sufficiently perceive the full extent of the ambivalence. Capital does expose fittingly the alienation of humanity from culturally constructed notions of the proper (a deconstruction that for Nancy mainly means misery), and at the same time, it unfittingly exposes the stripping bare of being in common as the primary feature of meaning and Being. That is, capital institutes possibilities of emancipation from the oppression of tradition, while at the same time instituting, if ever so seductively and surreptitiously, atomistic individualism and the transformation of the social being of the human into an asocial, unsociable, technologized and monadic existence. This basic ambivalence, Nancy points out, is at the basis of all ambivalence towards technology among thinkers. Marx thought that technology would assist humans in their self-overcoming of capital. Heidegger, on the contrary, thought that the relentless and uncontrollable efficiency of technology would only further entrench capital and would essentially control capital and humanity with neither having any power over the essence of technology.

---

[20] The individual of modern individualism, for Nancy, "is merely the residue of the experience of the dissolution of community.… It is another, and symmetrical, figure of immanence: the absolutely detached for-itself, taken as origin and as certainty" (1991b: 3).

Nancy sees fascism, nationalism, fundamentalism and their various forms as replies to the waning of the proper and of community. His solution is the following: "what is at stake is not a reappropriation of the *with* (of the essence of a common Being), but rather a *with* of reappropriation (where the proper does not return, or returns only *with*)" (Nancy 2000: 64–65). That is, *a community without communion*. According to Nancy, Heidegger, who in his Dasein-analysis demolished the Cartesian subject, fell for a notion of substantial community "with his vision of a people and a destiny conceived at least in part as a subject" (1991b: 14). Nancy's community is not a community of co-appearance but one of coexistence. Derrida unwittingly grants such a community to Levinas's philosophy of the Other: "Without intermediary and without communion, absolute proximity and absolute distance.… A community of nonpresence, and therefore of nonphenomenality. Not a community without light, not a blindfolded synagogue, but a community anterior to Platonic light. A light before neutral light, before the truth which arrives as a third party…" (2001: 112). For Nancy, this is a community never to come, never to actualize into a substance; it is in that sense *a negative community, an inoperative community, a community without communion or its own immanence*.

Being in common always already means exposition and communication. Hence, for Nancy, the task of community today is not fusion and immanence, or the struggle for founding real communities, but the task of "writing" and sharing. The political as the disposition of community means "being already engaged in the community, that is to say, undergoing, in whatever manner, the experience of community as communication: it implies writing. We must not stop writing, or letting the singular outline of our being-in-common expose itself" (1991b: 41). Nancy is here referring to "writing" in a broad and Derridean sense, according to which writing "is not a sign of a sign, except if one says it of all signs" (Derrida 1997b: 43). The chain of infinite referrals that constitutes signification is originary writing, and Nancy reminds us that writing in this sense *is* the exposition of being in common or communication. Writing means giving meaning and expression to our singular plural and political being in common.

All absolute foundations and origins are fictional and mythical, and all myths are necessarily interrupted by their own fictionality. All completed and realized communities are mythical and thus are necessarily interrupted.[21] If modernity is

---

[21] While deeply aware of the fragile origins and trajectories of Western history, Heidegger nevertheless fell prey to the saving power of "the proper". Derrida writes that Heidegger hoped for "the alliance of speech and Being in the unique word, in the finally proper name" (1997a: 27). Derrida's reference is to the statement in "Anaximander's Saying" (1946) that "language would have to find something unique, the unique word" to name the essence of Being and that the greater difficulty is "in preserving the purity of the discovered word in authentic thinking" than in discovering the unique word itself (AS: 276). On the contrary, according to Derrida "[t]here will be no unique name, even if it were the name of Being. And we must think this without *nostalgia* … outside of the myth of a purely maternal or paternal language, a lost native country of thought … we must *affirm* this … in a certain laughter and a certain step of the dance" (1997a: 27). Hope for the unique word, unique origins, unique community and the uniquely non-technological understanding of Being are to be relinquished.

the deconstruction of myths, then modern identity is to be defined by the absence of the myths of origin, and consequently the undoing of communities of fusion. In the contemporary scenario, Nancy prescribes not founding of further mythical communities but propagation of the passion for community or "the communication of community itself that propagates itself or communicates its contagion *by its very interruption*" (1991b: 60). The narrower sense of writing in the sense of literature is the name for the voice and communication of the interruption of communities of fusion. According to Nancy, philosophy belongs to the genre of literature in general, and literature originates from "the myth of the myth of mythless society" (1991b: 63). While all myths, even when they claim to be scientific, reveal 'a completed reality' or 'the reality of a completion', being in common is incomplete and therefore not mythical, and thus, the literary and the philosophical are the voice of being in common, and not the reverse.

The continuous interrogation that unfolds in the literary only means that "something is happening to us in common". The task of philosophy and literature, the task of the humanities, is to interrupt and render myths of origin impossible, to question all tendencies to found and consolidate, and to interrupt the fulfilment and completion of politics—in short, the critical task par excellence. The singularities of being in common are exposed by literature and philosophy. Nancy calls this exposition of community or communism with no aim whatsoever to become fulfilled in *a* real, historical community "literary communism". Writing challenges capital because it disavows community and avows the individual by placing commodities, the efficiency of production of commodities and the necessity of actualizing the individual by the relentless consumption of commodities above being in common. Literary communism indicates "that community, in its infinite resistance to everything that would bring it to completion … signifies an irrepressible political exigency, and that this exigency in its turn demands something of 'literature,' the inscription of our infinite resistance" (Nancy 1991b: 80–81). Because literature and philosophy stand for the relentless striving to converse and understand, address and respond, they mean "the being-in-common of what has no common origin, but is originarily in-common or with" (Nancy 2000: 90). Being or existence, Nancy writes, "*is* only in being partitioned and shared. But this partition … does not distribute a substance or a common meaning. It parcels out only the exposition of Being, the declension of self, the faceless trembling of exposed identity: *we* are what it divides and parcels out" (Nancy 1991a: 5). Philosophy means the necessity regarding the articulation of sense or meaning because "sense does not coincide with Being … the sense of Being is not to be found in a coincidence of Being with itself" (Nancy 1991a: 5). If Being is not self-contained sense, then the common understanding of community as "the ideal identity of a self-constituting signification" has to be interrogated and philosophy will have "to do with the limit where community is also suspended" (Nancy 1991a: 5).

Nancy interrupts every celebrated arrival at community, even international or world community, by way of the question whether the universally desired arrival at world citizenship does not risk what has been called "market democracy" and the toleration of "extreme inequality and injustice". Nancy fears that with the dissolution of the modern subject of calculative rationality, leading to the inadequacy

of the law without the certainty of the rational subject, such world citizenship would only establish "the infinite appropriation or devouring of a 'capital' that is… no more a subject than is the law, and that would be the empty subject of the pure appropriation of pure negativity (the dialectical process become a butcher's shop: the so called 'end of history')" (1997: 108).

The promise of democracy is consistently challenged by Nancy as he hopes for a democracy of non-equivalence, of singular–plural, rather than a democracy of homogeneity, equivalence and uniformity. Nothing—neither humans, nor cultures, nor words nor beliefs—is "equivalent to anything else". General equivalence means the levelling of all distinctions, reduction of the multiplicity of "forms of excellence through mediocratization", achieved through technologism and capitalism, which take *value* for *equivalence*. Nancy, of course, is not arguing for the non-equivalence of feudalism, aristocracy, casteism or theocracy. Liberal individualism produces equivalence of individuals. The developmental idea of progress and of capital is, thus, taken to be the means to the end of the moral value of the indifference of the equivalent. What Nancy calls for is a way of evaluating anything "that gives to each evaluating gesture… the possibility of not being measured in advance by a given system but of being, on the contrary, each time the affirmation of a unique, incomparable, unsubstitutable 'value' or 'sense'" (2010: 24). He warns against the (Heideggerian?) piety and esoteric sense of the language of "incommensurable value" and thus adds that political equality calls for the sharing of the incommensurables between incommensurable equals.

What stimulates Nancy's meditations are a certain definitively (post-)Marxist concerns within a deeply Heideggerian problematization of human sociality, not without a deconstructive gesture of thinking through these concerns. This being the case, we might ask whether Nancy is free of the occidentalism that I have already pointed out in Levinas and that I must investigate further in the Heideggerian philosophical gesture in the concluding chapter. Robert Bernasconi, who insistently undertakes this task, has already done so. He finds Nancy ambivalent on this score on account of "his refusal of radical alterity, his refusal of the Other" (1993: 4). Bernasconi argues that Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community* (1983), parts of which were composed in response to Nancy's essay "The Inoperative Community" (the lead essay in the book by the same name, published in 1986), accepts Nancy's proposal of a community without communion (a notion indebted to Georges Bataille), but does so in terms of the Levinasian substitution of the self for the Other. Communion as being in common, Bernisconi fears with Levinas, in fact might institute the fusion that Nancy wants to evade. However, existence, understood as the alreadyness of the impingement of the Other on the self ("the other in me, a malady of identity, both accused and *self,* the same for the other, the same by the other" [Levinas 1991: 69] according to the rhapsodic prose of *Otherwise than Being*) is not a thesis too distant from the notion of a community without communion.[22] Can we not think of community without communion as the ethical gesture of love and responsibility for the other person without

---

[22] That Levinas is closer here to Heidegger than his own notion of the separated, enjoying self in *Totality and Infinity* is discussed by Michael Fagenblat (see: 2010: 105, 156–163).

assuming the separated self? Being in common in itself is destroyed by the hardening of the essence of the We, a real and completed community. Community without communion, thus, is not alien to Levinas's notion of the subject, whose egoistic spontaneity is ethically challenged by the Other in the same.

However, what truly disturbs Bernasconi is Nancy's privileging of Greece and by that same coin the west. Bernasconi is convinced that this obsession with Greece in Nancy arises from a not sufficiently critical scrutiny of Heidegger but he fails to take cognizance of the historical trail Western philosophy itself has taken, whether in Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Levinas, Nancy or even in the valiant philosophical gesture of deconstructing presence or Being, which, one might say, is the Greek (and I would say also orthodox/*āstika* Indian)[23] basis of all philosophy and universality. Bernasconi's reference is to the essay "Shattered Love" in *The Inoperative Community*, which argues unexpectedly that although several tropes of love can be found in the non-west, absolute and universal love is rather specific to the Western tradition. "Only the Occident raises with this one name, 'love,' such a claim to universality" (Nancy 1991b: 91). Nancy seems to imply that what is outside the edges of the west, "as certain ethnological or archaeological fictions would like to do", is the abandoning of the west's love "to voluptuous rituals, innocent games, or heroic communions," and hence, "[n]othing leads us more surely back to ourselves (to the Occident, to philosophy, to the dialectic, to literature) than love" (1991b: 92). Nancy's larger argument is that the ideal of love, as enunciated in the Western tradition, is, like community, an "impossible" love; it is realized neither in the west, nor elsewhere. It is an excess, like the Levinasian Other, always incomplete, unrepresentable. Neither can we attain it in full measure, nor can we free ourselves from the grip of love. Love militates against self-love. To claim that "this love" is a cultural heritage of the west is not only philosophically outrageous but also untrue. Bernasconi quotes Derrida's injunction that "[a] radical trembling can only come from the *outside*… This trembling is played out in the violent relationship of the whole of the West to its other…" (1997c: 134) in order to say why it is necessary for Nancy's deconstructive notion of "community without communion" to think along the Levinasian path of ethical recognition of the irreducible Other.

However, as I have alluded to above, why this is not possible from a radical rethinking of the Heideggerian Being-with is not clear. The later Levinasian conception of the "other in the same", I think, deflates his earlier critique of Heidegger's notion of Being as "comprehension" and makes it possible to reconstruct Being-with as "being in common" that radically informs all ontology and allows a negative and non-substantial notion of community and affectedness to come to the fore.[24] It appears that Eurocentrism and all other forms of "centrisms"

---

[23] A separate study is called for on the question whether Brahminical philosophy is simply another instance of the privileging of presence as Greek (indeed Indo-European) philosophy is and whether the Buddhist interlude, on the other hand, may be seen as the critique of presence.

[24] In the first section of the next chapter, I engage with this possibility in my exposition of Heidegger's ethics of human relation in terms of letting the Other be Other in her/his care for own self without alluding to the atomistic individual.

can fall out of the cupboard of all sorts of ontologies and ethics, whether Heideggerian or Levinasian. It emanates from the very engaged, historically structured character of the human being and her knowledge production activity in general. This is not to say that all ontologies are equal. On the other hand, it means that the dynamism of an ontology, a philosophical articulation or account of the structures and modalities of being human, which opens up a whole realm of human possibilities, cannot be restrained arbitrarily beforehand. The critical task of philosophy can continuously engage with these possibilities in conversation. The spirit of this conversation is neither presuppositionless nor purely neutral. What the philosopher wants to achieve by the engagement is never fully absent from the conversation itself just as it does not fully dominate that conversation. History and events, situations and facts have their bearings on the conversation. It is within these constraints that a philosophical problem can be engaged with.

Let me restate the community thesis. Our most basic way of Being is always already invaded by otherness; our singularity as interpreters of the world of possibility is always already plural. Human individuality is conditioned on sociality or being in common. The meaning of sociality is not ontologically neutral. It means primordial affectedness, which is significantly different from the way things with which we engage and get engrossed in affect us. All sense or significance arises out of being in common and is constituted by it. Being in common constitutes a basic human tending towards others and a release of the good sense arising out of it. This is community in the ontological sense. Because the good sense of being in common as such is breached by real communities that exclude the others for the sake of their own essentialist Being, "community" as such cannot come, cannot complete itself and be fulfilled. In this sense, community is being in common with others by way of a genial, hospitable flourish. Community means the sociability of our sociality. The genial sense of being with those we are familiar, those who are with us in our world of involvement, and communing with them in the spontaneous gesture of affection that arises out of the basic affectedness of our being in common do not militate against the Other, the stranger, if our being in common does not inexplicably breakdown on account of the sole factor of the other's strangeness or difference. The most primordial sense of ethics arises from our being in common and the responsiveness, geniality and hospitality attached to it. Ethics arises out of the hospitable openness our basic relatedness to the other person invests on us, and not from the absolute, irreducible alterity and separatedness of the Other.[25] The other person, in her strangeness and difference, challenges my

---

[25] Levinas's reformulation of the separation between the absolutely same and the absolutely Other as "the other in the same" answers to Derrida's question of 1964: "How could there be a 'play of the Same' if alterity itself was not already *in* the Same, with a meaning of inclusion doubtless betrayed by the word *in*? Without alterity *in* the same, how could the 'play of the Same' occur, in the sense of playful activity, or of dislocation, in a machine or organic totality which *plays* or *works*?" (Derrida 2001: 158). Derrida's answer is: "the other cannot be absolutely exterior to the same without ceasing to be other; and … consequently, the same is not a totality closed in upon itself, an identity playing with itself, having only the appearance of alterity, in what Levinas calls economy, work, and history" (2001: 158).

culturally imbued interpretive frames, but this is possible only on account of our basic being in common. The irreducible difference of the Other vis-à-vis the self can only mean the constitutive rupture and the impossibility of communion of our being in common. Negative community or community without communion cannot close upon itself and alienate the other in her strangeness and independence, for when it does it becomes positive and substantial communion. Negative community means the ineluctability of being in common, despite difference, strangeness and freedom.

Heidegger's post-1935 work can profitably be read as his own philosophical effort to come to terms with the moral, political and intellectual indiscretion, indeed criminal failure, of 1933.[26] Especially in the *Contributions* (1936–38), Heidegger pictures philosophy as relentless, disquieting questioning.[27] Diluting philosophy's critical task "would be a machination that by necessity is always beneath the rank of philosophy" (CP: 33). Only when the technological essence of late modernity self-completes itself can the "question-worthiness", "primal questioning" or the critical, destructive/deconstructive task of philosophy can regain its "fertile ground" (AWP: 85). In the age of the domination of the technological understanding of Being and the particular worldview that reifies it—the Western worldview which has become definitive for humanity everywhere—philosophy's task is relentless questioning. This is reiterated by Heidegger in his response to the *Der Spiegel* interviewer: "philosophy will not be able to effect an immediate transformation of the present condition of the world" (GS: 107) but can only help realize that condition and prepare human beings to await appropriately for a different revealing of Being. What is required of philosophy is not mediating or battling against worldviews, but is questioning, for "the decision in favour of question-worthiness can be set in opposition to 'worldview'" (CP: 34).

Modern human beings, who are generally caught up, lost in and enthralled by the frozen representations of worldviews, cannot thus question and challenge them.

---

[26] Because philosophy is a thoroughly critical enterprise, of which Heidegger himself is an excellent exponent as borne out especially by his post-1935 work, his failure of 1933 is that much more problematic. Marcuse contends that "a philosopher cannot make such a 'mistake' without thereby disavowing his own, authentic philosophy" (2005b: 176) in an interview on his disillusionment with Heidegger. Accordingly, Rockmore shows that in 1933 there was no difference at all between Heidegger's philosophy and his worldview. He writes: "… even the most rigorously scientific philosophy … belongs to the world view of its own period. This obviously does not mean that philosophy is only a world view; it rather means that every philosophy arises and remains meaningful only within a world view. Yet as concerns Heidegger's Nazi period, there is finally no difference between a philosophy and a world view" (1999: 111).

[27] Indeed in a 1929–1930 lecture course, Heidegger told his students that philosophy "is the opposite of all comfort and assurance" (FCM: 19) and after resigning as the Nazi rector of Freiburg University in 1933 that philosophy is "the unceasing, questioning struggle over the essence and Being of beings" (Heidegger 2010: 9). Heidegger insisted in 1929 that "the single, actual, and most difficult task" in philosophizing was "driving one's own Dasein and that of others into a fruitful questionableness" (FCM: 20). But the humanistic, resolute and revolutionary tenor of philosophic questioning is given up in 1936 and the mood of an irremediable distress takes its place, which still situates the philosopher within a space of uncanny questioning.

For Heidegger, a worldview is the permanent picturing or representation of a total interpretation of beings, which is made possible by the epochal withdrawal of Being and the permanent objectification of a single but dominant manifestation of Being in a definitive way. A worldview, thus, also means objectifying the non-objectifiable being-in-common or community. Philosophy, on the other hand, as the critical enterprise, the unsettling, uncanny attunement, is anxious about frozen, closed worldviews of positive communities of communion. The later Heidegger is engaged exactly in this critical project of laying bare the ruptures of the planetary west.

<p align="center">***</p>

Communism is imagined by Marx as the final frontier of individual human development. In the classless community of individual excellence, unhindered by social forces and market competition, human beings will live freely according to their own design within a community of shared material and human resources,

> … where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus 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, shepherd or critic (Marx and Engels 2000: 185).

Marx's works and activities were driven by this vision of the community and the individual. William Booth points out that this vision was in turn driven by questions raised by "the present order of things", and that it was "those questions, the center of his critique of liberalism, that remain of interest, however implausible (or impalatable) we may judge his vision of communism to have been and however flawed his arguments were in their details" (1989: 221).

In my discussions above, I have also been mindful of a vision of the community. The community is currently under attack everywhere by the individualism of the capitalistic model of development, which is now in its definitive planetary trajectory, undergirded by the technological understanding of all-that-is. As Marx held, the community alone can restrain, negate and make inefficacious the absolute planetary reign of capital and individual. But the notion of community itself is beset with problems, which are not easily amenable to resolution. However, exposure to community and being fully individual in terms of our being in common seems to be our only safeguard against the calculative logic of capital that technologizes the human individual in her detachment from others. I have argued with Nancy that community in this sense cannot attempt to make the common a substantial unitary mass, a black hole into which every difference disappears. "Community" is not a decision about the value of totalities over individualities; rather, community means our sense of hospitable transcendence towards otherness because ontologically, we cannot be selves except in dialogical interrelation with otherness. Community means our good sense of restraining our spontaneous free reign as individuals in terms of the calculative logic of capital, and our becoming selves in openness towards the burdens of others. Capitalistic and individualistic pathways of developmentalism, which arise out of the seductive logic of the

technological understanding of Being and is still new to the global south, although fast overwhelming it, cannot be questioned and tempered except in reference to our being in common. Community in this sense means restraining the technological human animal.

Marx saw that community alone could temper capitalistic individualism. But Marx imagined productive overabundance as the basis for communist community, an aberration as far as the living system of the planet and the finite existence of the human being are concerned. Restraining capital and restraining the technologized individual—these seem to be the texture of our being in common, in as much as this sense of the common is transcendence towards otherness as such. Our transcendence towards otherness, our being in common, cannot then be substantialized as an individual mass of homogenous identity, a "we" which has thus become an "I", as the modernist notion of nation and the many varieties of identity politics are wont to do, without thereby damaging and distorting our primordial being in common.

In the epigraph to this chapter, Ashis Nandy points out that several aspects of the individualistic and capitalistic culture were not unknown to non-modern, pre-developmental societies, but these were wisely restrained through cultural checks and balances. The seductive import of the technological understanding of what-is seems to have totally eroded the traditional suspicion of these traits, thus making them globally acceptable, appreciable and ideal manners of being human. With epochal changes in the understanding of Being yesterday's wrongs have become today's rights and vice versa. This fluidity is fundamental to moral ontology. Morality is not the teleological search after the absolutely right and unchanging moral principle.

Nandy is certainly right that the traditional suspicion of instrumental individualism and competitive capitalism have been thoroughly eroded by development understood as modernization. But what seems to be flawed in critiques like Nandy's is a certain ingenuous belief that non-modern cultural restraint of capital and individual can be revived in their pure forms, that these non-modern forms of restraint are unproblematic and desirable in an unqualified sense, that they are worthy of a comprehensive revival, that such simple retrogressive movement to the past is a contemporary possibility, and that modern forms of life are somehow inferior in their totality to non-modern forms.

Even as we may contest all of these undertones of Nandy's claims, even as we may think that the future holds its own unique possibilities that would arise uniquely out of the past, what is to be definitely asserted is the implausible future that the planetary form of the technological understanding of Being, development as modernization, holds in store. The calculative intelligibility of capital and the technologization of the human animal as the atomistic individual are two definitive, distressing and devastating forms of enframing. This chapter has not been about envisioning the global society where these two forms of existence are finally defeated and humanity returned to an aboriginal or natural/primal state of innocent being in common. Rather, I have argued for an unnamable future where our primordial being in common would restrain the capricious freedom of individualistic

spontaneity and the internal telos of self-circulating and cumulatively growing capital. This is a possible response to the distress of technologized humanity (individualism) and the devastation brought about by the calculative logic of enframing (capitalism).

Philosophy means posing questions to the accepted and settled forms of existence. Philosophy means questioning both the essentializing tendencies within communities and the essentializing logic of individualistic capitalism. Hence, philosophy as the critical enterprise also turns its critical eye to the global establishment of individualism and capitalism in the postcolonial era in the name of the hopes and expectations, and desires and dynamics of that era. This questioning is what has been undertaken in this chapter. I have argued that the only restraining power that can be wielded over the free reign of capitalism and individualism, two visible manifestations of the technological understanding of all-that-is, is the hope for community, arising out of the constitutive human manner of being in common, but a community that does not hope to complete itself, a community that does not come. The sense of community evoked here is the attunement of sharing our being in common, our sociality. This sharing of the common, never to be fully realized and never to be coagulated, incommensurable and incalculable, fragile and tenuous as it is, is the only hope that we have of coming to an understanding of development as various conceptions of the good life.

A different danger, however, hides within these musings on individual and capital. What about the ideals of emancipation, equity and justice? In speaking about "community", there is a necessity to steer clear of the dispensability of justice and the hope of good life for all, which I have only cursorily alluded to in this chapter. This is precisely what I shall undertake to do in Chap. 5.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Aho, K. A. (2009). *Heidegger's neglect of the body*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
Aristotle. (1984). *Politics* (Benjamin J, Trans.). In Jonathan Barnes (Ed.) *The complete works of Aristotle* (Vol. 2, Revised Oxford Translation). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Askay, R. R. (1999). Heidegger, the body, and the French philosophers. *Continental Philosophy Review, 32*(1), 29–35.
Bauman, Z. (2002). *Society under siege*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Bauman, Z. (2005). *Work, consumerism and the new poor* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
Bernasconi, R. (1993). On deconstructing nostalgia for community within the west: The debate between Nancy and Blanchot. *Research in Phenomenology, 23*(1), 3–21.
Bernasconi, R. (2005). Who is my neighbor? who is the other?: Questioning 'the generosity of western thought. In C. Katz & L. Troute (Eds.) *Emmanuel Levinas: Critical assessments of leading philosophers–Beyond Levinas*. (Vol. IV, pp. 5–30). Routledge: New York.
Booth, W. J. (1989). Gone fishing: Making sense of Marx's concept of communism. *Political Theory, 17*(2), 205–222.

Brockelman, T. (2008). *Žižek and Heidegger: The question concerning techno-capitalism*. London: Continuum.

Carman, T. (2003). *Heidegger's analytic: Interpretation, discourse, and authenticity in being and time*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Caygill, H. (2002). *Levinas and the political*. New York: Routledge.

Chatterjee, P. (2004). *The politics of the governed: Reflections on popular politics in most of the world*. Delhi: Permanent Black.

Chatterjee, P. (2008). Democracy and economic transformation in India. *Economic and Political Weekly, 43*(16), 53–62.

Coase, R., & Wang, N. (2012). *How China became capitalist*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cohen, R. (2006). Introduction: Humanism and anti-humanism—Levinas, Cassirer, and Heidegger. In *Humanism of the other*, (pp. VII–XLIV). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Crowell, S. G. (2007). Heidegger and Husserl: The matter and method of philosophy. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A companion to Heidegger* (pp. 49–64). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Derrida, J. (1983). *Geschlecht*: Sexual difference, ontological difference. *Research in Phenomenology, 13*(1), 65–83.

Derrida, J. (1987) 1991. *Of spirit: Heidegger and the question*. (G. Bennington & R. Bowlby, Trans.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1968) 1997a. Différance. (A. Bass, Trans.). In *Margins of philosophy* (pp. 1–27). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1967) 1997b. *Of grammatology*. (G.C. Spivak, Trans.). Corrected Edition. Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press.

Derrida, J. (1968) 1997c. The ends of man (A. Bass, Trans.). In *Margins of philosophy* (pp. 109–136). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1996) 1999. A word of welcome. (P.-A. Brault & M. Naas, Trans.). In *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 15–123). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Derrida, J. (1964) 2001. Violence and metaphysics: An essay on the thought of Emmanuel Levinas. (A. Bass, Trans.). In *Writing and difference* (pp. 97–192). London: Routledge.

Drabinski, J. E. (2011). *Levinas and the postcolonial: Race, nation, other*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Dreyfus, H. L., & Spinosa, C. (2003). Heidegger and Borgmann on how to affirm technology. In R. C. Scharff & Val Dusek (Eds.), *Philosophy of technology: The technological condition—An anthology* (pp. 315–326). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Eaglestone, R. (2010). Postcolonial thought and Levinas's double vision. In Peter Aterton & Mathew Clarco (Eds.), *Radicalizing Levinas* (pp. 57–68). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Eldred, M. 2011. (2000) *Capital and technology: Marx and Heidegger*. Retrieved on July 31 2014 from http://arte-fact.org/cptltch3.pdf.

Ellul, J. (1964). 1954 *The technological society*. (J. Wilkinson, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Fagenblat, M. (2010). *A covenant of creatures: Levinas's philosophy of Judaism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Fisher, T. (2010). Heidegger and the narrativity debate. *Continental Philosophy Review, 43*(2), 241–265.

Foltz, B. V. (1995). *Inhabiting the earth: Heidegger, environmental ethics, and the metaphysics of nature*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books.

Freire, P. (1968) 2005. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum.

Gadamer, H.-G. (2004). *Philosophical hermeneutics* (D. E. Linge, Trans.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Guha, R. (2008). *How much should a person consume?: Thinking through the environment*. Ranikhet, India: Permanent Black.

Guignon, C. 2000. Philosophy and authenticity: Heidegger's search for a ground for philosophizing. In M. A. Wrathall & J. Malpas (Eds.), *Heidegger, authenticity, and modernity: Essays in honor of Hubert L. Dreyfus*, (Vol. 1, pp. 79–101). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Heidegger, M. (1942–43) 1992a. *Parmenides*. (A. Schuwer & R. Rojcewicz, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1924) 1992b. *The concept of time*. (W. McNeill, Trans.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Heidegger, M. (1933) 1993. The self-assertion of the German university (W. S. Lewis, Trans.). In R. Wolin (Ed.), *The Heidegger controversy: A critical reader* (pp. 29–39). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Heidegger, M. (1933) 2010. *Being and truth*. (G. Fried & R. Polt, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1949) 2012. The danger (A. J. Mitchell, Trans.). In *Bremen and Freiburg lectures: Insight into that which is and basic principles of thinking* (pp. 44–63). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Hemming, L. P. (2013). *Heidegger and Marx: A productive dialogue over the language of humanism*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Hutchens, B. C. (2005). *Jean-Luc Nancy and the future of philosophy*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. London: Verso.

Kant, I. (1784) 2006. An answer to the question: What is enlightenment? (D. L. Colclasure, Trans.). In P. Kleingeld (Ed.), *Toward perpetual peace and other writings on politics, peace, and history* (pp. 17–23). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Latour, B. 2005. *Interview with Bruno Latour*. In J.-K.B. Olsen & E. Selinger (Eds.), *Philosophy of technology: 5 questions* (pp. 125–135). New York: Automatic Press.

Levinas, E. (1961) 1979. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority* (A. Lingis, Trans.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1974) 1991. *Otherwise than being, or beyond essence*. (A. Lingis, Trans.). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1964) 1996. Meaning and sense. (A. Lingis, Trans.). In A. T. Peperzak, S. Critchley & R. Bernasconi (Eds.), *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic philosophical writings* (pp. 33–64). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Levinas, E. (1986) 2001a. Being-toward-death and "thou shalt not kill" (A. Schmitz, Trans.). In J. Robbins (Ed.), *Is it righteous to be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 130–139). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1990) 2001b. In the name of the other (M. V. Gendney Trans.). In J. Robbins (Ed.), *Is it righteous to be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 188–199), Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1983) 2001c. Philosophy, justice, and love. (M. B. Smith, Trans.). In J. Robbins (Eds.), *Is it righteous to be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 165–181). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1970) 2006. Without identity (N. Poller, Trans.). In *Humanism of the other* (pp. 58–69). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Levinas, E. (1988) 2007. *In the time of the nations* (M. B. Smith, Trans.). London: Continuum.

Lewis, M. (2005). *Heidegger and the place of ethics: Being-with in the crossing of Heidegger's thought*. London: Continuum.

Marcuse, H. (1964) 1991. *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society* (2nd ed). Abingdon: Routledge.

Marcuse, H. (1928) 2005a. Contributions to a phenomenology of historical materialism (E. Oberle, Trans.). In R. Wolin & J. Abromeit (Eds.), *Heideggerian Marxism* (pp. 1–33). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Marcuse, H. (1977) 2005b. Heidegger's politics: An interview. In R. Wolin & J. Abromeit (Eds.), *Heideggerian Marxism* (pp. 165–175). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Marx, K. (1867) 1954. *Capital: A critique of political economy*. In F. Engels (Ed.), Vol. 1 (S. Moore & E. Aveling, Trans.). Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Marx, K. (1875) 2000. Critique of the Gotha programme. In D. McLellan (Ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected writings* (2 nd ed, pp. 610–616). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, K. & Engels F. (1844 &1848) 1988. *Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844 and the communist manifesto* (M. Milligan, Trans.). Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1846) 2000. The German ideology. In D. McLellan (Ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected writings* (2 nd ed, pp. 175–208). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McGettigan, A. (2006). The philosopher's fear of alterity: Levinas, Europe and humanities 'without sacred history'. *Radical Philosophy, 140*, 15–25.

Merleau-Ponty, M. 1968. (1961) *The visible and the invisible followed by working notes*. (C. Lefort, ed., A. Lingis, Trans.). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945) 2002. *Phenomenology of perception* (C. Smith, Trans.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Morris, D. B. (1993). *The culture of pain*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Nancy, J.-L. 1991a. Of being-in-common. In M.T. Collective (Ed.), *Community at loose ends* (J. Creech, Trans.). (pp. 1–12). Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press.

Nancy, J.-L. (1986) 1991b. *The inoperative community*. (P. Connor and others, Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Nancy, J.-L. (1993) 1997. *The sense of the world*. (J. S. Librett, Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press.

Nancy, J.-L. (1996) 2000. *Being singular plural* (R. D. Richardson & A. E. O'Byrne, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Nancy, J.-L. (1999–2008) 2010. *The truth of democracy*. (P.-A. Brault & M. Naas, Trans.). New York: Fordham University Press.

Nandy, A. (1994). Culture, voice and development: A primer for the unsuspecting. *Thesis Eleven, 39*(1), 1–18.

O'Connor, M. (1993). On the misadventures of capitalist nature. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, 4*(3), 7–40.

Rawls, J. 1999. (1971) *A theory of justice* (Revised edition). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rockmore, T. (1999). Philosophy or weltanschauung? Heidegger on Hönigswald. *History of Philosophy Quarterly, 16*(1), 97–115.

Russon, J. (2008). The self as resolution: Heidegger, Derrida and the intimacy of the question of the meaning of being. *Research in Phenomenology, 38*(1), 90–110.

Sachs, W. 2010a. Introduction. In W. Sachs (Eds.), *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power* (2 nd ed., pp. xv–xx). London: Zed Books.

Sachs, W. 2010b. Preface to the new edition. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power* (2nd ed., vi–xiv). London: Zed Books.

Schatzki, T. R. (2007). Early Heidegger on sociality. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A companion to Heidegger* (pp. 233–247). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Schmidt, D. J. (2001). Strategies for a possible reading. In C. E. Scott, S. M. Schoenbohm, D. Vallega-Neu, & A. Vallega (Eds.), *Companion to Heidegger's contributions to philosophy* (pp. 32–47). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Sen, A. (2000). *Development as freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Solomon, R.C. (1988). *Continental philosophy since 1750: The rise and fall of the self*. Series: A history of western philosophy (Vol. 7). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Strauss, S. (2002). The master's narrative: Swami Sivananda and the transnational production of yoga. *Journal of Folklore Research, 39*(2–3), 217–241.

Taylor, C. 1985. (1981) Legitimation crisis?. In *Philosophical papers: Philosophy and the human sciences* (Vol. 2, pp. 248–288). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1991). *The ethics of authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition* (pp. 25–73). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Taylor, C. (1995). Two theories of modernity. *Hastings Center Report, 25*(2), 24–33.

Taylor, P. A., & Harris, J. L. I. (2005). *Digital matters: The theory and culture of the matrix*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Urban, H. B. (2003). *Tantra: Sex, secrecy, politics, and power in the study of religion*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Vallega-Neu, D. (2003). *Heidegger's Contributions to philosophy: An introduction*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Wolin, R., & Abromeit, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Heideggerian Marxism*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Zahavi, D. (2005). *Subjectivity and selfhood: Investigating the first-person perspective*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Ziarek, K. (2007). A new economy of relations. In M. C. Cimitile & E. P. Miller (Eds.), *Returning to irigaray: Feminist philosophy, politics, and the question of unity* (pp. 51–76). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Zimmerman, M. E. (1996). Martin Heidegger: Antinaturalistic critic of technological modernity. In David Macauley (Ed.), *Minding nature: The philosophers of ecology* (pp. 59–81). New York: The Guilford Press.

Zimmerman, M. E. 2003. Heidegger's phenomenology and contemporary environmentalism. In C. S. Brown & Tedtoadvine (Eds.), *Eco-phenomenology: Back to the earth itself* (pp. 73–101). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Chapter 5
Justice, Ethics, Development

I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind,
but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands
of the few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps
a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all
is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against
this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might.
—M.K. Gandhi, "Discussion with G. Ramachandran, a
Shantiniketan Student, in 1924", Vol. 25, 251

Abstract The ethics of development is commonly understood as justice for the global south. Phenomenologically, ethics can be seen as springing from our hospitable being in common without exclusivist communion that denies the Other's otherness. Hence, justice need not mean replicating in the global south the "flatness of organized uniformity" wrought by the technological society. Contemporary development ethics and practice are insufficiently critical of the transformation of selfhood imposed by developmentalism in the global south, which plunges vulnerable subjects of development into further marginalization. While desire for good life invites our ethical attention, global justice can mean several things other than the project of unequal duplication of northern opulence in the global south. Global justice calls for understanding the limits of opulence, letting the various conceptions of the good life to flourish and bloom, and contributing positively towards this goal.

The principle that legitimizes and drives development as modernization is justice. Contemporary developmentalism claims not only to be driven by justice but also to have achieved justice. China has arrived; India is arriving. Political one-upmanship and reactive nationalism hold in store the germinal internal impetus of the post-war development discourse set in motion by the Truman doctrine of technology transfer for the containment of communist advance. Whether development, understood in the sense of national progress in comparison with the nation's foes

and the exemplar nations that flaunt their prosperity, can address the question of justice for the least advantaged in a polity is an intriguing question, which nonetheless has to be faced in this study. This is the aim of this chapter.

The ethics of development is nothing but the justice of development. I argue in this chapter that justice, understood commonly as the balancing measure of resources, freedoms or a set of *x* or *y*, is a necessary but not sufficient approach to the question of justice. This approach is usually unmindful of the question of the selfhood of the "subject" of just development—*subject* understood as the one for whom *is* just development in the first place.[1] International and national politics of development revolves around the objectified subject of deprivation, who is expected to respond positively to the "ethical" narrative of the possessor of the resources of development understood as modernization. In the mainstream discourse of development, with its ahistorical and violent metaphysics of efficiency and domination, an interrogation of the essential possibilities of self-other relationship seems to be absent. The ethics of development, perceived as justice for the global south even by the subject of development, brings to light the paradoxical denial of selfhood to the developmental subject by the homogenizing, levelling processes of global development. There is also the question of the southern elite and swelling middle class, the drivers and chief gainers of levelling modernization, who are unconcerned about the question of justice and equity.

The interdisciplinary subfield called development ethics is underprepared to sufficiently challenge the technological understanding of Being, which undergirds and powers developmentalism. Development ethics plays by the logos of techno-modern capitalism to a large extent. The capability approach itself, to which mainstream development ethics today is submitted, arises out of a certain humanistic intelligibility of what-is in terms of calculation and ethical individualism. Such approaches can only insufficiently question the structures of the global development juggernaut. Hence, development ethics and global justice, as fiercely debated legitimation narratives that justify and guide developmentalism, demand a closer look. Such narratives conveniently overlook what homogenizing modernization does to the "subject" and her sense of the self. An ethical account that does not deny the authentic otherness of the subject of development and the "anxious care" she has for her own Being can be arrived at only by recognizing the already positioned responses to phenomena of the subject of development, and this in turn is possible only if their various conceptions of the good life are engaged with, affirmed, let be and allowed to maintain themselves.

The Frankfurt School theorists were bothered by the loss of freedom in highly advanced industrial societies in the midst of the near-complete availability of

---

[1] Two cautionary remarks. *Firstly*, the subject-centred approach to justice is unmindful of "that which is not the subject". In this approach to justice, that which is not the subject is considered as "that which is *for* the subject". We will address this dimension of the question of justice later in this chapter and in the next chapter. *Secondly*, the term "subject" calls for caution in the present study, undertaken from the perspective of Heidegger's critical philosophy. I use "subject" in this chapter to mean something like the "protagonist" (see George 2008: 20–21), for whom is all development, and I take for granted the already emphasized point that the protagonist of development is to be imagined after Dasein.

resources. They were concerned about the mindless violence and dehumanization perpetuated in the very name of advancement and progress. Their concern was humanistic in the sense that what bothered them was the degeneration of the human being in the midst of abundance and in the wake of technological advancement. "With the spread of the bourgeois commodity economy," writes Horkheimer and Adorno, "the dark horizon of myth is illuminated by the sun of calculating reason, beneath whose icy rays the seeds of the new barbarism are germinating" (2002: 25). The problematic of the Frankfurt School was a sort of emancipation from the emancipated condition! Hence, what the planetary phase of the developmental society has in store in relation to the question of justice for the global south needs to be addressed vis-à-vis the questions of *what is it* that is becoming planetary, what kind of justice is being imagined and what essential human transformation is being envisaged.

I have been trying in this study so far to voice a Heideggerian critique of developmentalism and an affirmation rather than a denial of development. The need to associate development to its historical context rather than dissociating it from its horizon of disclosure, the need to stem and tame the inherently violent logic of developmentalism in its contemporary forms, the need to undercut the efficiency logic, individualism and capitalism that developmentalism fosters—these have been the constructive parts of my argument so far. In this chapter, I explore the need to address the question of justice in development in a more original way than usually attempted. In the next chapter, I emphasize the need to dwell on the earth in a manner that does not lead to "the developmental devastation of the earth" and also dwell on a possible and positive notion of development. The question really is, if the idea of a monolithic, ahistorical and aggressive progress and the idea of the established and supposedly necessary logic of efficiency are dissociated from development, whether development would still be that *same* thing. Postdevelopment theorists abandon the discourse of development on this very score. I take up this challenge in the next chapter. In speaking about these matters now, I am merely stressing the constructive and affirmative ideas proposed in this study. The final section of this chapter pays attention to the affirmative emphasis of this study.

This chapter is arranged in three sections. In the first section, I ask whether the question of justice can be said to be important and necessary for the global south from the point of view of the critical stance on development that I have offered in this study so far. My answer to this question is positive but qualified with several riders. In the second section, I take a critical look at the subject area of development ethics, and in the third section, I engage with the question of justice.

5.1 The Question of Ethics/Justice

Heidegger claims that the technological understanding of Being is all-encompassing, and that is why technology for him is ontological/metaphysical. "What now *is*", he stresses unequivocally, "is marked by the dominance of the active nature of modern technology. This dominance is already presenting itself in all areas of

life, by various identifiable traits such as functionalization, systematic improvement, automation, bureaucratization, communications" (OCM: 51–52). When we think and act spontaneously in the functional, systematic, progressive, utilitarian, automated, bureaucratic manner and communicate efficiently using modern means, Heidegger reminds us that the calculative understanding of what-is has imperceptibly seeped into our way of being human. That such a manner of being human is the ideal of modern culture is a foregone conclusion, for this image of being human is perceived even in the global south as the necessary route to modernity and well-being. To this extent, technological understanding of what-is is globally entrenched.

The idea that certain aspects of culture can be shielded from technological understanding is not only rejected by Heidegger but also he considers it the danger that threatens humans in the time of the oblivion of Being.

> What threatens man in his essence is the opinion that this assertion of production would be risked without danger if only other interests in addition to it, perhaps those of a faith, remain valid—as though the present relationship of our essence to the entirety of beings (a relationship into which the technological mode of willing has shifted us) could still be housed in some separate annex, some residence on the side that would be able to offer more than temporary resorts to self-deception, such as the flight to the Greek gods (WP: 221).

The confidence that the most significant part of existence is untouched by technological calculation lets enframing invade all aspects of existence. Hence, in Heidegger's history of Being, ethics, religion, art and such other aspects of the life of the spirit (culture) are also ruled by the technological understanding of Being in the modern era.

Heidegger speaks often about the entrenchment of modern cultural life in calculative thinking. He points out that even terms such as "culture" and "world-view" arise from the total objectness of Being in terms of the subject. The 1955 lecture course, *The Principle of Reason*, is dedicated solely to the task of exposing the link that runs in intellectual history between the principle that necessitates the rendering of sufficient reason for everything and the technological understanding of Being that rules late modernity. "By rendering sufficient reasons this cognition (of the object by the subject) receives the unique character that determines the modern relationship of humans to the world, and that means, makes modern technology possible" (PR: 87; my gloss). The age of technology, actualized through a cultural–historical understanding of Being, demands the rendering of reasons for everything, every experience, for reality as such. Heidegger points out that this is a mighty principle because even God, which is the ground of the principle itself, can *be* only in terms of the principle (PR: 28). This is the God of philosophy, reduced to the first cause, a god useless for religion and religious experience (OCM: 72). In *Contributions*, the historical march of the machinational is said to be realized through the understanding of Being as "the created thing" (*ens creatum*) and the "corresponding representation of God" as the creator (CP: 100). If calculative understanding has penetrated human experience of the divine, it has also similarly seeped into human experience of the artistic. *The Principle of Reason*'s single aim is to show how the techno-scientific understanding of everything, which is transforming into a world view that can in fact embrace the whole

world, makes its own "specific claims on the shaping of all available resources". "What one names with the ill-suited title 'abstract art'", writes Heidegger, "thus has its legitimate function in the domain of this technico-scientific world-con-struct" (PR: 20). For him, the subject–object divide, which is central to modernity, guides disciplinary areas such as aesthetics, where the work of art is considered an object (OWA: 50). Heidegger calls the objectification of the work of art "'the technology of the creative drive' itself—the how of making and invention" (OWA: 50, n. a). Hence, he thinks that the theological attempts to reason out the nature and existence of God and religious experience, and the scientific study of art and artistic experience have all become deeply entangled in the technological under-standing of Being.

Ethics, Heidegger claims, is similarly infested with calculative thinking. What we should immediately remember is the necessity to render reasons for the eth-ical act according to modern philosophical ethics, as opposed to traditional and religious ethics. The ethos of rational morality has sweeping influence on mod-ern social and political morality. For instance, if ethical reasons can be rendered for the flow of development aid from the global north to the south, they seem to be unproblematic and justified without reference to anything else. Certain abstrac-tion is working here about the rational purity of the moral act of assisting the dis-tant poor with no reference whatsoever to political and cultural agendas that might underlie such acts. The aggressive economic calculations of international trade further complicate the politics of aid.

Exemplars of abstract ethical generalization are the deontological categorical imperative and the utilitarian rule of preference maximization. Heidegger claims that such systems of generalization, universalization and uniformity arise out of technological understanding. Hence, Joanna Hodge's study on Heidegger and ethics claims that "Heidegger's work, with its emphasis on the predominance of technical relations, reveals an ethical crisis, since actualizing metaphysics in tech-nical relations makes these relations the ethical substance of human experience" (1995: 21). That is, since ethics is about human relations and their regulation as we understand ethics in modern terms and since these relations are themselves technologized, ethics becomes merely a matter of regulating behaviours of the technologized animal. Surely according to Heidegger, ethics stands for something different. He complains that as logic rules thought, as aesthetics rules art, as theol-ogy rules religion, so also a way of approaching the ethical that is onto-technologi-cal rules the realm of ethics today.

Heidegger argues in a hermeneutical vein that the rational-calculative approach to ethics, politics, art, religion and such other matters is a particular modern appro-priation of the tradition. According to him, the modern ethical appropriation of the traditional notion of "ethos" is undergirded thoroughly by technological under-standing. While "ethos" means the human abode, and thus nearness to Being (in the sense of dwelling or Being-*in*) and acting in response to the disclosures of Being, modern ethical appropriation of ethos separates between the ontological and the ethical, Being and ought. Heidegger points out that for modern metaphys-ics, which culminates in Nietzsche, since

> … nature is what-is, freedom and the ought are not thought as Being. The opposition of Being and the ought, Being and value, remains. Finally Being itself, too, becomes a mere 'value' when the will enters its most extreme deformation of essence. Value is thought as a condition of the will (OM: 90).

Relying on Nietzsche's unpublished notes on the conception of justice, Heidegger advances his exposition of Nietzsche as the west's last metaphysician. Justice accordingly is "the ability to posit right … it is the ability to will such a will. This willing can only be as will to power" (N III: 244). This is certainly a metaphysical conception of justice, but Heidegger argues that it is not altogether foreign to the essence of the ethical–historical conception of justice that was available to Nietzsche because what resounds in his notion of justice is "the struggle for mastery over the earth, and which therefore determines all human transactions in this age, explicitly or not, hiddenly or openly" (NW: 185). Justice thus comes down to mean the total fulfilment of the subject, who now is the global (western) subject, *for* whom is all objects or what-is as such.

For Heidegger, Nietzsche's five core notions of metaphysics are given as: will to power, nihilism, eternal returns of the same, overman and justice. According to him, the essence of truth for Nietzsche is justice as will to power: "the metaphysics of absolute and consummate subjectivity thinks its own essence, that is, the essence of truth, as justice" (N III: 249). Thus, in Heidegger's interpretation, Nietzsche's conception of justice as will to power pertains to looking "beyond to that sort of mankind which is to be forged and bred into a type, a type that possesses essential aptitude for establishing absolute dominion over the earth" (N III: 245). In this modern historical moment, the earth becomes the source of all raw materials and humanity is turned into "human resources" at the service of the absolute will to power. Metaphysics consummates itself by disappearing to the basis of western history, and not by appearing at its forefront, as the source of its modern form of world domination. *Thus what is European becomes global in the name of justice—justice as will to power.* "Nietzsche's metaphysics is at its core never a specifically German philosophy. It is European, global" (N III: 251). The name "justice" justifies the globality of the west.

Heidegger claimed in 1935 that for the Greeks, on the contrary, the physical was not opposed to the psychical, but even the psychical belonged to the realm of the physical (*phusis*). What was opposed to the physical was called

> *thesis*, positing, ordinance, or *nomos*, law, rule in the sense of mores. But this is not what is moral but instead what concerns mores, that which rests on the commitment of freedom and the assignment of tradition; it is that which concerns a free comportment and attitude, the shaping of the historical Being of humanity, *ēthos*, which under the influence of morality was then degraded to the ethical (IM: 17–18).

Ethos is the very dwelling of humanity in the nearness of Being or historical intelligibility, which is the basis of freedom and necessity, action and thought. Being *in* the abode of meaning and language (ethos) determines the essence of the human being. The planetary essence of humanity means the global domination of a particular "ethos", the western, in the name of justice. Heidegger's 1946 reflection on ethics in "The Letter on Humanism" originates from these musings.

It is clear that in the Letter and indeed in his thinking after the 1933 fiasco, Heidegger was struggling to articulate a posthuman alternative to the resolute/voluntaristic import of his Dasein analysis. In the posthuman alternative, the human being, the shepherd of Being, is not at the centre of all beings. However, in the Letter, he still recognizes the need for "a peremptory directive and for rules that say how the human being, experienced from ek-sistence toward Being, ought *to live in a fitting manner*" (LH: 268; my emphasis) "without elevating the human being to the centre of beings". The phrase "to live in a fitting manner" resonates with Heidegger's translation of the Greek word for justice, *dikē*, as "fittingness".

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger refers to Sophocles's *Antigone* and argues that being human among the Greeks meant primarily being the uncanniest (*deinon*), which meant both being wonderful/overwhelming and at the same time terrible/violent. The wonderful part of being human means human exposedness to the overwhelming sway of Being and the terrible part of being human is the gathering of "what holds sway" and letting that gathering enter into the openness of intelligibility (IM: 160). Being human is uncanny because in being human there is disquiet about being at home and settled in the face of the overwhelming sway of Being. Without the violent letting open of the sway of Being in manifold ways, human history can only be static. Dasein or Being-there means this very uncanniness in the face of the wonderful and terrific exposedness to Being.

After this exposition of being human as *deinon* or the uncanniest, Heidegger attaches the aspect of violent human encounter with Being to the Greek word *technē* with all its deeply rich and broad import. By way of *technē*, that which merely *is* becomes accessible and interpretable *as* a being. He then attaches the aspect of the wonderful human encounter with Being to the similarly rich Greek word *dikē*, by way of which the overwhelming sway of Being has direction. Heidegger's translation of *dikē* as "fittingness" (joint, structure) rather than "justice" refers to compliance, arrangement and direction of the sway of Being. According to him, it is out of this meaning of *dike* that the legal and ethical sense of 'justice' arises. There is a reciprocal and constructive opposition at play in the violence (*technē*) and order (*dikē*) of the sway of Being, which lets history unfold. It is in this sense that the human being is the house of Being, the shepherd of Being. However, without the human being, the sway of Being is mute and empty.

Levinas criticized the priority of Being over humans and the lack of explicit ethics in Heidegger's philosophy. According to Derrida, Levinas's humanistic attack notwithstanding, there is no question of an ethical subordination of the human being to Being in Heidegger because an order of priority can be spoken of only in relation to "two determined things, two existents. Being, since *it is nothing* outside the existent… could in no way *precede* the existent, whether in time, or in dignity" (1964: 170). Similarly, Nancy emphasizes that Being is meaning, and Being *is* only as circulation of meaning within the human sphere and nothing outside it. And, there is the undeniable communal dimension to the circulation of meaning. "Being cannot *be* anything but being-with-one-another, circulating in the *with* and as the *with* of this singularly plural coexistence" (Nancy 2000: 3). For Nancy, such a view is non-anthropocentric because it transgresses humanity

rather than making it the centre of beings (as modernity and Christianity do). The ontological privilege that Heidegger attaches to Dasein means that "it gets Being on its way… but the Being of *Dasein* is nothing other than the Being of being" (Nancy 2000: 17). This also means that moral good and evil are aspects of Being, grounded on Being. Heidegger complains that

> … in the moral interpretation we forget that good and evil could not strive apart from each other if they were not intrinsically striving against each other and that they could never strive against each other if they did mutually thrust into each other and were not together in the ground as they are (ST: 157).

Evil, thus, is not a lack or privation in the Augustinian sense. Evil and good are both in Being, and in our "being human" as all circulation of meaning is. Evil and good appear in the clearing of Being, in the strife of the violence of being human against the overwhelming sense of awe in the face of the sway of Being (LH: 272).

How, then, the human being, the ecstatic openness for Being, ought to live in a *fitting* manner? Or, what is ethics? Technological understanding of everything, we have maintained, presupposes the measurability and calculability of all beings. Heidegger, in line with his thinking of the other beginning at the end of metaphysics, calls for a non-calculable ethics that does not order, level and measure all beings under a single norm. Humans as uncanny openness for Being comport themselves towards phenomena in manifold ways. Calculative ordering of these various comportments under a single norm would be paying obeisance to the technological understanding of Being, which currently threatens humanity with the single demand to reduce all beings as resource for human machination. From the point of view of this demand, technological world is a human product and the human being is its master. From such a point of view, "we reduce everything down to man, and at best come to the point of calling for an ethics of the technological world" (PI: 34). Such an ethics cannot let us authentically encounter the technological world and its metaphysics. As a result, the global south is enchanted by the technological world and its ethics.

Hence, an ethics that does not order reality in accordance with the essence of technology is called for in the technological age. "The greatest care must be fostered upon the ethical bond", stresses Heidegger, "at a time when technological human beings, delivered over to mass society, can attain reliable constancy only by gathering and ordering all their plans and activities in a way that corresponds to technology" (LH: 268). An ethics capable of attending to the essence of the human being and her ownmost uncanniness is called for. The ethics that Heidegger has in mind is open for the strife that is inherent to being human, the strife of existing between the overwhelming owe in the face of Being's upsurge and the violent letting open of the sway of Being. There is wonderment in the fact that there are beings rather than nothing, and there is struggle to make beings meaningful, to make them matter.

Referring to the root word "ethos", Heidegger argues in the Letter that ethics is the bond that holds humans together in community, their being in common. The Heraclitian saying "*ethos anthropoi daimon*", generally translated as "a human being's character is her destiny/fate", is rendered by Heidegger in the following way: "The human being (*anthropos*) dwells (*ethos*, the open region of

Being wherein the human being dwells; the familiar human abode), in so far as he is a human being (Dasein, the ecstatic openness for Being), in the nearness of god (the unfamiliar one, who also comes to presence in the open region of Being)" (LH: 269; my gloss). Accordingly he argues that originary ethics is thinking about Being, the familiar human abode, where the unfamiliar god as well comes to presence. Charles Taylor observes that Heidegger's divine beings are "strong goods, matters of intrinsic worth. These are matters which make a claim on us" (2007: 449). However, we must note that in Heidegger's ontological picture, these ethical matters are neither imposed on us by a metaphysical god nor by our rational nature; rather, they are phenomena that seize hold of us in terms of the epochal understanding of Being. In this sense, ontology is ethics too because Being shows the way to live to human beings in response to the event of manifestation. But Heidegger immediately denies that such thinking has any effect because it comes before the distinction between theory and practice. Only from the authentic thinking of Being can the rules and norms arise within the familiar dwelling region of the human being. Only these directions that come from Being can become obligatory laws for the human being. All other laws are capricious fabrications of human reason.

Joanna Hodge rightly suggests that "if ontology is understood as also ethical in intent, then neither term need be rejected" (1995: 100). More basic than ethical rules is our care-structured relation to Being and dwelling in the nearness of that relation. Originary ethics is acceptance of the human condition with responsibility and living up to that condition in terms of authentic dwelling. Ethical imperatives must arise from such dwelling. Heidegger, thus, offers a thoroughly ontological account of something well known. Ethical norms are various and vernacular. Universal ethical constructions, made available by uniform modern thinking, contradict our involved practices of everyday life. We need to turn our attention to various conceptions and negotiations of the ethical in relation to communities and contexts as well as challenge them in response to our increasing global exposure.

Heidegger denounces human-centrism. However, humanism is acceptable to him if it is thought in an originary fashion, just as ethics is thought, in terms of our historical openness towards Being. If humanism is understood "as a concern that the human being become free for his humanity and find his worth in it, then humanism differs according to one's conception of the 'freedom' and 'nature' of the human being. So too are there various paths toward the realization of such conceptions" (LH: 245). The nature of human freedom and human essence itself change in accordance with the event of Being's manifestation.

The ontological human condition as already being in common is not without the ethical imperative. Because the human condition is already engaged with other humans and things of the world, this condition, as Hodge suggests, is already ethical or constructively relational, or as Nancy suggests, it is always already imbued with a sense of responsiveness towards others in the communal world. That this response can be positive or negative, good or evil is ontologically a secondary matter; the communal relationality of existence is always already ontologically ethical.

How does Heidegger understand self-other relation? For him our relation with the Other, even an alien other, is negotiated in and through our world wherein dwells an

understanding of Being. Every dialogical situation, even the ethical encounter with the 'face' of Levinas, already assumes the more primordial existential structure, Being-in-the-world. In a revealing passage in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, he speaks about the other in terms of I-Thou relation, the dialogical existential situation, made famous by the 1923 essay of Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (2004).

> Self and world belong together in the single entity, the Dasein. Self and world are not two beings, like subject and object, or *like I and thou*, but self and world are the basic determination of the Dasein itself in the unity of the structure of Being-in-the-world. Only because the 'subject' is determined by Being-in-the-world can it become, as this self, a thou for another. Only because I am an existent self am I a possible thou for another as self. The basic condition for the possibility of the self's being a possible thou in Being-with others is based on the circumstance that the Dasein as the self that it is, is such that it exists as Being-in-the-world. For 'thou' means 'you who are with me in a world'. If the I-thou relationship represents a distinctive existence relationship, this cannot be recognized existentially, hence philosophically, as long as it is not asked what existence in general means. But Being-in-the-world belongs to existence. That the being which exists in this way is occupied in its Being with its ability to be—this selfhood is the ontological presupposition for the *selflessness in which every Dasein comports itself toward the other in the existent I-thou relationship*. Self and world belong together in the unity of the basic constitution of the Dasein, the unity of being-in-the-world. This is the condition of possibility for understanding the other Dasein (BPP: 297–298; my emphasis).

As the space wherein intelligibility dwells, the world makes the encountering of my own self and the other possible. Whatever possible understanding is there of an alien other in our encounter with her or him is also made possible similarly. Even the possibility that something/someone is strange and cannot be understood is made possible only from out of the hermeneutical orbit of the world. All understanding is a modification of the "there" of the understanding being (Dasein).

> The strangest man whom we encounter is with me in my world and is experienced as such in avoiding and passing each other by.… It is only insofar as Dasein as Being-in-the-world has the basic constitution of Being-with that there is a *Being-for* and -*against* and -*without-one-another* right to the indifferent walking-alongside-one-another (HCT: 240–241).

This portrayal of self-other relation is the point of attack of Emmanuel Levinas. He argues that in such a view of self-other relation, the Other has to be a temporal moment in the Dasein's comprehension of Being (see George 2011).

Doesn't this picture of the self-other relation mean that the ethics of relation is already culturally informed? Doesn't it involve the danger that we are dealing with an ontological account of the human being that endorses the possibility that an alien other may not be hospitably welcomed, indeed rejected or worse, eliminated, whether metaphorically or literally? Levinas never tires of pointing this out. According to him, the ethical demand that emanates from the human face does not come from a world or "the referential totality of significance". "The visitation of the face is thus not the disclosure of the world. In the concreteness of the world a face is abstract or naked … a detachment from its form in the midst of the production of its form" (1996: 53). Levinas objects to the deeply "cultural" human ontology of Heidegger according to which not even ethical encounter can be "worldless". Levinas fears that such a picture of the ethical subject can lead

to brazen violation of the otherness or alterity of the Other. On the contrary, for Levinas, the very letting be of the Other in her otherness is ethics, which therefore exceeds world, culture and context. Ethics does not negate the context but exceeds it and disempowers its effect. Levinas is worried that the worldliness of ethical relation can lead to the exclusivity and insularity of communal life.

In the light of Heidegger's association with the Third Reich, Levinas's criticism cannot be overlooked. However, as we noted in the last chapter, Nancy's work on community is a pointer towards engaging profitably with the Levinasian criticism without leaving the "climate" of Heidegger's philosophy.

In *Being and Time*, our relation with the things of the world that matter to us is called concern and our relation with other humans we care about is called solicitude. Heidegger's description about the various modes of solicitude shows how remarkable are the ways others affect us. Solicitude has both positive and deficient modes. Heidegger points out that our everyday being in common most often occurs deficiently in the sense that we experience our undeniable sociality matter-of-factly in terms of indifference, inconspicuousness and obviousness. In these deficient modes, we encounter others mostly as not mattering to us rather than as intentionally against us, purposely wanting to be without us or deliberately passing us by. Heidegger stresses the phenomenological difference in the way we experience the indifferent manner of our encounter with things of our engagement and others with whom we are involved (BT: 158).[2] Other humans make a different kind of moral demand on us in comparison with the things we deal with. The urgency of something like being at the service of the Other arises from the fact that our everyday social relations are enmeshed in the deficient modes of solicitude.

The Other's alterity and freedom are central to Heidegger's observations on the positive modes of solicitude. These modes are "positive" not in an ethical sense but in an ontological sense. Ontological responsibility for one's own Being is central to Heidegger's ontology in *Being and Time*. Hence, he characterizes any way of relating to the Other that infringes on the Other's otherness and sense of self as a way of denying the Other's care for own self. In such cases of dominative relations, ontological care is compromised. According to Heidegger, most of our everyday social relations are dominative in this way and such relations resemble our concernful dealings with things. *Ethical relation would thus mean solicitous*

---

[2] This is not to say that the ethics of care for things and the world as such is meaningless or has a lower priority than the ethics of our relation to the Other. It, rather, means that the way we experience the Other and the things of the world are different and that these experiences demand different ethical responses from us. However, we can say this only when we consider Heidegger's writings as a whole. Hodge shows that the originary ethics of *Being and Time* is the ethics of human relations because fundamental ontology is "a description of what it is to be human for which there are three central ethical concerns: taking responsibility for oneself, refusing the temptation to take responsibility for others … and recognizing differences between self and others" (1995: 202). The ethics of care for things is absent in the descriptions of fundamental ontology. The later Heidegger sets matters right with his writings on the ethics of dwelling. I shall deal with the ethics of dwelling in Chap. 6.

relation which does not compromise ontological care. Hence, ontologically speaking, deficient modes of relating with the Other like being against her and being indifferent to her are both unethical. Furthermore, according to Heidegger, most of our positive dealings with others are also unethical from an ontological perspective because these relations are dominative at least in a veiled way. Therefore, Joanna Hodge is right that fundamental ontology is always already ethical, and Nancy's ethics of community without communion and fusion is worth pursuing from a straightforwardly Heideggerian angle.

Being and Time's analysis of solicitude does let the Other be Other which Levinas fears it does not. Heidegger elaborates a second positive mode of solicitude which does not take away the other's care but rather gives it back to her "authentically as such for the first time" (BT: 159). In all ethical social relations, we are solicitous, but authentic solicitude upholds the Other's ontological care for her "own authentic self", the Other's taking issue with her own Being.[3] This letting the Other be, positively freeing the Other to her own authentic care, I think, should take care of Levinas's concern. The Other of course cannot be encountered except against the background of one's world. However, every culturally situated encounter with the Other ought to find its own specific and historical way of letting the Other be Other in order for social relations to be called ethical in any ontologically significant sense. Heidegger notices that our modern social and work settings are not really conducive to achieving this. However, an authentic work setting can be created without compromising the ontological care of the Other only when humans

> … devote themselves to the same affair in common, [and] their doing so is determined by the manner in which their Dasein, each in its own way (*and not in any sense of fusion*), has been taken hold of. They thus become *authentically* bound together, and this makes possible the right kind of objectivity … which frees the Other in his freedom for himself (BT: 159; my gloss).

Every community, whether it is a community of workers or lovers, shares a gathering of meaning that circulates among them, but an authentic community not only lets the Other be but positively "frees" her for her own freedom to be.

The positive and authentic mode of solicitude frees the Other for her responsible care of own self but does so not by disengaged indifference or cynical apathy but by involving in and contributing to the projects by way of which the Other can be answerable to her ontological responsibility and thus meaningfully project her authentic potentialities for Being. Ethical comportment towards the Other is the authentic meaning of our being in common without fusion and communion, without the will to reduce the Other to one's own representation, without exclusionary

---

[3] Heidegger writes: "This kind of solicitude pertains essentially to authentic care—that is, to the existence of the Other, not to a '*what*' with which he is concerned; it helps the Other to become transparent to himself *in* his care and to become *free for* it" (BT: 159).

restrictions and with vernacular, hospitable welcome.[4] Ethics is "community" without communion or solicitous engagement with the Other without domination, assimilation and diminution of alterity. However, the porous, vulnerable and open world of the self's embedment can never fully evaporate either in her ethical comportments or in wilful self-projections.

To the extent that ethics partially ruptures the embedded world of the self, to the extent that ethics jeopardizes fusion, communion, assimilation and domination, to that extent ethical encounter is a positively world-opening event. This is a possible and positive way of making sense of Levinas's pronouncement in *Totality and Infinity* that ethics is "calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other" (1979: 43) and in *Otherwise than Being* that ethics is conditioned on a subjectivity always already substituted for the Other, or "other in the same, without alienating the same" (1991: 112). "Relation" or historical processes of encounters, in short, interrogates and renders impossible both an absolute world and an absolute Other. Thus, both the absolute Other of early Levinas and the absolute embedment of the self within a closed system of meaning implied by certain varieties of cultural anthropology and identity politics are rendered allergic to thinking.

All ethical rules and injunctions regarding non-dominative human relations and social interactions arise out of the world, our culturally informed context, the historical, epochal event of Being's manifestation and from the way our world encounters the Other's world in historical "trysts with destiny".[5] But ethics is ethics for its resistance to fusion, to what calls for merging and assimilation (that is, nihilation or annihilation of alterity), which takes away not only the Other's freedom for selfhood but can also outlaw, refuse, forbid, cast out and even literally annihilate the Other, who is stranger to the fused self or community in absolute

---

[4] Pollock (1998, 2000) emphasizes the local/global slippage. In my essay, "The Cosmopolitan Self and the Fetishism of Identity", I looked at the question whether a self is authentically capable of inhabiting the Other's space of meaning through a postcolonial lens, considering such a habitation as authentic cosmopolitanism. There I emphasized with Levinas the need to leave home and world, pointing out that Pollock's literary history of vernacular cosmopolitanisms attests this possibility (see George 2010). However, it now seems to me that any attempt to think an absolutely worldless self-other encounter like that of Levinas is untrue to existence as such. Pollock's vernacular cosmopolitanism in fact shows that it is from out of our embedded situation or world (which itself, however, has not emerged in absolute exclusivity but through an ungrounded historical process of encounters with the alien) that we weave the story of authentic encounter with the Other. Hence, Nancy's extension of Heidegger's notion of Being-with to an ontology of non-exclusionary community seems to me to be the most robust ground (in fact, the abyssal abground) for ethical relation.

[5] I do not deny that this reading of Heidegger's remarks on solicitude can be seen as militating against his own unpardonable politics and also against certain emphasis in Heidegger's writings and lectures about autochthony. In the famous interview ten years prior to his death, Heidegger stated: "According to our human experience and history, at least as far as I see it, I know that everything essential and everything great originated from the fact that man had a home and was rooted in a tradition" (GS: 106). My point, however, is that Heidegger's idea that our embedment in tradition is itself ruptured and open, and his remarks on positive solicitude as non-dominative can be appropriated for an ethics of human relation that is neither averse to embedment nor to openness towards the Other as Nancy demonstrates. The logos that lead Heidegger's philosophical meditations, I conclude with Nancy as I showed in the last chapter, Sect. 4, can be better understood in this fashion.

communion, as the Holocaust, India's partition pogrom and similar historical events show and as Levinas's writings, similar post-Holocaust literature, partition narratives and similar literary and philosophical work argue. Originary ethics or community refers to the human warmth exuding in our encounters with the Other untinged by the ruse of domination and nihilation of alterity.

However, Levinas does have a thoroughly humanistic (human-centric) pre-occupation. He proposes that the only way to encounter the inhumanities of the twentieth century is more stringent humanism—a humanism of the Other. Heidegger's posthuman gesture coupled with his questionable politics is worrying for Levinas. He told in an interview in 1983: "In Heidegger, the ethical relation, *Miteindandersein*, being-with-one-another, is only one moment of our presence in the world. It does not have the central place" (2001b: 177). Levinas takes Heidegger to task for having destroyed what he considers the most preservable aspects of the Western tradition: metaphysics, interiority and humanism. He wrote in 1970:

> The strangeness of man to the world, this stateless condition, would attest the last shudders of metaphysics and the humanism it upholds. By this denunciation of the 'inner world,' Heidegger radicalizes Husserl's anti-psychologism.… [Heidegger and the social sciences send] the subject, the individual, his unicity and his election back into ideology, or else rooting man in Being, making him its messenger and poet (2006: 61).

Levinas's humanism of the other supports all that Heidegger questions and abandons, namely humanism itself, technology, globalism and metaphysics. On the one hand, it is unclear how Levinas's strident humanism would respond to the ecological crisis. His meditations on that crisis are thoroughly equivocal and ambivalent. On the other hand, Levinas's philosophical gaze upon non-Western cultures is similarly equivocal and ambivalent. In fact, the following remark of Levinas on the ecological crisis foregrounds both these problems: "justice, which is better than justice, *is European consciousness*. It has to be made better! I mean that the feeling that there is still violence evokes a search for a better justice. A progressivism of justice belongs to this" (1986: 134; my emphasis). European consciousness as such for Levinas pertains to justice and all that modern global consciousness can come to mean invariably flows from the European sense of justice. The ecological crisis is a moment in the history of European consciousness which has to simply refer back to that very progressive consciousness of justice in order to resolve itself. Heidegger's ontology of technology dissociates itself from such simplistic and triumphalist understanding of modern European consciousness.

In the face of Levinas's equivocal and ironical human-Euro-centrism, the interpretation that I have offered here of Heidegger's ethics of community without communion (caring for or engaging with the Other and letting the Other be without compromising her otherness), I believe, is at least the most ponderable option. Community without communion and letting the Other be Other (as well as letting things be things) also means *critique*—the philosophical investment that is the only way of understanding "Dasein without illusion". Our moral evolution has not come to a close and it most certainly has not come to a termination with modern humanism, for "Dasein stands before possibilities it does not foresee. It is subject

to a change it does not know. It constantly moves in a predicament it does not have power over" (FCM: 19). Philosophy invites us to see the yet unseen possibilities of our being in common; ethics invites us to live them.

5.2 Development Ethics and Justice for the Global South

My question for the moment is: what is the "colour" of ethics, understood as rightful justice for the postcolonial world, in the context of post-war development? What is justice for the global south, which was once the colony of the current mediators of justice, in the context of Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche's notion of justice as will to power? What fitting distribution or justice does development demand today when development itself means nothing short of the concretion of the world dominating technological understanding of Being? I respond to these questions firstly by affirming the need for justice, and secondly by questioning the calculative understanding of Being that underpins the discourse of justice, the subject area of development ethics.

First, an affirmation of justice for the global south. The postdevelopment discourse is an apocalyptic discourse of the end of development. In his postdevelopment classic, *Encountering Development*, Arturo Escobar asks the reader to see his work as part of the increasingly more numerous and audible voices "calling for an end to development" (1995: vii–viii). But we cannot take at face value the rhetoric of the end of development and the myth of poverty. The end that Escobar and other postdevelopment critics call for is the end to the current global regime of development, the specifically formulated post-war discourse of development. They are afraid that calling for alternatives to the present development discourse would not be a sufficient enough break with the post-war regime of development. Hence, for them, the call is strictly not for alternative development but for alternatives *to* development.

But the fact is the postdevelopment thinkers too are looking for alternatives. They do not advocate maintaining the status quo in the global south. Escobar's alternatives *to* development definitely are responses to "modernity's crisis", which leads him to dwell on "the investigation of alternative representations and practices in concrete local settings, particularly as they exist in contexts of hybridization, collective action, and political mobilization" (1995: 19). His alternatives are proposed against the background of the struggle between local traditions in the global south and global capital and technology, the struggle over nature, life and the technological necessity for a single, uniform global order. I shall argue in the next chapter that these imagined futures that are already beginning need not be in any necessary sense something completely other than development, if development is understood as the human yearning for the good life.

It is also not useful to disparage the postdevelopment discourse as romanticization of poverty, as a discursive practice that makes the unqualified claim that poverty "is in the eye of the beholder" (Pieterse 2000: 177). Escobar cannot be said to be

fascinated with the constancy of social forms. He sees "change as a process rooted in the interpretation of each society's history and cultural tradition—as a number of intellectuals in various parts of the Third World had attempted to do in the 1920s and 1930s (Gandhi being the best known of them)" rather than seeing social change as a process of devising "mechanisms and procedures to make societies fit a preexisting model that embodied the structures and functions of modernity" (1995: 52). He is not even against the modern technological amenities. While engaging with the interesting way in which population control discourse is shaping up in relation to the global south and distinctively against its popular classes, Escobar does not forget to add in a footnote that his intentions should not be taken to mean that contraceptive devices per say have to be abandoned. He asserts that contraception is certainly an improvement especially for women and should not be considered "incompatible with the struggle against poverty and for better health systems" (1995: 231, n. 17). His emphasis, rather, is on the inability of the new discourse of technological control of the size and shape of population to address the real issues of poverty.

The postdevelopment thinkers are wary of the problematization of poverty in the face of the ecological crisis alongside the ever expanding market society based on the principles of individual freedom, consumer happiness and uninhibited profit making. They wisely call for the necessity to tame consumption patterns everywhere and to institute simple living rather than conspicuous consumption as the social ideal. This wisdom is not new: Thoreau, Gandhi, Schumacher and Illich, among others, have championed this wisdom since the late nineteenth century. Ashis Nandy concludes his critique of the popular discourse of poverty in the following way: "like M.K. Gandhi—the insane, subversive stepfather of the Indian nation-state—I recommend that we try to get rid of destitution and learn to live with poverty" (2002: 121). I shall come back to these issues in the next chapter, but it should be stressed here that the easy reading of postdevelopment as the romanticization of poverty calls for resistance. Such a reading pays homage to our inveterate entrenchment in the market society and the technological understanding of Being that powers it, both of which postdevelopment untiringly puts in the dock.

And yet, it is problematic even to suggest that the poor do not desire something like development, or, as Ramachandra Guha puts it, to suggest that they want to live close to the ecosystem as the aboriginal guardians of the earth, uncorrupted and disenchanted by global capitalism and the technological society. Guha interrogates Indian and global environmentalism for alluding to such an outrageous assumption. It is not clear why this vision of the subaltern cannot be the imperialist design to deny justice and enhanced existence to the global poor. The colonial argument that colonization is civilizational is now turned on its head: development is non-civilizational and so the global poor ought to reject it. It is not clear why this argument is not a ploy of the global elite, who lay the earth to waste by their profligate lifestyle and then turn to the poor for subsidizing that very lifestyle by taking away their resources cheaply and luring them to remain in their subsistence condition without desiring to change it. When we look at such suggestions, keeping in mind the social composition of poverty in nations such as India, the suggestion smacks of cultural/ethnic otherness or ethnocentrism because the incidence of abject poverty in India

is far greater among the erstwhile untouchable castes and among those who occupy the lower rungs in the caste hierarchy. It is at least as imperialistic as the suggestion that post-war developmentalism has empowered the global poor. The suggestion that justice is a mirage is to be rejected together with the injustices of capital intensive consumer society. Neither development as it is institutionalized nor the suggestion to the global poor to remain where they are seems to make sense.

Partha Chatterjee narrates the following anecdote in order to emphasize subaltern desire for social mobility and change, and the conflict between universal affiliations such as democracy and particular identities of ethnicity, caste, tribe and the like. The scene is not one unknown in the Indian academia—a meeting of social scientists and activists who are in a mood of disillusionment with the moral condition of Indian national life at the beginning of the third millennium. A Dalit activist in the audience found this caricature of the contemporary situation of India appalling. He found it strange that leftist and left liberal Indian intellectuals (and definitely the rightists) were apologetic about the progress of history. He argued that 50 years before the year 2000 were for the Dalits the brightest period in their whole history as the cruelest aspects of the practice of untouchability were waning, Dalit community mobilization was stabilizing and the struggle for their rightful share in political power was succeeding. This Dalit victory was possible, he underlined, because Dalit political representatives, their beneficiaries of popular democracy, attacked the traditional bastions of caste privilege. Chatterjee observes that the disillusioned intelligentsia was silenced by this impassioned intervention.

Chatterjee highlights the need to reinvent democratic politics in order to accept rather than deny subaltern desires, even if those desires seem to be in disharmony with the current political mood. He concludes that it is not legitimate for democracies to pursue universal ideals such as nationalism without at the same time recognizing the legitimacy of the political mobilizations and claims of the subalterns. "Without it," he writes, "governmental technologies will continue to proliferate and serve, much as they did in the colonial era, as manipulable instruments of class rule in a global capitalist order" (2004: 25). If so, neither the reading of development as the concretion of the technological understanding of Being, nor the postdevelopment call for the end of development could dismiss the demand for justice of the most marginalized sections of the global south and the world at large.

Ramachandra Guha recounts a similar anecdote involving the Dalit Kannada poet Devanur Mahadeva. The scene is a seminar commemorating Mahatma Gandhi, where Indian intellectuals waxed eloquent on the loin cloth that the Mahatma wore in the last 30 years of his life, a symbol of simplicity, identification with the poor and rejection of modernity. When Mahadeva got up to speak, he also eulogized an article of clothing, the trademark blue suit of B.R. Ambedkar—Gandhi's adversary on many issues, the most celebrated Dalit icon of modern India, the architect of the progressive Indian constitution, Buddhist revivalist and the first law minister of independent India. For Mahadeva, Gandhi's loin cloth symbolized the wilful sacrifice and renunciation made by a well born Indian. If Ambedkar also had dressed himself similarly, it would have symbolized the fate of a lowborn, argued Mahadeva. Instead, Ambedkar's deep blue coat became a

signature of the fate he overcame. It stood for his defeat of the fate that history and society conspired to impose upon him. Guha's message is that modernity and development are desires that the subalterns all over the world legitimately cherish, if they come to become aware of these possibilities. Guha's message, however, is not about triumphalist developmentalism, but about frugal consumption patterns, the wealthy bearing the cost of their profligate lifestyle, "empowering ecological refugees and ecosystem people, strengthening their ability to govern their lives and gain from the transformation of nature to artifact" (2008: 244).

Second, a look at the calculative notion of justice. While the intuitive force of justice for the global south is undeniable, it is important to note that the discursive area called "development ethics", which deals with the normative question of justice for the global south through development, and Guha himself, altogether miss certain hidden and yet effectively real facets of the question concerning development that Heidegger's musings could help raise. I point out some of these concerns here and move to a more substantial discussion concerning them in the next section.

Guha's ecological anxiety has to engage with alternative human possibilities and futures, not merely alternative distribution. That the late modern clamour for gratification through commodity intensive consumption patterns, envisaged and projected as the global ideal, is itself a particular cultural production of desire, a rather exotic and problematic historical development, is not an argument that Guha is interested in facing. We have seen in Chap. 3 that the global acceptance of the technological society as an overwhelming disclosure of reality could not have been possible without the violent impositions and the seductive promises of the technological understanding of what-is. Guha is unconcerned about how we come to interpret phenomena around us through a pre-given understanding of the world we inherit and grow into. Guha's call to tax the rich for their profligate behaviour and redistribute resources thus generated to the poor is located right within calculative intelligibility as such and does not engage with a different humanity than what late modernity has offered us.

The basic concerns of development ethics came to prominence as the colonial empire began to crumble, and so, these concerns are older than the post-war development agenda. The writings and political actions of the prominent sceptics of modernization foreshadowed development ethics even before developmentalism got rolling. Gandhi was certainly one of those early sceptics. He attacked Western materialism, irreligion, consumerism and technologism in the famous, hard-hitting 1909 pamphlet, *Hind Swaraj*. He went to the exaggerated extent of calling modern civilization an evil, a seductive disease (1960, Vol. 10: 26), which was not, however, incurable (1960, Vol. 10: 21). In a more realistic vein, he told a capitalist in 1928 that if huge countries such as India, aspiring to be free, took up capitalism like England, such a move "would strip the world bare like locusts". Gandhi's advice to the capitalist sympathizer was to become the trustee of wealth in an altruistic spirit before the wealthy class came to "destroying the masses or being destroyed by them" (1960, Vol. 38: 244).

However, development ethics as an interdisciplinary area of ethical enquiry was pioneered by Denis Goulet (1931–2006), an American philosopher and

development thinker. Goulet was fascinated with the existentialism of Sartre and Camus and with liberation theology. He lived for a time with the French worker-priests and worked with his mentor, Louis Lebret, the Dominican priest at the forefront of the French economy and humanism movement. Goulet and his inspirers such as Lebret advocated development for every person and for the whole person (Gasper 2008: 455). He was deeply ambiguous about the universal project of development. In his magnum opus, *The Cruel Choice* (1971), Goulet understands development as "the quality of life and the progress of societies toward values capable of expression in various cultures" (1973: x). But he wrote 10 years later: "Perhaps the only true universal value is the desire of all human persons, living in every place and under every cultural system, to be treated as beings of worth on their own terms and independently of their usefulness to others" (1981: 4; emphasis removed). The ambiguity about cultural freedom and how development as a social process could deny it was one of Goulet's persistent concerns.

Goulet talked about development as a complex and uncertain social process, whose dialectical effects could not be completely predicted, and hence had to be meticulously and sensitively planned. But the proposed changes could be ethically called "development" only if they, in some perceptible form, contribute to the imagination of the people concerned (the subjects of development), so that they can somehow see themselves ascending from a form of life less human for them to one that is more humanly satisfying. The achievement and the process, the ends and the means, were equally important to Goulet. He argued for global solidarities for development. However, he also argued that in the process of development "cultural and ecological diversity must be nurtured… esteem and freedom for all individuals and societies must be optimized" (1973: x).

Goulet was a gradualist and considered technology transfer for the sake of development extremely problematic. Introducing his study on value conflicts in technology transfer, he declared that technology is "a 'two-edged sword', simultaneously the bearer and destroyer of values" (1989: 3). Goulet was a unique ethicist who never took his eyes off from the dilemmatic nature of ethics in development. Rejecting moralistic posturing, he looks at the uncertainty surrounding violent, revolutionary means to development and social change in the final chapter of *The Cruel Choice*. "No one is morally obliged to do what is impossible", he remarks. "If social justice is truly unattainable except through revolutionary violence, men cannot be morally bound to resort only to futile or inefficient non-violent means" (1973: 305). However, Goulet insists that revolution itself should not lose sight of the dilemma and absolutize its own programme. The relativity of the context is to be accepted constructively with moral imagination, argues Goulet, so that the need for revolution is seen not as an absolute end in itself and revolutionaries do not pursue "victory at any cost". Dilemma, ambiguity, the impossibility of knowing what is to befall a society at the end of its developmental journey, a consequent whole-hearted ethical attack on development practice and development experts,[6]

---

[6] Goulet calls development experts "one-eyed giants" because they forget about the dilemma of development and are unwise to consider "non-scientific rationality retrograde" (1980: 481).

insistence that ethics cannot be equated with moral absolutism but has to be awake to the context of human action and inaction—these were the resolves with which development ethics began in Goulet's work.

We should surmise, then, that development ethics began as a critical enterprise. Even in what was his last publication Goulet reiterated this critical role: "it becomes an urgent task to study competing models of development in detail and critically, and to pass judgment on the values and civilizational forms which underlie each model" (2006: 3). In *The Cruel Choice,* we are told that development ethics cannot assume the prevailing models of power as just or inevitable. "Freedom to contest power verbally and symbolically and to oppose it by actions is therefore a necessary requisite for the responsible use of political power" (1973: 338). Power, its exercise and its rejection, Goulet insists, has to have an ethic. If those in power reject ethical critique, the rejected ethical critique can become the basis for those without power to oppose power.

However, the critical energy of development ethics is currently on the wane. The market society, the technological society and the question of centralized political power, which Gandhi frowned upon and Goulet thoroughly subjected to ethical critique, have become much more acceptable to development ethicists. This tame approach is defended often as a practical approach that lets development occur rather than vanish.

A great deal of development ethics writings today concentrate on Amartya Sen's capability approach—a normative and evaluative framework that focuses on the evaluated individual's real or positive freedoms (capabilities) to achieve the beings and doings she has reason to value. The achieved capabilities are functionings that make life "good". Unlike Rawls's metric of primary goods (things that a rational person is presumed to want: fundamental liberties, real opportunities of life, income and wealth and the social bases of self-respect), Sen's approach does not focus on any set of goods, not even primary goods, but on our capability or freedom to have them. Sen believes that he is thus avoiding what he calls Rawls's goods-fetishism and the utilitarian scheme of preference maximization. The popularity of the capability approach is seen in its wide-ranging acceptability, whether in the critical project of development ethics (see Crocker 2008; Esquith and Gifford 2010), or the evaluative project of UNDP's human development index.

Despite this approach's emphasis on pluralism, cultural sensitivity and equality of capability rather goods, it takes for granted, without questioning, the institutional façade and ideals of modernity. Its response to the ecological crisis is still equivocal. Its faith in the market is unflinching. Oddly, Sen equals the freedom of exchange in the modern market with "[t]he freedom to exchange words, or goods, or gifts" and argues that this basic/fundamental freedom does not call for "defensive justification in terms of their favorable but distant effects; they are part of the way human beings in society live and interact with each other (unless stopped by regulation and fiat)" (2000: 6). Instead of looking at whether the dominant forms of the contemporary market are just or unjust, Sen seems to be eager in his neoliberal "fiat", even if in a somewhat restrained fashion, to justify and equate all forms of the market as based on something like our "being in common". It is these

unquestioned aspects of the capability approach's restrained neoliberalism that the critical project of development ethics should be wary of.

The environmentalist Richard Sandbrook's review article of Sen's *Development as Freedom* (2000) raises these issues. The attractive features of our democratic polity, Sandbrook argues, should not blind us from its unjust features. Several ways of showcasing democracy offer false promises to the world's poor.

> Custom, a tyrannical state and lagging economic growth are not the only obstacles to political freedom and reducing poverty. Concentrated economic power, centred on both global and national markets, must also be challenged. How free is 'free' trade, for example… when international trade rules permit ostensibly free-trading industrial countries to impose tariffs on the agricultural and manufactured exports of developing countries that compete with local production? (Sandbrook 2000: 1079).

While the flow of international aid to the global south always finds neoliberal applauders (though promises and expectations regarding aid are usually never fulfilled), according to *Human Development Report 2005* unequal and unfair trade policies "continue to deny poor countries and poor people a fair share of global prosperity" (Watkins 2005: 3). This incontestable agenda of global justice, which has far greater potential to address the question of global equality than the flow of aid, never seems to strike the neoliberal economist as self-evident. Hence, several straightforwardly engaging issues of development ethics are simply getting overlooked in the field of study initiated by Goulet, who argued that considering market competition as the organizing principle of economic activity is bound to be unjust. For Goulet, market is a social mechanism to achieve justice, but he sees societies, under the prevailing global tendencies, deciding by the very logic of the market to create wealth for the few. A just state will place a higher value on the common good, Goulet insists, than on "aggregation or arbitration of interests" (2002: 22).

To consider unregulated market as the best possible organizing principle of the economic behaviour of human beings means the reign of calculative intelligibility. Accordingly, development is understood as a process of constantly surging ahead without the ability to pause and reconsider, do otherwise, reimagine or connect to the past. This sense of inevitability attached to the idea of development was underscored by Heidegger in a seminar in Zähringen three years before his death.

> This imperative of progress demands an imperative of production that is combined with an imperative of ever-new needs. The imperative of ever-new needs is of such a sort that everything which is imperatively new is likewise immediately obsolete and outmoded, replaced by something 'even newer', and so forth. In this rush, every possibility of tradition is broken. What has been can no longer be present—except in the form of the *outmoded*, which as a result is entirely inconsequential (2003: 73).

The very visibility of development (progress in Heidegger's words) in the sense of modernization is maintained in relentless production according to the parameters of the modern market system. The developmental momentum of modernization can be sustained only by the proliferation of commodities that quickly turn superfluous so that new items of want can take the place of the old.

An absurd consequence of the modernist idea of progress and development is that anyone fully entrenched within its demanding logic is never rich, full or

satisfied. Anyone who accepts the logic of the market is *by definition "poor"*, for he/she is in increasing "need" of commodities as they multiply relentlessly. When satiation by means of a commodity wanes, its myriad other forms and other magical commodities come to fill the vacuum it leaves, resulting in conspicuous consumption and the consumerist society as such. This absurdity cannot be put away as a mere speculative possibility because its consequences are menacing our politics, economics, ethics and our modern existence as such. The plight of those who have too little cannot be too grave a plight for the others who are caught up in the logic of the modern market society, the survival of which is dependent on the rapid proliferation of commodities, the display of their novelty, the global reach of such a society and not on any moral sense of just global distribution. His productionist metaphysics notwithstanding, Marx realized in 1844 that "extravagance and thrift, luxury and privation, wealth and poverty are equal" (1988: 120) because both these conditions are wasteful of human essence. He pointed out that in our eagerness to produce "useful things" we forget that "it is use that determines a thing's value, and … fashion determines use … production of too many useful things produces too large a useless population" (1988: 119–120). The modern market society depends for its survival on its own more expansive, magical forms, which need not extend to the excluded. Hence, the sense of justice Goulet introduced into the interdisciplinary area of development ethics simply cannot be achieved without encountering the logic of the market. The justice of the modern market is the justice of Nietzschean will to power.

This is not to deny the several important ethical facets of development brought to the fore in the recent development ethics debates. Assuming the ineluctability of the global market, while at the same time challenging its overt forms of injustices, several crucial issues concerning global justice are raised, for example, by the Rawlsian cosmopolitan Thomas Pogge. He makes an interesting argument about the responsibility of global northerners for the development condition of the global south. According to him, the global institutional order contributes actively to unjust development in the global south. Pogge is not saying like Peter Singer that the innocent and moral northerners have a moral duty to assist the poor southerners, but, rather, that north-imposed global order is causing (in the active sense) southern poverty. While this is in itself interesting from a liberal egalitarian standpoint, what I find more interesting is a different claim that Pogge makes. Much in agreement with the argument I have followed in Chap. 2 on historicizing the development narrative, Pogge follows the historical method to argue that "[m]ost of the existing international inequality in standard of living was built up in the colonial period when today's affluent countries ruled today's poor regions of the world: trading their people like cattle, destroying their political institutions and cultures, and taking their natural resources" (2005: 97). Pogge persuasively makes the case that inequality between colonized and colonizers is historically rooted in colonization, continuing to have its distressing impacts to this day. He argues statistically that there is hope for any semblance of equality between the global south and the north only in the twenty-fourth century according to the current pace of the global justice mechanism, especially between the least developed African countries and the most developed affluent countries. His two moral theses about the responsibility of the global north with respect to the

development condition of the global south are the following: "We should reduce severe harms we will have caused (by the historical wrong of colonization); and we should not take advantage of injustice at the expense of its victims (by the contemporary wrong of unjust global institutional order)" (2004: 278; my gloss).[7]

However, despite the fluency of Pogge's liberal egalitarian argument, what he is pleading for is the rectification of the current global justice mechanism such as the World Bank and the IMF without in anyway attempting to see the violent and calculative intelligibility that holds up such a global system with its inherently unjust operational logic. Without questioning the legitimation of the infinite production of wants in contemporary market society, I think Pogge's desire for justice cannot become real. Our not challenging the constancy of progress, the constancy of freedom and the constancy of ever-proliferating wants makes the equitable distribution of some goods for all impossible. Without this, there will not be enough goods for distribution at any finite point in time, and hence global justice can never be realized even if institutions for it are arranged in a fairer manner. Pogge does not ask how subjectivities that conceive "want" in this manner, the global economic individual, come to be. Liberal democracy is in a bind: it cannot see from within its own standpoint any reasonable and effective limit to what it calls the cardinal freedom to enter the holy space of the market to buy and sell "goods" that make good life possible; at the same time, its moral logic is calling for expanding this holy freedom for every person across the globe. The impossibility of this scheme, which arises out of the technological understanding of all-that-is that seduces humans to understand reality as resource for relentless gratification, does not impress liberal egalitarians.

Can the justice that Pogge rightly wants for postcolonial societies be achieved through the very means that created colonialism? Critics like Gandhi diagnosed a paradox hidden in the ethics of modernity. If freedom, equality and community are valuable, achieving these ends, and with them the modern political order, through the creation of the fully technological society is meaningless. It tends to destroy the very freedom, equality and community it promised to create. Herbert Marcuse observes: "A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress" (1964: 3). Advocating a very different model of political economy for independent India, Gandhi resisted all Western attempts to globalize the ethics of technological modernity.[8]

---

[7] These arguments of Pogge are presented in their fuller form in his 2002 book, *World Poverty and Human Rights* (2008).

[8] However, Gandhi was ambivalent about equitable distribution of inherited wealth accumulated in social pockets. His non-violent and non-revolutionary social imagination asks the inheritors of wealth to act as its trustees in order to bring about the best possible distribution of wealth. This suggestion is generally considered an unworkable and largely conservative scheme of protecting the status quo rather than changing it radically for the sake of social equality. In 1932, in an interview given to French journalist, Charles Petrasch, Gandhi spoke of converting "the better-off classes into trustees of what they already possessed… they would keep the money, but they would have to work for the benefit of the people who procured them their wealth" (2011: 38). Nevertheless, Gandhi was in support of peaceful voluntary or legislative redistribution as in the case of land reforms. As for capitalism, he believed that capital and labour could work in perfect coordination.

Justice for the global south, hence, cannot mean equitable distribution of northern affluence or what is popularly known as the American dream. For a post-technological notion of justice, we need to think first about a post-technological notion of human existence. "Americanism is something European", says Heidegger. "It is that still uncomprehended species of the gigantic—the gigantic that is still not properly assembled and still fails to arise from the complete and collected essence of modernity" (AWP: 85). What would be the state of the earth and what would be the essence of humanity when the essence of the gigantic is fully assembled and completed across the globe? As Marx saw, to be capital, capital has to keep producing a surplus; in the same way, to be development, as far as our experiences go, development has to keep up with the momentum of producing its own surplus. This is why the developmental notion of justice is problematic.

In the modern/developmental era, Being is producible material. Hemming notes in *Heidegger and Marx* that the replacement of Being with production is in fact the replacement of the creationist metaphysics of Christianity with the modern metaphysics of manufacturing. Hemming points out that "in a short article for the *New Zurich Times* in 1969, Heidegger confirms this interpretation with specific reference to Marxist dialectic, when he says 'industrial society, which today means the only and final reality—previously this was called God'" (2013: 236).[9] For medieval Europeans, God was the final reality and everything else appeared the creation of God. With industrial modernity, Being as that which is created withdrew to Being's nothingness, and Being as that which is producible took its place. The understanding of reality as that which is producible arose from the technological understanding of Being.

Hence, a post-Nietzschean, post-technological conception of justice means taming the endlessly representing-producing human will. Nurturing the manifold ways of imagining the good life, toning down the northern technological society and global solidarity for the locally arising forms of good life—these would form the rough sketch of a theory of justice in the post-technological age. The implausibility of this theoretical sketch imposes itself on us from out of entrenched calculative intelligibility. Hence, its implausibility ought to be celebrated as long as it takes for it to become a definite global possibility. Little can we do as respondents to Being's manifestation as producible resource for relentless machination to subvert that very manifestation. Celebrating the implausible is a way of responding to the lack of distress in distress. I will come back to this theme in the next two chapters.

The gently critical capability theory advocate, Des Gasper, has written on a variety of themes in development ethics. The question of justice is central to Gasper, which concerns itself with "identifying and responding to preventable and undeserved suffering that typically is inescapable for its victims, and with the distribution of the major costs as well as large benefits that economic development can bring" (2004: 84). He questions the sacrificing of the weak for the sake of the strong, whether in the name of colonialism, elitist national development or such routine happenings as the setting up of the Coca-Cola plant in Plachimada

---

[9] The article Hemming refers to is from GA13, which is still untranslated.

in Kerala to the detriment of the neighbourhood's water sources. In his disquiet about the market ideology, Gasper is close to Goulet's development ethics programme. He in fact comes to see the liberal ethical tangle: "Once economism is entrenched in public life it is hard to dislodge. Divergences from it typically 'cannot be afforded', when evaluated by the very set of inadequate measures and narrow values which are in dispute but also in power" (2004: 81).

But what we do not see among Gasper's largely normative concerns is an engagement with any particularly postcapitalistic or hybrid options. In his extensive commentary on the capability approach, Gasper unlike many development ethicists has developed a gently critical interrogation with the approach. In their paper, "Deepening Development Ethics", Gasper and Truong criticize Sen for his insufficient notion of human personhood (2005).[10] Gasper points out that Sen's approach grew out of "a conversation amongst economists and Anglo-American philosophers". He thinks that the approach therefore reflects the "insouciance of welfare economics". He asks: "Are psychologists, anthropologists and other disciplines still largely absent while economists build square wheels? Did Sen's capability approach's very success in being adopted by UNDP help to freeze it prematurely?" (2002: 436). Sen has not engaged with philosophers of the Continental tradition, who have for long helped puncture the atomistic, liberal self. Gasper also has not, whereas Goulet began with French existentialism. Ananda Giri's critique of the liberal notion of personhood, upon which Gasper relies for his own critique of Sen, also originates from a broad spectrum of highly eclectic engagements, including the most radical of Continental philosophers. If it were to be asked what such an engagement would do to normatively guide development ethics, one could only say that a vast research field lies simply vacant. We should not stop with asking who the subject of Sen's ethical individualism is, for Gasper's rightly critical development ethics also has to face the same question. An understanding of selfhood modelled on the rationally choosing individual who acts to optimize his/her self-interest still seems to plague most approaches in development ethics today. The questions

---

[10] For a critique of Sen's idea of person, see also Giri (2002, Chap. 12: Rethinking human well-being: A Dialogue with Amartya Sen). While Giri here offers a critique of Sen's notion of "personhood", his overall goal in the book is self-cultivation and self-transformation through spiritual practices and social change through the spiritual pragmatics of the self. "The task of practical spirituality", writes Giri, "begins with… self-realization but does not end there: its objective is to transform the world" (2002: 5). Giri denounces Western modernity's disparaging of the spiritual angle to personhood. This goal in itself has a wide array of resonance within South Asia, where the Western "flight of the gods" or "death of God" cannot be said to be a culturally entrenched form of human experience. Answers to social and political questions in such contexts have to be sought also from within the organized social spaces of religion. The Hindu religious movements against caste hierarchy, Latin American liberation theology, Sri Lankan Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement and Bhutanese happiness index are examples of such transformative spiritual engagements. However, Giri does not offer a sustained critique of traditional spiritual pragmatics that brought modernity justifiably into conflict with religious traditionalism. Without this critique, it is impossible to see what the spiritual pragmatics of self-cultivation could mean in pluralistic and contested spaces of democracy like India in terms of the current value conflicts in development practice.

concerning justice and development, then, are also questions concerning an existential and non-substance understanding of selfhood, as implied by Goulet's question "what kind of man does a society want to create?" (1973: 147).

I now want to accentuate the insufficiency of critique in regular development ethics literature by moving to a level different from these rather straightforward and often discussed matters of global injustice and the inadequacies of development theory.

5.3 The Self of Development Ethics

"What kind of person does a society want to create?" In this question of Goulet, we may still see the unfulfilled agenda of development ethics. According to Goulet, "development is the ascent of all men and societies in their total humanity" (1973: x).

The existentialist angle of Goulet's concern with development is evident in the above question and statement. In Sartre's famous words, "man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world—and defines himself afterwards… Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself" (2001: 28–29). Simone de Beauvoir, turning her existentialist eye towards essentialist understandings of women, notes in *The Second Sex*: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (1956: 273).[11] Popular existentialism overemphasizes the will to be: we are neither what we *are* nor what we *conceive* ourselves to be, but what we *will* to be after the leap into existence. Heidegger sees the Nietzschean project of the will leading to the technologization of existence. For him, the slogan "existence precedes essence" means that existence unfolds as a pull between being in terms of the world of other humans and things, and being a self, a pull between inauthentic and authentic being, never settling fully on either poll of this pull. Existence is not an unbearable contradiction, argues Heidegger, because being a self means owning up our existential situation alongside things and along with others "in" our world. For Jean-Luc Nancy, being a self means to be in common with others without fusion, without closure and without exclusion. Sociality of our being is not a secondary feature added to something essential in us; we *are* only in common. According to the Heidegger-Nancy thesis, in our most primordial experiences, we find ourselves in our openness towards meanings invested upon us by something more than our mere being, and so our being itself *is* this very openness.

Goulet's conception of development as ascent from what we conceive to be less human in some way to a more human way of being can thus be understood as a concern with the dynamic existentialist preoccupation of self formation. Development is remaking the self and changing the meaning of being human. When Goulet asks what kind of human being does a society want to create, he understands development not merely as making certain goods available to us or

---

[11] This existentialist credo may be referred back to Heidegger's claim that "*[t]he essence of Dasein lies in its existence*" (BT: 67).

opening up certain spheres that so far remained closed to us; rather, development is self-transformative, whether for good or ill. Societies that subject themselves to the developmental process should be prepared for this transformation. Developmentalism is a case of unrecognizable self-transformation.

Goulet recognizes that development processes are never ethically unambiguous. He argues that these processes make the subject of development vulnerable because they assume the subject to be deprived and powerless, because the choices for self-making are not in fact made by the subject and because the question whether the self is ascending through these processes to something more human or descending into something less human or arriving at a fusion of both is a thoroughly ambivalent question. Hence, the gigantic social, economic and political process that we call development makes its subjects powerless onlookers at the current of change overwhelming them and takes away rather than reinforce their self-making agency. And yet, development literature in general looks at development as that very social process which grants the (non)subject, the poor and vulnerable, agency, freedom and selfhood. Amartya Sen's capability discourse, to a large extent, is mired in this problem. The self-assurance in declaring "development as freedom" and liberation smacks of neoliberal triumphalism. The subjects of the global south, the subjects of development, are taken for non-agents, indeed non-subjects, in a great deal of development literature.

Robbie Shilliam, who makes a postcolonial argument against the capability approach, observes that "Sen intends 'development as freedom' to be a policy framework that finely balances faith in the neoliberal market with a freedom ethic of hermeneutic pluralism" (2012: 331). By "hermeneutical pluralism", Shilliam means Sen's emphasis on the importance of cultural conceptions and democratic processes for the political selection of capabilities. Shilliam grants Sen only "a small decolonial opening". For him, Sen's faith in the market can only perpetuate a religious sense of providence "by baptizing sufferers as developmental individuals whose freedoms must be provided for by and understood in terms of profane market mechanisms. And this moment of baptism is the moment of their subalternization" (2012: 345). According to Shilliam, approaches like Sen's can stealthily entrench civilizational notions that can reconstruct selfhood unrecognizably. As the thread of Heidegger's philosophy that I have been following in this book would reiterate, developmental approaches like that of Sen help entrench the technological understanding of reality where it is still peripheral and persuade communities that understand reality less violently to give up their understandings in favour of the representing-producing ontological apparatuses of Western modernity. The "ethical individualism" of capability approach refuses to address deeper questions concerning the global politics of self-making.

The institutional reach of modernizing development in the societies of the global south gives rise to the liberal, developmental individual and the technological society. If the civilizing mission of the colonizer was once the means to the end of the creation of the capitalistic society in the global south as much as in the north, development understood as modernization is the contemporary means to the same end. The increasing technologization of southern life-world, which

essentially benefits northerners and their cohorts in the south, negligible in number but not in the extent of power they wield, unveils the world-dominating ontological trail of the technological understanding of Being. The transformation is never only about machines and methods *but mainly about the human being*. Goulet speaks tirelessly about the ambivalence inherent to the dialectical processes of development. But these processes stop being ambivalent if the human transformation prepared by development is "the technologized animal". With developmentalism, the global fate of this human transformation, the consequent devastation of the planet and the abdication of human ontological responsibility as Being's shepherd and precinct are increasingly appearing to be settled matters. While a way out of this fate is a point of anxious discussion at least in the academia of the north, triumphalism with regard to the technological society is booming in the south with the successes of China and partly of India.

The single-point agenda of the Indian political psychologist, Ashis Nandy, has been to revisit the forgotten/lost Indian selfhood with the onset of modernity, or to reimagine possible Indian selfhoods. Like Heidegger, Nandy understands global southern history as the technologization of selfhood. He writes:

> [T]he idea of development is grounded in a concept of science, that promises not only absolute human mastery over nature (including human nature) but even human omniscience, and in an edited version of the idea of the white man's burden vis-à-vis those living with 'Oriental despotism' and 'the idiocy of rural life' in the backwaters of Asia and Africa (1994: 7).

Development is colonialism perpetuated for Nandy. Heidegger understands the new order of Europe as constituting "an anticipation of planetary dominance, which of course can no longer be an imperialism, since emperors are impossible in the essential domain of machination" (E: 80). What dominates in the era of domination without emperors, both for Heidegger and Nandy, is the calculative understanding of everything. Nandy notes that it is on account of the techno-scientific worldview that human beings everywhere are beginning to think that they are masters of the cosmos, which they can exploit without limit. He points out that developmental individuals of the global south cannot even express their sufferings and loss of selfhood except in calculative, economistic terms. Even their right to interpret their own sufferings and self-understanding in their own terms is denied to them; they are, rather, overtaken by the calculative systems of knowledge within which they and their experiences take the form of hard economic data. The fact that justice even in the techno-scientific format cannot reach the neediest redoubles their plight and pushes them deeper into helpless dilemma. Nandy emphasizes the ambivalences of modernizing development like Goulet. He is unsure whether the ideal, liberated subject promised by development would be the ideal subject of the future: "the onus will be on our generation to decide or at least debate whether this century's dominant faiths do represent the next century's ideas of sanity and maturity" (1989: 276). According to Nandy, this ambivalence gives credence to all projects of resistance to developmentalism, small or big.

It is not merely the large scale, all-encompassing processes of development propelled by dominant political and cultural narratives that bring into focus the

dilemmas of developmental self-making. NGO-based community development and other such small scale projects too can bring these same dilemmas into focus, for what rules them is the same calculative intelligibility that rules the larger developmental processes of socio-economic reconstruction. Even the way these projects are monitored by higher bodies, for example, can bring to light these dilemmas. I have elsewhere recounted how the gruelling technocratic monitoring mechanisms disempower rather than empower the subjects of development, and in that way deny them even the liberal-modernist goal of making them free subjects. In such monitoring approaches

> … the 'end' target of the development programme, the most important link in the long development chain, is humiliated, bereft of their dignity and the issue of 'right to development' becomes meaningless. Needless to say, a flurry of fundamental questions—questions like 'whose need/right is development, who defines it, how it is measured'—emerge from such a scenario. Has the one who 'spends the money' the right to say 'what should be achieved and what shouldn't?' (George 2008: 26).

These are routine ways of making the subject of development a passive recipient of benefits without agency. From within the rationale of capability approach

> … bullying stakeholders into submission in the name of project monitoring enhances their powerlessness. Freedom is the ability to make choices and to accept the responsibility arising from the choices made. If development is indeed a matter of right rather than privilege, if it is a matter of promoting the capabilities of people in order to enhance their freedom and choice rather than merely improve their income, then people's freedom to participate and 'own' their development should be recognized as a value greater than outright quantitative goal achievement (George 2008: 27).

A tacit calculative intelligibility pervades the development project, its planners, funders and executors. In cases of development for subjects still largely untouched by the technological understanding of what-is, they are generally bullied into submission, not necessarily by other human agents, but mainly by impersonal, technocratic mechanisms. In this way, developmental processes reconfigure subjectivities systemically and not through the work of fragile human hands.

Technological understanding of Being, when culturally entrenched, need not always depend on human agents for its circulation and effectuation. It infests human things and processes, tools and methods, and through the elemental force of the inanimate artefacts humans make, technological intelligibility is buried within society's structural layers. These structures have a life of their own. However, even with its utmost independence from human agents, technological understanding of reality still can circulate only as a mode of human understanding, for it is always received and imbibed passively at least by those "subjected" to developmental processes. This is in fact the unmaking of their selfhood and reconfiguring it in terms of an alien understanding of Being. This process goes on unchallenged for it presents itself as the new manifestation of the *true* and *legitimate*. Hence, little development projects too can mean initiating subjects into a new and revolutionary understanding of selfhood different from their own. To these subjects, empowerment comes to mean education in calculative and instrumental approaches.

The formation of the self through developmental processes, without the subject's choice, however, is no surprise. How does a baby, who is "nothing" to begin with in the existentialist sense, become a self, a Dasein? She becomes a self by way of her transcendence towards the world of dominant others and fascinating things. According to Hubert Dreyfus's interpretation of Heidegger, we come to make sense of the meaning of our humanity as "the result of being socialized into practices that contain an interpretation not exhaustively contained in the mental states of individuals" (1991: 17). That is, we begin to be Dasein only after at least a few weeks of our birth because we can be Dasein only after a process of socialization, however unclear, not in terms of a fully aware cognitive mapping and representation of meanings but by "imbibing" meanings as embodied beings from the social practices and interpersonal contacts. To begin with, what makes us is what we do, more than what we cognitively represent. Only when we begin to project meaningful possibilities and, thus, are up to something, only when phenomena begin to matter to us and we care about them in our basic demeanours are we Dasein. We develop a sense of familiarity with the world and begin to anticipate things in particular ways because we have become Dasein, Being-in-the-world, readied ontologically through our social practices to have an understanding of Being. Dreyfus says that we have a general background understanding of how rooms show up and that is why we anticipate rooms to be in certain ways. This familiarity with rooms, this openness for the phenomenon called room, this possibility for encountering anything like a room, we have "developed by crawling and walking around many rooms" since we were babies. That social practices determine and shape us to a large extent, whether for good or ill, is the most basic ontological fact about us. This ontological fact about us becomes a matter of surprise if we begin to imagine that we are first of all detached "minds", capable of neutral and independent representations. This ideal of the mind-enabled, autonomous human being is glorified by liberal humanism, which according to the Heideggerian argument that we have been following is a flawed thesis. Dreyfus has the following hypothetical Japanese example to show how the late modern technological understanding of Being in the global north works in terms of everyday cultural practices:

> [O]ur culture has entered a phase in which we deal with things as 'standing reserve'. This means in part that we treat them as resources to be used efficiently and then disposed of when no longer needed. A styrofoam cup is a perfect example. When we want a hot or cold drink it does its job, and when we are through with it, we simply throw it away. How different is a delicate Japanese teacup, preserved from generation to generation for its beauty and its social meaning (1991: 18).

Sweeping social processes such as development are no different. They transform selfhood.

World domination of Western metaphysics without emperors and human imposers means the global transformation of selfhood according to the technological understanding of Being. It means the welcome reign of calculative intelligibility in the global south without the fulfilment of the promises of justice. Even though the work of promise ensuing from technological understanding, justice in

other words, benefits only a negligible but powerful number of southern elites, the reign of that understanding is established as a possibility for everyone by the acceptation, absorption and internalization of an ontological order according to which phenomena as a whole can come to presence.

The politics of this ontology of domination, unlike all imperialisms that went ahead of it, is completely tacit and invisible. Instead of holding aloft ideologies and slogans as the stimulus for social transformation, a metamorphosis of the way phenomena show themselves is ushered in, and hence the role of propagandists and colonizers is cancelled out. It is still a matter of *domination* because technological understanding (1) is not an original way of encountering phenomena for the global south in general arising out of its own existential vicissitudes and contingencies; (2) it benefits the global north on the whole and its politics of capital, consumption patterns, knowledge production systems, philosophy of individualism and its powerful, if numerically negligible, cohorts in the global south; and (3) this tame, seduced falling for the technological understanding of reality is not wholly untutored because an era of colonization and imperialistic global politics has gone before it. The entrenchment of technological understanding in the global south through developmentalism comes to mean the widening of inequality, the devastation of the earth and the banishment of the powerless into deeper dilemmas and paradoxes, not of their own making. It means the levelling of Being's inherent differentiations, alterations and modifications, the spiritual–cultural alienation of communities in the global south, and the consequent loss, denial and concealment of possible meaningful selfhoods for the global southerner.

Heidegger sees a lurking danger in globalism (and developmentalism) because it stifles the inherent power of Being's difference. "The struggle for world domination and the unfolding of the metaphysics that sustains it bring to fulfillment an era of earth history and of historical mankind", and the utmost danger of metaphysical world domination for Heidegger is that "the contest becomes a confrontation between the power of beings and the truth of Being" (N III: 190–191). Metaphysics is not really dead with the death of God; Western metaphysics is transformed for new purposes: "self-consummating metaphysics, which in its fundamental traits sustains Western history, shapes it in its modern European form, and destines it for 'world domination'" (N III: 250). The seductive Western ontological world domination began just as ontic colonial world domination ended. Because of a particular trail in Western humanity's tryst with beings and the interpretation of beings in their Being, world domination is inherent to that metaphysics' temporal unfolding. It is therefore that I argued in Chap. 3 that developmentalism also means a warlikeness and seductiveness that do not permit its rejection. Within this ontology hides the power to conquer those who reject it, both by way of violent disciplining and by way of seductive subduing.

Hence, the technological understanding of Being does not any more have an essential geographical determination. Pockets of powerful mediators in the global south as well respond obligingly to the event of Being's global manifestation. They help shape the destiny of Being in terms of calculative intelligibility. According to Heidegger, this new humanity, everywhere in the making, a

technologized humanity, is the Nietzschean overman, which "wills its own being-human as the will to power and finds this being-human to be at home in the reality determined in its entirety by the will to power" (NW: 187). Technologized human being is "determined by a form of human essence that goes beyond erstwhile man"; it "refers to the essence of the humanity that, as modern humanity, begins to enter into the completion of the essence of its age" (NW: 187–188); it is "the '*type*,' the 'model' of a certain kind of man who has assigned the task of a revaluation of all values to the individual power of his will to power and who is prepared to embark on the absolute domination of the globe" (N IV: 9). The meaning of nihilism is the unconditional acceptance of calculative intelligibility as the sole basis of all valuing. This is not a moral aberration, but an ontological transformation of global humanity. According to this ontological transformation, "[v]alues are essentially related to 'domination'. Dominance is the being in power of power. Values are bound to will to power; they depend on it as the proper essence of power" (N IV: 50). Justice as the highest global public value is upheld as perfect satiation of human desire through making reality available to all across the world in ready resourcefulness.

The essential ontological transformation of humanity in terms of technological understanding is no more geographically specific to the global north. Through historical processes of colonization and post-war developmentalism and through standardizations of the global market, public culture and the media, the technological framing of the real as available resource is now in a historical process of completing its world-domination. The least vulnerable, who are unreached by the technological logos, are also beginning to accept it as unproblematic. Those who are unconvinced by its logos are the perennial outsiders to the "normal". In the conversation between him and the Japanese thinker, Heidegger observes that it is delusionary to think that the success of European reason is confirmed by the making possible of functional technological advancements all over the world. What is happening is not the simple and unproblematic victory of one rationality over another or the global victory of humans over nature. What is happening is an ontological transformation; the essence of global humanity is being transformed. Because of the delusion in the global south that a more suitable and unproblematic rationality has to be accepted without question, Heidegger notes that "we are no longer able to see how the Europeanization of man and of the earth attacks at the source everything that is of an essential nature. It seems that these sources are to dry up" (DL: 16). The drying up of the essential sources of meaning is called "nihilism", which has grave consequences for the least well off and the most vulnerable in the global south.

For the most vulnerable humanity all across the world, whose self-interpretation also is being affected by technological understanding, contemporary conditions are problematic for at least two reasons: (1) Their desires, pursuits, goals, all that they consider worthwhile and their life-world itself are being transformed through the social practices and the socialization processes of the technological society, which they cannot clearly order, control, understand, own up and posit as their own. Even as unrecognizable transformations come to pass, they appear to

participate in them willingly and pre-cognitively. We call these transformations "ontological" because of their very entrenchment and the deep marks they leave on self-understanding. These transformations increase their vulnerability because they become indecisive about discarding or accepting them. (2) In spite of the ambivalences and dilemmas inherent to the transformations wrought by calculative intelligibility, modern individualism and several other forms of enframing, they participate in the consumerist ethos of the technological society as needy, unhappy, unfulfilled subjects. The objectified, personalized, differentiated, cumulatively multiplying consumption patterns of the technologized individual, the modern "ends in themselves", forever escape them with no reasonable avenues in sight to make them real, even though they too are affected by and fully exposed to the power these social patterns wield on their essentially transformed humanity.

A certain lack of power over the conditions producing their desires and over the conditions necessary to make them real plunges the most vulnerable sections of the newly emerging technological societies of the global south into existential anxieties because their lives are not measuring up in terms of their transformed lifeworld. With all their traditional securities threatened, their erstwhile values, goods and organizing principles disparaged, their social cohesion disbanded by modern individualism, their labour and products undervalued in the globalized market, their old loves and desires belittled, their forms of art, craft and culture reconfigured in terms of tastes, preferences and sensitivities alien to them, their gods and transcendental principles replaced, their food, attires and manners of enjoyment denigrated, the most vulnerable especially in the global south find their existential condition thoroughly ambiguous.

This situation is uncanny. In the world dominating and self-consummating phase of Western metaphysics, there is no invading colonizer to objectify, vilify and to defend oneself against. A new order of calculative intelligibility is taking over without a clear line of invaders and imposers. For Ashis Nandy, the speedy takeover of technological understanding signifies the lingering shadows of colonialism. Nandy points out that clenched-teeth nationalism in the global south, popular solely in Europe a century ago, against whose imperialism the countries of the global south rose en masse in rebellion, is a case of what Freud "would have loved to identify as a perfect clinical case of identification with the aggressor" (1989: 276). Developmentalism and the reactive nationalism that buttresses it are no less problematic identifications with the aggressor's stance. Paradoxically, dominative identifications without a clear line of dominators oppress and harass self. The demands of ontological transformations persecute the vulnerable self. These demands turn out to be oppressive overtures of the self against itself, a self-torment for not measuring up, for not being able to catch up and conquer the desirable. The most insufferable condition of vulnerability probably is this sort of self-hate.

Some of the aberrations of justice in the newly emerging technological societies are plainly evident, but some others are not. The most plainly evident aberration without doubt is widening inequality and increasing impoverishment among the most vulnerable. The epigraph to this chapter is about Gandhi's anxiety

regarding technology displacing human hands from work for the benefit of the few. According to Gandhi, what powers technologization of labour is not the desire to humanize labour but instead the desire to automate labour processes for the sake of the greed of capitalists, who own and socially disseminate technologies. The Gandhian diatribe against Western modernity and technologies in *Hind Swaraj* (1909) is to be read as one of the earliest subversive encounters with the technological understanding of Being. Gandhi accepts the critical engagement with tradition made possible through India's encounter with modernity. With reference to the several dark shades of traditional India, he affirms the need to "utilize the new spirit that is born in us for purging ourselves of these evils" (1960, Vol. 10: 38). However, with reference to the metaphysical scheme of modernity as such, Gandhi states that India "has nothing to learn from anybody else" (1960, Vol. 10: 37). He seems to be looking critically at the Indian's metaphysical understanding through the lens of what he finds acceptable in metaphysical modernity while at the same time looking beyond it in a definitive sense.

According to Gandhi, to take to war and conquest, reactive nationalism and developmentalism in essence meant wanting English rule without Englishmen, desiring the tiger's essence and not the tiger (1960, Vol. 10: 15)—in Nandy's words "identification with the aggressor". The "English" is Gandhi's term for modern metaphysics and its essence, the technological understanding of Being. *Hind Swaraj* is a ridiculous piece of writing with its glorification of the tradition and the spinning wheel, denouncement of every piece of modern machinery and bureaucracy, and every aspect of modern culture—parliamentary democracy, modern medicine, legal practice, modern railways, postal system, mass media and all industry—if we do not see that it is an attack on modern metaphysics. Gandhi's life and writings articulate a different understanding of Being while still attempting to be open towards a modern sense of equality and freedom. Independent India did not go by the Gandhian vision. As Heidegger argues, the global ontological transformation in accordance with the technological understanding of Being does not appear to be a matter of choice, but a matter of responding to the event of Being's world-dominating manifestation. Human agency that powers any ontological transformation is itself transformed by the same ontological essence. Our contemporary attempt to address the vital question of justice for the global south from within the spaces allowed by the essence of technology is leaving us with further injustices, inequalities and the total world-domination of the technological understanding of Being.

As for the less plainly visible aberrations of justice in the emerging technological societies, one needs to take a more careful look at the modernist narratives of poverty. Ashis Nandy has the following observation: "The suicide of farmers, which in recent years has reached almost epidemic proportions in India, almost never takes place in underdeveloped, ill-governed states like Bihar, but in India's most prosperous, economic-reforms-minded states. This is not an exception; 78 % of the world's malnourished children come from countries that have food surpluses" (2002: 114). Interestingly, Nandy never tires of using the calculative techno-modernist representation of data sets against modern calculative

intelligibility. Nandy might come across as underestimating poverty, but what he wants to stress is the inability of the modern frame to fulfil its promise of global liberation from poverty on account of its internal telos of cumulatively rising production and consumption patterns that feed unequal distribution. He wants to stress the anxiety that the modern frame can bring to global humanity through the enumeration of poverty, which institutes the fact of poverty in terms of prefixed standards like the below poverty line. Poverty mainly is a sense of deprivation. If so, opulent society plunges the poor further into a sense of comparative deprivation. This is not to deny abject poverty, which Nandy calls "destitution".

Another example of the less plainly visible aberrations of justice in the technological society is the cultural delegitimization of the non-materialistic, non-economistic aspects of life, which are still valuable for many communities of the global south. Even a well-articulated neoliberal development evaluation paradigm such as the capabilities approach does not seem to be free of this. Why should "the unending addictive quest for fulfilment—or at least novelty and distraction—through commodities" (Gasper 2002: 450) be imposed on the world's poorest when it is impossible for them to attain it, when it is ambivalent for those who can attain it, when it is unhealthy for the planet? Sharing their lives with others in their being in common, explicitly in families and social groups, is a central aspect of the well-being of people who are not completely modernized, not fully overtaken by the technological understanding of all-that-is. To the extent that this being in common is not an exclusivist communion and denial of human exposure, it is a spontaneous expression of humanity, of our exposure to otherness. Indeed, the atomistic individualism of the modern frame should not be allowed to obstruct the communal aspect of our well-being.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

I want to end this chapter's study of development and selfhood with the assertion that developmentalism, understood as the ontic manifestation of the technological understanding of Being, the modern global horizon for the existential projection of possibilities, is an essential manner of transforming the essence of global humanity. That is, the openness that lets beings manifest is undergoing a global metamorphosis. Consider what Heidegger means by the *Da* of Dasein:

> The *Da* in *Being and Time* does not mean a statement of place for a being, but rather it should designate the openness where beings can be present for the human being, and the human being also for himself. The *Da* of [Dasein's] *Being* distinguishes the humanness of the human being (ZS: 120).

Since the human being most primordially means the openness for Being, openness for the appeal of Being, and since the articulation of the encounter between Being and the human being "occurs in different ways according to how the appeal of Being speaks" (WIP: 75), the perfect concretion of the technological understanding of Being, in its fully dominating potential, means a certain "closure" introduced to being human as the openness for Being. This closure is accentuated in the manifestation of Being to the human being in the "flatness of organized uniformity" and the corresponding denial of every other and even a more primal revealing. Heidegger reads phenomenologically Aristotle's saying in *Metaphysics*

1003a33, "being is said in many ways": "Existence is revealed in many ways" (WIP: 97). That is, the coming to presence of Being is manifold. Technological society constrains the manifold meanings of Being. Heidegger calls the encompassment of technological understanding in every sphere of existence "organized idolatry", in comparison with which "the supposed superstitions of primitive peoples seem as child's play" (ZS: 102).

How is the essence of humanity transformed by the essence of technology? The essence of humanity, the openness for Being, is transformed into the field of play for organized uniformity. Humans themselves and their things, thus, become mere material for endless production. The closure introduced to being human means that global humanity is turned into representing-producing subjects.

> As the representer and the producer … he (the human being) stands before the *obstructed … open*. Thereby he himself and his things are exposed… to the growing danger of becoming *mere material, a mere function of objectification*. The intention … itself of self-assertion … expands the realm of the danger that *man will lose his own self to absolute producing*. The threat which the human essence incurs arises from this essence itself. However, this human essence is located in the attraction of Being to it. Therefore, by his self-willing, man in an essential sense is threatened, i.e., in need of defense, but by the nature of his essence, he is at the same time defenseless (WP: 220; my gloss and emphasis).

Technological understanding of Being invokes self-assertive production of everything including the self as material for human manipulation. The closure of the openness for the event of Being's manifestation means that global understanding of phenomena is standardized in uniform ways. The essence of humanity is transformed because as the technologized animal the human being "stands against the openness of Being" (WP: 220). My next chapter is a study of the possibility of subversion of this fate of humanity in the age of technology.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Buber, M. (1923) 2004. *I and thou* (R. G. Smith, Trans.). London: Continuum.
Chatterjee, P. (2004). *The politics of the governed: Reflections on popular politics in most of the world*. Delhi: Permanent Black.
Crocker, D. A. (2008). *Ethics of global development: Agency, capability, and deliberative democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
De Beauvoir, S. (1949) 1956. *The second sex* (H. M. Parshley, Trans.). London: Jonathan Cape.
Derrida, J. (1964) 2001. Violence and metaphysics: An essay on the thought of Emmanuel Levinas (A. Bass, Trans.). In *Writing and difference* (pp. 97–192). London: Routledge.
Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's* Being and time, *division I*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Esquith, S. L., & Gifford, F. (Eds.). (2010). *Capabilities, power, and institutions: Toward a more critical development ethics*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
Gandhi, M. K. (1960–1994). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi* (in 100 Vols.). New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Gasper, D. (2002). Is Sen's capability approach an adequate basis for considering human development? *Review of Political Economy, 14*(4), 435–461.

Gasper, D. (2004). *The ethics of development: From economism to human development*. New Delhi: Vistaar Publications.

Gasper, D. (2008). Denis Goulet and the project of development ethics: Choices in methodology, focus and organization. *Journal of Human Development, 9*(3), 453–474.

Gasper, D., & Truong, T.-D. (2005). Deepening development ethics: From economism to human development to human security. *The European Journal of Development Research, 17*(3), 372–384.

George, S. K. (2008). Birth of the subject: The ethics of monitoring development programmes. *Journal of Global Ethics, 4*(1), 19–36.

George, S. K. (2010). The cosmopolitan self and the fetishism of identity. In S. van Hooft & W. Vanderkerckhove (Eds.), *Questioning cosmopolitanism* (pp. 63–82). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

George, S. K. (2011). Meaning and context: Heidegger and Levinas on self and the other. *The Journal of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research XXVIII, 4*, 101–127.

Giri, A. (2002). *Conversations and transformations: Toward a new ethics of self and society*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Goulet, D. (1971) 1973. *The cruel choice: A new concept in the theory of development*. New York: Athenaeum.

Goulet, D. (1980). Development experts: The one-eyed giants. *World Development, 8*(7–8), 481–489.

Goulet, D. (1981). In defense of cultural rights: Technology, tradition and conflicting models of rationality. *Human Rights Quarterly, 3*(4), 1–18.

Goulet, D. (1989). *The uncertain promise: Value conflicts in technology transfer* (new ed.). New York: New Horizons Press.

Goulet, D. (2002). What is a just economy in a globalized world? *International Journal of Social Economics, 29*(1 & 2), 10–25.

Goulet, D. (2006). *Development ethics at work: Explorations—1960–2002*. London: Routledge.

Guha, R. (2008). *How much should a person consume?: Thinking through the environment*. Ranikhet, India: Permanent Black.

Heidegger, M. (1966–1973) 2003. *Four seminars* (A. Mitchell & F. Raffoul, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Hemming, L. P. (2013). *Heidegger and Marx: A productive dialogue over the language of humanism*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Hodge, J. (1995). *Heidegger and ethics*. London: Routledge.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1944) 2002. In G. Schmid Noerr (Ed.), *Dialectic of enlightenment: Philosophical fragments* (E. Jephcott, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1961) 1979. *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority* (A. Lingis, Trans.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1974) 1991. *Otherwise than being, Or beyond essence* (A. Lingis, Trans.). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Levinas, E. (1964) 1996. Meaning and sense (A. Lingis, Trans.). In A. T. Peperzak, S. Critchley & R. Bernasconi (Eds.), *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic philosophical writings* (pp. 33–64). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Levinas, E. (1986) 2001a. Being-toward-death and "thou shalt not kill" (A. Schmitz, Trans.). In J. Robbins (Ed.), *Is it righteous to be?: Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas,* (pp. 130–139). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1983) 2001b. Philosophy, justice, and love (M. B. Smith, Trans.). In J. Robbins (Ed.), *Is it righteous to be?: Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, (pp. 165–181). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Levinas, E. (1970) 2006. Without identity (N. Poller, Trans.). In *Humanism of the other* (pp. 58–69). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Marcuse, H. (1964) 1991. *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society* (2nd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Marx, K. (1844) 1988. *Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844 and the communist mani-festo* (M. Milligan, Trans.). Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Nancy, J.-L. (1996) 2000. *Being singular plural* (R. D. Richardson & A. E. O'Byrne, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Nandy, A. (1989). Shamans, savages and the wilderness: On the audibility of dissent and the future of civilizations. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, 14*(3), 263–277.

Nandy, A. (1994). Culture, voice and development: A primer for the unsuspecting. *Thesis Eleven, 39*(1), 1–18.

Nandy, A. (2002). The beautiful expanding future of poverty: Popular economics and a psycho-logical defense. *International Studies Review, 4*(2), 107–121.

Petrasch, C. (1932) 2011. An extract from an interview with Mahatma Gandhi. *Think India Quarterly, 14*(3), 37–40.

Pieterse, J. N. (2000). After post-development. *Third World Quarterly, 21*(2), 175–191.

Pogge, T. (2002) 2008. *World poverty and human rights* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Pogge, T. (2004). "Assisting" the global poor. In D. K. Chatterjee (Ed.), *The ethics of assistance: Morality and the distant needy* (pp. 260–288). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pogge, T. (2005). A cosmopolitan perspective on the global economic order. In G. Brock & H. Brighouse (Eds.), *The political philosophy of cosmopolitanism* (pp. 92–109). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pollock, S. (1998). The cosmopolitan vernacular. *The Journal of Asian Studies, 57*(1), 6–38.

Pollock, S. (2000). Cosmopolitan and vernacular in history. *Public Culture, 12*(3), 591–626.

Sandbrook, R. (2000). Globalization and the limits of neoliberal development doctrine: *Development as freedom* by Amartya Sen, review. *Third World Quarterly, 21*(6), 1071–1080.

Sartre, J.-P. (1945) 2001. Existentialism and humanism (P. Mairet, Trans.). In S. Priest (Ed.), *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings* (pp. 25–57). Abingdon: Routledge.

Sen, A. (2000). *Development as freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Shilliam, R. (2012). Redemption from development: Amartya Sen, Rastafari and promises of freedom. *Postcolonial Studies, 15*(3), 331–350.

Taylor, C. (2007). Heidegger on language. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A compan-ion to Heidegger* (pp. 433–455). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Watkins, K. (2005). *Human development report 2005: International development at a crossroads—Aid, trade and security in an unequal world*. New York: UNDP and Oxford University Press.

Chapter 6
The Idea of Development

This extreme view of things developed so rapidly that by the end of the nineteenth century people saw in their grasp the moment in which everything would be at the disposal of everyone, in which man, replaced entirely by the machine, would have only pleasures and play.

—Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 191

Abstract Heidegger's account of the dissolution of Western metaphysics in planetary technological understanding is the philosophical basis of this book's critical account of post-war developmentalism as the ahistorical, violent, calculative, individualistic and unjust concretion of technological understanding in the global south. This chapter argues that such an account of developmentalism calls for a positive idea of development, which can conceive flourishing human existence without endangering the fate of the planet and of non-human animals. The argument is not deep ecological but is nevertheless post-technological. Accordingly, development is understood existentially as a dynamic process of human ascent from a less to a more fulfilling human condition. However, such a condition is also understood to be alert to human fragility, finiteness and, thus, to restraining the defeatist possibilities of human freedom. Critically considering the progress of developmentalism, human ascent thus comes to mean living with the needed, relinquishing the unneeded, finding fulfilment in less resource intensive forms of life and achieving this without the fascist politics of human equality and radical ecology. The sense of development evoked by this study also calls for a posthuman sense of dwelling on the earth. Understood as the openness for the circulation of the meaning of beings, human beings and their communities care for, preserve and let beings be. Post-technological human comportments demand openness for the manifold meanings of phenomena as opposed to their technologically organized uniformity. The chapter ends with a plea for communicating development from a post-technological perspective.

Keywords Human ascent · Flourishing · Poverty · Restraint · Posthuman · Post-technological

I have so far painted a critical picture of what I consider are certain kernel ambivalences in the all-encompassing processes of development now enveloping the global south, although I have tried to draw constructive conclusions from each of those critical reflections. These critical engagements have so far centred on the ahistoricity, violent logic, capitalistic and individualistic ethos, and problems of justice, which are inherent to the post-war development discourse. In this attempt, my analysis has been close to the postdevelopment discourse. However, I now want to distinguish my analysis from that apocalyptic discourse of the end of development because postdevelopment narratives are ambiguous about whether to reject the idea of development totally or to reclaim it in some form. In this chapter, even if tentatively, I propose a reclamation of the idea of development. I develop the reclaimed "sense" of the term "development" in the first two sections of this chapter.

Heidegger's ontology of technology never loses sight of human mastery over the earth and all beings. The withdrawal of Being means the appearance of all beings as meaningless resources. Hence, a crucial issue for this study is the manner of human dwelling on the earth. Blaise Pascal considered the human being a feeble but thinking reed in nature, which can come to annihilation even by a drop of dew. However, nature knows nothing of what it is doing to the feeble reed, whereas the greatness of the reed according to Pascal lies in the fact that it comes to know that it is faced with its own death. Human dignity consists in understanding, thinking, speaking and housing Being, and Pascal exhorts humans to "think well" and be loyal to the dignity of being human, which for him is "the principle of morality" (1995: 72–73). Human being in the technological society is not Pascal's thinking reed but the technologized animal with ominous potential to crush the earth and all beings under the gigantic weight of its relentless representing-producing. And yet, our hopes still hinge upon thinking and rethinking well. The third section of this chapter interrogates critically this fate threatening humanity and the planet in the face of our desire for good life, development and justice for the global south.

The idea of development articulated in the first two sections of the chapter is further elaborated in the fourth section with reference to the muddled field of contested subjectivities and notions of good life. In the final section, I argue for the need for communicating the "sense" of development discussed in the chapter.

6.1 The Sense of "Development"

A critique of development, however modest, is expected today to reject the word "development". The introduction to the first edition of the influential *The Development Dictionary* (1992) opens with a startling declaration: "The last 40 years can be called the age of development. This epoch is coming to an end. The time is ripe to write its obituary" (2010: xv). Postdevelopment rejects "development" for being a moralized, seductive discourse of power. We must not forget to underline that "development" is rejected on account of its historical manifestation within a particular discursive arena, originating with the Truman doctrine. The credence to this view does have a strong Heideggerian backing: Being is housed in the precinct of language.

Outside our discursive constructions what are meaningful realities? They are mute, unmeaning things. With no human being to engage with things, with none to take issue with them, without something mattering to the human being, the possibility of meaning and the meaningful reality of a thing are simply non-existent. The claim is not that things do not exist outside human consciousness; the claim is that outside human care for Being, beings do not come forth in their Being. And hence, "development" is nothing really outside the discursive space that lets it be. Moreover, the line of argument I developed in the second chapter about historicizing the notion of development acknowledges that outside the historical trajectory, our realities, especially if they are social and political phenomena, are not meaningful in any significant sense. If so, what is the meaning of the claim in this study about the "sense" of development?

The "sense of development" that I am looking for comes close to the Heideggerian notion of the "ecstatic projection of possibilities". I want to argue that the sense of dynamism in the word "development" has a phenomenological truth to tell about being human.

<div align="center">***</div>

We live each of our waking moments by way of projecting possibilities of our past background of meaning, insignificant as well as crucial ones, made significant in terms of the temporal sense of the future, defined by the abyssal and utterly finite point of death. Existential projection of possibilities is wedded to the available possibilities of the historical context of significance. Whenever possibilities are actualized in a present, the significance of the available and past possibilities arises out of the future. On rare occasions in our everyday life, we do tend to specifically own up a possibility in reference to our own selfhood (authentic existence), but most of the time we follow a mechanical, socially levelled manner of projecting possibilities (inauthentic existence). A sense of dynamic movement concealed in existence as such rather than in a divinely, materially or culturally given self-thing is a point of emphasis in existential phenomenologies of all variety. Heidegger explains the end in death as determining all human existential projections:

> As long as Dasein is there is in every case something still outstanding, which Dasein can be and will be. But to that which is thus outstanding, the 'end' itself belongs. The 'end' of Being-in-the-world is death. This end, which belongs to the potentiality-for-Being—that is to say, to existence—limits and determines in every case whatever totality is possible for Dasein (BT: 276–277).

But the background that gives clarity to human choices is not only finitude but also the cultural and dialogical context of being human. "Development" may be reconsidered in the light of the context-sensitive existential dynamism home to the human condition as we know it today.[1]

However, Heidegger's ontological characterization cannot be considered in any way close to or replaceable with the sense of development evinced by post-war developmentalism. That is, I am not suggesting at all that the human being is first of all

---

[1] For an understanding of development as realization of the yet to be realized possibilities of the human condition, see Stefanovic (2000: 138–142).

something like the developmental individual of the post-war development discourse out there to be saved by the modern market society. The postdevelopment writers reject the term "development" on account of this very reason. In order to be free of the allusions and significations of an entrenched discursive space close to one's discursive concerns, postdevelopment writers advocate that one ought to reject the significant labels associated with that discursive space. Hence, one ought to overcome completely the term "development" and all its allusions and so one ought to fight it to see its defeat. They insist that one should not try to resuscitate such terms, pregnant with historical meaning, in any manner, for such attempts are bound to fail; they will forever draw us like a magnet to their entrenched significations. Resuscitation of terms cannot be innocent and free of the term's historical genesis, affiliations and resources.

The "sense" of development I am getting at is much more basic and fundamental than the development of developmentalism, although this "sense", in Heidegger's terms, is still "ontic". What I mean is: something like development, a desirous dynamism with regard to new possibilities—call it a qualitatively better and a more human possibility than the present and the actual one—animates the human condition. Heidegger remarks: "Ontologically, wishing presupposes care" (BT: 240). Similarly, "development" in the above sense presupposes the existential structure of projection, and to that extent it is ontic.

All our understandings of possibilities, whether grave and essential ones or mundane and trivial ones, have a certain temporal structure. The human being is that kind of being, for which, in its Being that Being is an issue; that Being is something about which it cares, something that matters to it. Even everyday actions are possible only out of this structure. Charles Taylor comments: "from a sense of what we have become, among a range of present possibilities, we project our future being. This is the structure of any situated action, of course, however trivial. From my sense of being at the drugstore, among the possible other destinations, I project to walk home" (1989: 47). According to Heidegger, this structure of the human being means that "in each case Dasein is already *ahead* of itself … in its Being. Dasein is always 'beyond itself' … not as a way of behaving towards other entities which it is *not*, but as Being towards the potentiality-for-Being which it is itself" (BT: 236). The human projection of its Being towards one possibility or other, Heidegger calls 'care', expressed in terms of its temporal structure as 'Being-ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-a-world'. I want to emphasize this conception of the existential structure of the human being in relation to my attempt in this chapter to evoke in the term "development" the existential dynamism of the human condition because what powers this conception is a sense of the future without losing sight of the past. The past gets its significance out of the future, and the future is significant because it releases the present, all actualities, out of itself.[2]

The never settling, never fulfilling futural orientation of the human condition, captured well in the term "development", is much abused by the contemporary

---

[2] Heidegger writes: "The character of 'having been' (or better, which 'is in the process of having been') releases from itself the Present. This phenomenon has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been…" (BT: 374). This is the meaning of temporality, the Being of Dasein, which is also the meaning of "care".

technological culture and, thus, is vitiated and indeed subverted. However, to this study, *'development' should mean only the undeniable human dynamism towards more humanly satisfying possibilities*. The excessive and self-destructive trajectory of human existential dynamism in the late modern era should not lead us to reject the ontology underlying it and thus accept a flawed ontology. The term "development" is suggestive regarding the existential-structural dynamism of the human condition. To say that this structure of the human being has to be seen only in its destructive contemporary manifestations is to take a defeatist position. There are alternative possibilities to harness in human ontological dynamism.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Heidegger's remarks on wishing and willing in the discussion on the ontological structure of care in ¶41 of *Being and Time* have several clues for my attempt to understand development as alertness towards human ontological dynamism, which means ascending to a more humanly satisfying condition of life. We are already attuned to our world as affected, embodied selves, and we, in existing, always project possibilities of our Being towards the phenomena we encounter. We make our own a possibility of our Being towards things of our world in concern or others of our world in solicitude by willing that possibility. Following are the elements of the structure of the ontological possibility of willing in terms of the temporality of care: (i) a definite "possibility" for willing is disclosed to us (Being-ahead-of-itself), (ii) this possibility is ontologically related to the world that we care about (Being-already-in-a-world) and (iii) we understandingly project our Being towards this willed possibility (making present or actualizing by willing our Being-ahead-of-ourselves-Being-already-in-a-world). It is in willing that the temporal structure of care is manifested.

Now, because what is willed is something of our world that matters to us in accordance with the usual cultural interpretations of possibilities, there is in the process of willing a levelling off and dimming down of the possibilities willed. That is, cultural interpretation of phenomena has "already restricted the possible options of choice to what lies within the range of the familiar, the attainable, the respectable—that which is fitting and proper" (BT: 239). Our everyday cares, conformism as well as unfreedoms of all sorts including destitution and consumerism, yoke us to the humdrum, easily repeatable possibilities. They are only nominally changed in accordance with the dynamism of the human condition but "no positive new possibilities are willed". Even in this dull getting on with life, Heidegger remarks, the dynamism of the human condition is not 'extinguished' but is only modified in order to get on with life with least resistance.

Heidegger points out that in this modality of humdrum existence, Being towards possibilities is most often not *willing* but *wishing*. Wishing does not take up a possibility as something that truly matters to one, as something considered and anticipated, and, thus, betrays "a lack of understanding for the factical possibilities" (BT: 239). Wishing means attuning oneself to whatever is at one's disposal but "never enough". Developmentalism should be considered a phenomenon of the "wish-world", the never-quenching thirst for the new which has no connection to factical human possibilities. Wishing is falling into hankering after possibilities and, thus, closes off rather than discloses the factical possibilities of

one's world. In this sense, the global north is a magnificent field of consummated wish-fulfilment; the global south as the deficient form of the north means pining after the impossible fulfilment of the same wish. Technological world is the magical world of miraculous wish-fulfilment, and it casts the spell of seduction over that portion of humanity, the global south, which is still in the wish-world with no robust hope of fulfilling it and yet firmly held within that world of promise.

Heidegger further elaborates that wishing can be letting ourselves be drawn by certain addictive possibilities or the urge that crowds out all other possibilities, both of which bind the structure of care to a specific, all-consuming modification. *Addiction* is a compulsive letting oneself be drawn by certain possibilities. Commodity fetishism, hankering after the new, and the quick disenchantment with them, characteristic of deeply entrenched consumerist cultures, may be called "addiction" in this sense, whereas *urge* is not letting oneself be drawn by a possibility but being pulled forcibly by "the urge to live" at any cost, where the pull is effected by the thing that urges us (say, food in the condition of abject hunger) rather than by our wilful letting be drawn to it. To the hungry, food is not a seductive object of attraction but an object that blindly pulls her for the very preservation of life. In the case of an urge, all other possibilities are crowded out and a single-minded attention is centred on the urge to live. The urge to live takes hold of one's self-understanding and one's self-attunement. The all-consuming botheration with mere subsistence and survival, the inability to engage with any possibility of self-enhancement and the powerless pull to meet one's bare and basic needs, which are characteristics of abject destitution, may be called "the urge to live" in this sense.[3]

The above reference to destitution should not be construed as a vulgar attack on the value of the non-materialistic aspects of life, prevalent in meaningful forms even today in many parts of the global south (which, though, are under programmatic attack from the ethos of calculative intelligibility), or as a conception of poverty arising from the very technological understanding of Being that I am trying to interrogate in this book in relation to the global south. For Heidegger,

---

[3] One of the most gripping characterizations of the urge to live that I came across recently was in the Malayalam novella of Benyamin, *Aadujeevitam*, translated into English as *Goat Days*. The story recounts the most harrowing experiences of Najeeb in the sweltering, lonely Saudi deserts. Najeeb, an emigrant Indian to the gulf and trapped in a desert existence of servitude and drudgery, plots his escape with fellow bondsmen Hakeem and the Somalian Ibrahim Khadiri, a perfect godsend. After several days of endless, directionless sojourn under the scorching desert sun without food and water, the trio is sapped of all energy. Mad thirst and hunger grip them. Hakeem, the youngest of them, begins to run after the mirage, wildly screaming "water, water!" He "fell exhausted. Then he began to cry very loudly. He pushed us away when we went to catch him and began to eat hot sand. Although Ibrahim and I tried to stop him, he shrugged us off with demonic strength and kept eating sand. Then, he started vomiting…. After vomiting for some time, Hakeem began to spit blood. He writhed in the sand like a beaten snake" (Benyamin 2012: 216). This is how Hakeem meets his end in the desert. Najeeb is more fortunate because he escapes to freedom, but before that, his experience of quenching his thirst in an oasis spotted by Ibrahim similarly reminds us of the urge to live. Ibrahim prevents him from rushing to the pool to quench himself despite being violently hit and sworn at by Najeeb. Ibrahim wets a piece of cloth and slowly begins to moisten Najeeb's lips. "Greedily, I opened my mouth. As a drop of water from it fell on my tongue, I sprang up as if burned with acid.… Water forced its way through my tongue into my throat. That moistness reached my stomach burning all the sore spots. It was only after my mouth was moistened fully that the burning sensation slowly ebbed and thirst began to grow in me" (Benyamin 2012: 225–226).

poverty has a positive meaning, though, I argue, not destitution. Heidegger's characterization of poverty not only as positive but also as necessary can be understood as what I have been alluding to in the last two chapters as the restraining of the liberal individual and subversion of the endless circularity of capital.

***

Heidegger distinguishes between a sound, characteristically human sense of poverty and a weaker sense of poverty in the 1929/30 lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. *Firstly*, the weak sense of poverty means 'meagre' as in "the poor or meagre flow of water in a stream…. In this context 'poor' implies having a lack or insufficiency" (FCM: 195). This sense of poverty does not point to merely a quantitative comparison between less and more. What is spoken of in the weaker sense of poverty is about "a lacking or absence of something which could be present and generally ought to be present" (FCM: 195). *Secondly*, the more characteristically human sense of poverty does not mean having more or less; it does not mean the absence of what ought to be present or "possessing nothing, or little, or less than another". Heidegger calls this sense of poverty "poverty in mood". It means:

> … *being deprived*…. Such deprivation in turn is possible in different ways depending on *how* whatever is poor is deprived and comports itself in its deprivation, *how* it responds to the deprivation, *how* it takes this deprivation. In short: with regard to *what* such a being is deprived of and above all to *the way* in which it is deprived, namely *the way* in which it is *in a mood*… (FCM: 195).[4]

This is the characteristic sense of human experience of poverty according to Heidegger, not the former sense of objective lack. Like being in a mood of melancholy, one is in a mood of poverty. In this sense, poverty is

> … the very way in which man comports and bears himself. *Poverty in this proper sense* of human *existence* is also a kind of deprivation and necessarily so. Yet from such deprivation we can draw our own peculiar power of procuring transparency and inner freedom for Dasein. Poverty in the sense of *being in a mood of poverty* … does not simply imply indifference with respect to what we possess. On the contrary, it represents that preeminent kind of having in which we seem not to have (FCM: 195).

Heidegger considers the mood of poverty an enhancing aspect of being human, whereas being deprived of what ought to be present in the human condition an aberration.

Destitution, thus, is the urge to live at all costs in the absence of what ought to be present in the human condition. It is the mere existential struggle to subsist to the detriment of being human to the extent that all other meaningful phenomena evaporate from the human horizon. The very existential dynamism of the human condition is lost sight of in abject destitution. But we could say that there are degrees of destitution, and all destitute human conditions are not experienced in the same way, for the mood of poverty varies. The "how" of the experience of the most acute form of being deprived of what ought to be present in the human condition can itself be varied, and so it is difficult to put this condition into a quantitative, formulaic frame.

---

[4] Heidegger's overall argument here aims at the thesis that animals are 'poor' in the world. For this issue, which is a contested thesis no doubt, see: Winkler (2007), Elden (2006), Krell (1992), McNeill (1999, 2006), Collins (2009), Calarco (2004, 2008), Buchanan (2008), and Mitchell (2011).

How this condition can be escaped is not at all a secondary question for global humanity. However, the post-war development discourse is a problematic way of approaching that question. The capability approach too is insufficiently critical of opulence, and it seems to urge us to achieve freedom through the "liberative" spaces opened up by the market society (see Cameron 2000; Shilliam 2012).

In a brief lecture delivered to a small audience in 1945 in Hausen called "Poverty" ("*Die Armut*"), which was given against the background of the communist ambivalence about the opposition between poverty and wealth (Düttmann 2008), Heidegger speaks to Westerners in general regarding the urgent need to cultivate the mood of poverty and attune themselves to the "world", the openness of Being, as its preservers and guardians. The inhumanity of destitution is not denied, but for his audience, Heidegger emphasizes the appropriateness of *being human in the mood of poverty*. Poverty in the positive, ownmost sense of being in the mood of poverty, and not destitution, means "to be so that one is deprived of nothing except what is not needed" (P: 6). In this sense, poverty is sufficiency. Opulence or ostentatious affluence that is the opposite of poverty in this sense means: "not being able to be without what is not needed and thus immediately and exclusively belonging to what is not needed" (P: 6). In this sense, opulence means living with what *is not* needed; sufficiency means living with what *is* needed; destitution means "being specifically *deprived of what is needed*".

Evidently, such a conception of poverty is dependent on the concept of "need", which for Heidegger is *what compels*—"that which in our life places the needs … at the service of this life to sustain it and compels us exclusively to satisfy these needs" (P: 6). Destitution is being deprived of these needs that compel us existentially. Existence as the dynamic standing out into the openness for manifold meanings or possibilities is never compelled in all contexts in the same way in relation to the very same goods; existence had never before been compelled in this manner. But technological understanding of Being brings us ever so closely to the equivalence of needs.[5] Human needs today, the ones that compel us like education, health

---

[5] We need to exercise caution in denying the equivalence of needs and affirming the non-equivalence of the sense of destitution. Jean-Luc Nancy is insightful in this regard. He writes: "The destiny of democracy is linked to the possibility of a mutation in the paradigm of equivalence. The challenge is thus to introduce a new nonequivalence that would have nothing to do, of course, with the nonequivalence of economic domination (the basis of which remains equivalence) or with the nonequivalence of feudalisms or aristocracies, or of regimes of divine election or salvation, or of spiritualities, heroisms, or aestheticisms. It would not simply be a matter of introducing another system of differential values; it would be a matter of finding, of achieving, a sense of evaluation, of evaluative affirmation, that gives each evaluating gesture—a decision of existence, of work, of bearing— the possibility of not being measured in advance by a given system but of being, on the contrary, each time the affirmation of a unique, incomparable, unsubstitutable 'value' or 'sense'. Only this can displace what is called economic domination, which is but the effect of the fundamental decision for equivalence" (2010: 24). Without attention to the Other's needs, there can never be democracy, which is nothing but the political attestation of our being in common. The Other's difference and nonequivalence is meaningfully negotiated in the politics/power of the people (*demo*-cracy), where the incommensurable "sense" of the other is affirmed and fostered. This is the meaning of Heidegger's positive mode of solicitude that does not deny the other person her ontological care, of Nancy's "community without communion", and Levinas's "justice among the incomparable ones".

care, leisure and social–political–cultural–spiritual needs are all different from those of our ancestors. This ambiguity, dynamism and movement are not to be denied to the human condition. But what is not needed or that which does not compel us does not arise out of compulsion but out of freedom or in Heidegger's idiom, "our openness for Being". Freedom is escape from need. According to Heidegger, the free, open region of Being is a region of phenomenological–ontological nonviolence, and in the language of *Being and Time,* phenomenology is itself openness for Being: "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself" (BT: 58). The free region of Being is to be safeguarded from the violence of technological understanding, of reducing all phenomena to resources for use. This safeguarding—sparing and preserving in the words of the 1951 essay "Building Dwelling Thinking"—is not simply leaving things without using them but is positively caring for them in our involvements. This means release from "the compulsion of need", the averting and circumventing of all needs before they become compulsion, before they coerce us as the urge to live.

I understand Heidegger's characterization of freedom in terms of the escape from need as *a positive conception of development*—evading destitution, careful turning of nature into artefacts, defining the needed in terms of the openness of Being and living with the needed. "Freedom means this averting and circumventing of the need" (P: 7), and not salvation through market society. Heidegger criticizes the freedom of the technologized individual as the expression of "a necessity giving rise to a willing that wills the will to power as *the* will to actuality and as life itself" (P: 7). Freedom from neediness, freedom from compulsions of the unneeded, freedom to live with the needed alone, freedom to determine the needed in terms of manifold understandings of Being and freedom to preserve beings in their Being or letting beings be: these are basic to the sense of development.

Being "poor" means "being deprived of nothing except of what is not needed", being deprived of our will to power over the "liberating free and open" or openness of Being. "Be-ing poor means to be exclusively deprived of what is not needed; it means belonging of old to the unrestrained that liberates; it means residing in a relationship to that which liberates" (P: 7). Hence, poverty in the Heideggerian sense, the poverty of not being led by a singular manifestation of Being as the technological understanding of Being is in fact not different from development. Free poverty is richness: "being deprived of nothing other than what is not needed is in itself already be-ing rich" (P: 8). Thus, according to Heidegger's reinterpretation of the Western intellectual tradition, "[t]he overtone of the still hidden-sheltered ownmost of the Western people and their destiny is poverty" and not liberation through the market society. Such poverty is "the mourning joyfulness of never be-ing sufficiently poor. In this reticent restiveness lies poverty's releasement, which is used to overcoming everything need-akin" (P: 8). Poverty and development mean existing in the openness of Being.

The compulsion of the endless multiplication of needs and human existence centred on the abundance of needs is an unfreedom for Heidegger. The excess of needs prevents an authentic experience of the ownmost essence of need, and thus takes away from us "the hint for overcoming the need" (P: 8). Not in the mood of

understanding the existential–ontological necessity of restraining the endless pro-
liferation of needs, not in the mood of understanding the ontology of poverty as
being without the unneeded, humans are plunging deeply into the unfree mood of
understanding reality itself as producible material readily available for human grati-
fication. Developmentalism is the global concretion of the same mood, which at the
same time leaves major sections of global humanity in the abject urge to survive.
This plight of humanity, this distress of justice, cannot be mitigated without the mood
of poverty and the mood of the sense of development. Heidegger points out that the
danger of not having an understanding of the essence of poverty is manifested not
primarily in famine or poverty deaths but in the consumption patterns of the survi-
vors of the time of need. Heidegger depicts their condition in this way: "'Life' rotates
around its own peculiar void, which surrounds life in the form of the hardly noticed
and admitted boredom. Man goes to ruin in this void. He goes astray on the way
whereupon he learns the ownmost of poverty" (P: 8). The boredom of the technolo-
gized animal takes away from them the essence of poverty and development.

   In Heidegger's interpretation of poverty as the needed late modern attunement to
living without the unneeded, development is nothing but the mood of understanding
the needed and securing them appropriately. Heidegger's interpretation of poverty
is not arbitrary but is true to his philosophy, which has a strong and critical relation
with tradition. In his interpretation of the Western tradition, the human essentially is
the openness of Being, the sphere for the circulation of meaning and the sheltering-
gathering of Being's play. Hence, the devastation of the earth, the reduction of the
human into human resource, the turning of the human essence into the technologized
animal and the closure of Being's openness in terms of calculative intelligibility are
all ways of denying the human its essential humanity. Therefore, the interpretation
of "poverty" as a possible mode of dwelling in the world indeed opens the closed
openness of Being's play. This "sense" of development does not militate against the
human dynamism that I have been trying to capture in the word "development", for
"poverty" is a positive and definitively transformative mode of existing. "Poverty" is
human ascent. This interpretation, thus, definitively undercuts opulence, consumer-
ism, technological conquest of the earth and technologization of the human animal.

                                          ***

   At the end of the analysis of addiction and urge to live in ¶41 of *Being and Time*,
Heidegger notes that the aberrations of the dynamic human care-structure like addic-
tion and urge to live cannot be rooted out completely, because they are all grounded in
that ontological structure. What then can be done about them? According to Heidegger,
"because these are both grounded ontologically in care, and only because of this, they
are both to be modified in an ontical and existentiell manner by care—by care as some-
thing authentic" (BT: 240). Authentic care is choosing and resolutely owning up as
"mine" factical possibilities that show up within my world of action as delimited by
my finitude, my death, the finite closure of all my possibilities. "Dasein as human life
is primarily being possible, the Being of the possibility of its certain yet indeterminate
past" (CT: 12E). However, since human existence is lost and fascinated with the world,
authentic being possible is rare, and when it occurs what is achieved is rather modest:

> [T]his authentic disclosedness modifies with equal primordiality both the way in which the 'world' is discovered (and this is founded upon that disclosedness) and the way in which the Dasein-with of Others is disclosed. The 'world' which is ready-to-hand does not become another one 'in its content', nor does the circle of Others get exchanged for a new one; but both one's Being towards the ready-to-hand understandingly and concernfully, and one's solicitous Being with Others, are now given a definite character in terms of their ownmost potentiality-for-Being-their-Selves (BT: 344).

Authentic care gives us existential clarity about our situation and our possibilities. Authentic individuation is a modification of our already engaged and fully immersed social existence, not the reverse. Hence, the authentic modifications of addiction and the urge to live are ways of becoming clear about our situation and responding accordingly. And so, the mood of poverty and the mood of development are important; they are conditions of existence that open up meaningful possibilities of existing.

The "sense" that we are seeking in the term "development" is a sense that avoids both the extremes of addiction to commodities and the mere destitute urge to survive. Both these are conditions that consume "care" and restructure it completely for the sake of the objects of addictive and destitute conditions. Absorbed into the orbits of addiction and urge, care thus becomes unfree for its authentic possibilities. If we understand ethics as relation with the Other without fusion and assimilation, and letting the Other free for her care for self, as we did in the last chapter, we can *understand development positively as freedom from both the destitute urge to survive and the fetishist addiction to commodities*. Development as freedom, therefore, calls for freedom from the late modern human condition of liberal individualism and market centrism, and at the same time, freedom from destitute conditions. Freedom from consumerist addiction and freedom from destitute urge to exist are both "ascent" to authentic human possibilities. I shall elaborate on this understanding of development as alertness towards human ontological dynamism in the next section.

Denis Goulet understood "development" in the existential sense as "ascent" towards a more human possibility, and not at all in the sense of a more technological, calculative possibility. Yearning for a better life is common to both human groups and individuals. The human being is constantly a not-yet as long as it is. Possibilities of existence that are not yet are conceived in one way or another as more desirous. This is all that I am trying to evoke here in the phrase "the ascendant sense of development". As Charles Taylor has argued elaborately in *Sources of the Self*, the normative sense of better and worse forms of existence is not simply about personal inclinations, tastes and desires but is a moral sense about forms of existence, which are independent of the individual at least in a broadly cultural sense. That is, these judgments have a horizon bigger than merely the individual (Taylor 1989: 4)—their horizon is the "world". "Ascent" here does not mean a more technologically adept, more commodity-rich existence. Ascent means transcendence. Ascent is transcending the given for a more desirous condition of existence in terms of the essence of the human being as openness for Being. Hence, the understanding of the "sense" of development as human ascent is an affirmation of the dynamism and transcendence characteristic of the human condition without any commitment to endless consumption and technologizations.

The critics of post-war development discourse refer to President Truman's inaugural address of 1949, the four-point speech, as the founding text of the development era. We have referred to this foundational event concerning the discourse of development in our second chapter's concern with historicizing the development narrative. However, it would be ridiculous to imagine that Harry Truman was inventing a new story with no precedent at all. Instead, he was locating himself well within a history of several such narratives of "promise"—a promise of human ascent, a pledge to honour human dynamism and existential restiveness, and an assurance to "make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize *their aspirations for a better life*" (2010: 307; my emphasis), even if his account was nothing more than a subtext of the cold war and the new ground rules of plainly technological world-domination. Harry Truman was harnessing the human yearning for a better life in the tried and tested format of "promise". "Promise" is a dominant narrative of salvation, whether in the Bible or in the texts of Karl Marx,[6] which evokes the movement of ascent in the human condition, whether from orthodoxy to social mobility, misery to luxury, hunger to satiation, disease to wellness, poverty to prosperity, primitiveness to technology, sorrow to salvation, darkness to light and death to immortality. It is clear that President Truman is evidently calling for a technological world, created out of American technical know-how and calculative world view. His repertoire of terms with an ascendant sense of promise includes peace, plenty, freedom, higher standard of living, fair-dealing, constructive programme for better exploitation of natural and human resources, industrial and economic growth, and decent, satisfying life. Who can deny that at least some of these figure strongly in Truman's target audience's sense of the good life however variously conceived? Discourses of power, of making and unmaking, of creating as well as destroying, are often laced with the sense of human ascent that we have been alluding to here, not because this sense is rare, fantastical or unique, but because it is central to the human condition.

All political systems that in some way advocate the uninterrupted maintenance of the status quo or totalitarian control of state power betray the ascendant sense of "development". They arrest the dynamism characteristic to the human condition.[7]

---

[6] For an interesting study of how the Judeo-Christian scriptures and the writings of Karl Marx can be analysed in a single sweep as central texts of the western civilization that problematize the human body in physical pain, see Scarry (1985), Chap. 4: "The Structure of Belief and Its Modulation into Material Making: Body and Voice in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures and the Writings of Marx". For Scarry, the body in pain is the ontological basis for all our self-objectifications through human imagination, which is materialized in the artifices and artefacts, including the most central of the cultural artifices of the west, the Judeo-Christian God.

[7] The ontological basis of a non-conservative and non-totalitarian democratic polity—a democracy of our Being in common, a pluralistic democratic community without communion, where the justice of the incomparable ones is enacted—is, thus, totally different from the classical ontology of the liberal individual. The liberal individual is the Cartesian subject of representation and objectification, invested with inviolable rights, the Kantian autonomous moral agent. The Heideggerian self is on the other hand the non-representing way of Being an 'I', an 'I' who is not really an 'I' but 'the-they' in an average way. An authentically owned up way of Being an 'I' is a modification of 'the-they' self.

Further, the "sense" of human ascent in development is to be weaned away from
the sense of "evolutionism" that is historically attached to the concept of develop-
ment. It is mainly for this reason that postdevelopment critics want to do away
with the term "development". I shall now attempt to show why the "sense" of
development I have invoked has nothing to do with evolutionism.

6.2   Development as Good Life Variously Conceived

The picture of development that has emerged out of our analysis so far is one
of contentless existential dynamism and human ascent. In this section, I want to
make the description of development as human ascent and existential dynamism
notionally thicker. What more can we say about development than saying that it is
existential dynamism and human ascent?

Development as human ascent involves making real various conceptions of
the "good life". This is exactly what most liberal theories of development claim
to do. In the Rawlsian format development is conceived as equitable distribution
of primary goods: liberties and opportunities, income and wealth and the social
bases of self-respect, these being goods that all rational beings would want in
order to make real their various conceptions of the good life. In the Sennian format
development is equitable distribution of capabilities: substantial freedoms that all
rational agents would seem to want in order to put goods to appropriate uses and
thus make real their own conceptions of the good life. As Sen puts it, that which is
made real by development are the various beings and doings that an individual has
freedom and reason to value. However, certain assumptions and compulsions of
contemporary common sense plague such talk about development and make them
not as open as they seem.

Development is certainly about the "good life". It is impossible to speak about
the good life without reference to Aristotle, whose musings on the theme are
said to have deep resonance with the capabilities approach (see Nussbaum 1987,
1993). Martha Nussbaum's 1986 study of Greek ethics, *The Fragility of Goodness*,
argued that unlike the Platonist, who "appeals to an already deep tendency in us
towards shame at the messy, unclear stuff of which our humanity is made" (2001:
260), the Aristotelian deals only with appearances and phenomenality in practi-
cal, messy matters of human life. Aristotle teaches that "an unconditional vantage
point outside the appearances, is both futile and destructive: futile, because such
a vantage point is unavailable, as such, to human enquiry; destructive, because
the glory of the promised goal makes the humanly possible work look boring
and cheap" (2001: 258). That is to say, Nussbaum contends that in ethical mat-
ters, Aristotle is downright concrete. His ethical project is humbler than that of
Plato: he seeks not the good as such but a fragile human good, a good relative
to human life. Aristotle writes in *Magna Moralia*: "It is about good, then, as it
seems, that we must speak, and about good not without qualification, but relatively
to ourselves. For we have not to do with the good of the Gods" (1984a: 3). He

paints an interestingly concrete view of our moral judgment. Aristotle based his moral theory on his observations of how people around him concretely behaved and responded morally.

Nussbaum stresses Aristotle's concern with morality as a question of decision about concrete practices rather than about theoretical knowledge. Aristotle observes in *Nicomachean Ethics*:

> The man, however who deviates little from goodness is not blamed, whether he do so in the direction of the more or of the less, but only the man who deviates more widely; for *he* does not fail to be noticed. But up to what point and to what extent a man must deviate before he becomes blameworthy it is not easy to determine by reasoning, any more than anything else that is perceived by the senses; such things depend on particular facts, and the decision rests with perception (1984b: 30).

In Nussbaum's interpretation of this passage, Aristotle means to say that laws cannot capture the fine nuances and details of the action. Close observation of the situation or perception alone can really attach or detach moral praise or blame to or from a human action. Nussbaum notices that this view punctures the search after the universal moral thumb rule, whether in Platonism, Kantianism or utilitarianism. However, working on these contingencies of the moral situation, Aristotle comes up with a morality of the mean, under the assumption that in our actions we ought to fulfil the human function of being rational in our choices in accordance with the thumb rule of attaining a happy or better, humanly flourishing life (*eudaimonia*), for which the fine mean between the extremes of various excellences (*arêtes*) or virtues are the guide. The excellences come to be not because of the gods or our innate moral nature, but out of practice and habit, though moral goodness is godlike because it is the best. But, of course, Aristotle valued noble birth, good company and the like as aids for ethical learning, training and culture. Since morality is the measuring rod for judging people, moral training should be open to everyone who wants to learn them, although in accordance with the cultural prejudices of the times, Aristotle does think that there are human beings who deserve to be enslaved because they are incapable of reason, ethics and the good life as such.

I shall not focus on the *arêtes* or on the rational nature ('*zoon logon echon*') that Aristotle privileges. I shall rather focus on the eudaimonic conception of life as a guide for our conception of "development as various conceptions of the good life". Aristotle, as Greeks were wont to do, grew up on the tragedies that portrayed the drastic influence of the rationally irremediable forces like luck and fortune on fragile human existence, even as these elemental forces are bound to frustrate rational human life. Nussbaum's Aristotle wants us to face squarely the inescapable fragility inherent to our yearning for the good life, while at the same time, knowing fully well that the fragile parts of the project of good life can, to a large extent, be remedied. According to Nussbaum, Aristotle invites us to understand that "it is possible to be dislodged from living well" by the chain of fortunes surrounding a life, and also to appreciate that "given a conception of good living that values stable excellences of character and activity … such drastic upsets will be rare…. Making excellences and their activities … the primary bearers of value … helps us to avoid seeing ourselves as, and being, mere victims of luck" (2001: 329).

Good life, then, is *passively* (without our choice) affected by a great deal of things and is *actively* made (with our choices) by our activities and decisions in accordance with the rational middle way of practising the excellences. For Aristotle, it is totally certain that a flourishing, good life is not simply a life of explicitly moral actions alone. It is not also a condition of "feeling good" as a state of mind alone. Several non-moral elements contribute to the good life, and to the extent that they contribute to the good life, they are imbued with moral significance. Several strictly moral and humanly well done activities rather than mere states of mind contribute to the making of good life. All these need to come into the purview of a flourishingly fine life. As for the mere state of mind, Aristotle remarks that "the state may exist without producing any good result, as in a man who is asleep or in some other way quite inactive, but the activity cannot" (1984b: 11). Regarding the good activities, Aristotle points out that eudaimonia involves the best, noblest and the most pleasant activities, but not only these, for eudaimonia "needs the external goods as well; for it is impossible, or not easy, to do noble acts without the proper equipment" (1984b: 11). He enumerates friends and riches, political power and good birth, good looks and good children as external goods that constitute a good life. This sort of prosperity and good fortune, Aristotle adds, truly contributes to a good life in addition to the internal goods, the excellences.

At the same time, Aristotle does not want to leave the prospects of a good life merely to chance and caprice, for he remarks: "To entrust to chance what is greatest and most noble would be a very defective arrangement" (1984b: 12). The purpose of political and social systems is remedying the elemental force of fortune upon good life. Nussbaum observes perceptively that Aristotle emphasizes this remedial view of politics and ethics not because he found the force of fortune upon fragile human existence empirically incorrect but because "human life is worth the living only if a good life can be secured by effort, and if the relevant sort of effort lies within the capabilities of most people" (2001: 320). She stresses that "effort" would not be enough to make a life good but it plays at least the most important role in the making of a good life and hence the Aristotelian emphasis on the excellences. But Aristotle is not a moralist of the Christian or Kantian variety. He does not deride the pleasures of life. The good life is a pleasant life and the excellences themselves are pleasant to pursue, or else the good life would in fact be a misfortune as would be with a too strenuous, burdensome and humanly impossible morality. Anyone who claims that an unfortunate but morally virtuous person is a happy person, Aristotle says, is speaking nonsense. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, eudaimonia is said to be a pleasant life:

> Thus the chief good would be some pleasure, though most pleasures might perhaps be bad without qualification. And for this reason all men think that the happy life is pleasant and weave pleasure into happiness—and reasonably too; for no activity is complete when it is impeded (by ill-luck), and happiness is a complete thing; this is why the happy man needs the goods of the body and external goods, i.e. those of fortune, viz. in order that he may not be impeded in these ways (1984b: 117).

While emphasizing the pleasantness of eudaimonia, we also need to remember that moral intellectualism is not altogether absent in Aristotle, for he privileges contemplation as the most pleasant and, therefore, the most excellent activity.

What is positively striking for us about the Aristotelian account of the good life are as follows: (i) an uncompromising alertness to the fragility of the human condition, (ii) a conception of the ideal life as a humanly desirable and possible form of life, and (iii) the assertion of human agency even in the face of human fragility. Let me now ponder a little longer on these insights of Aristotle's conception of the good life.

<center>***</center>

Firstly, Aristotle does not paint a picture of the human condition that is insulated from its fragility by recourse to an overtly rationalistic morality. He does not, for example, think that something like a sense of equanimity achieved through a philosophical or spiritual liberation would completely negate the existential pangs of the fragile human condition. Instead, angst is a part of fragile human existence, and one responds to it humanly in a variety of ways. In this sense, the promise of the post-war development discourse, that I have referred to in the third chapter, which aspires to take away the existential anxiety and death that are constitutive of being human, both deceives the world's most vulnerable people and sets up the dehumanizing exemplar human being, the technologized animal. The terrible flukes of fortune that made the life of Oedipus wretched in Sophocles's tragedy demand the audience's identification with the protagonist's tragic fate, not applause and admiration for Oedipus's moral uprightness or courage. Similarly, the cruel conspiracies of destiny that made the life of Karna wretched through no fault of his in *Mahabharata* do not invite our moral reproach for his being on the wrong side of the war, but his tragic lot invites our helpless sense of pity for Karna's landing up on the wrong side of the war and of fortune despite being the eldest of the Pandavas, who are ultimately on the right side of *dharma* (morality) and of *niyati* (fate). Aristotle's *eudaimon* individual does not lose sight of the fragility of good life.

President Truman's developmental promise, on the other hand, aims to create technological societies all over and assumes that "our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically" (2010: 307). Our alertness to fragility of the human condition calls for the awareness that this condition cannot fully be overcome and that attempting to fully overcome it is doomed to failure, leading to the setting up of the technologized animal. Concrete manifestations of attempting to overcome fragilities of the human condition are seen in the capitalistic takeover of government and politics, good life and development, nations and communities. Denial of human fragility is just as problematic as accepting it tamely. Technological salvation and organized uniformity are central to the enticing distress emanating from calculative intelligibility.

Secondly, for Aristotle, good life is a world-reliant, humanly desirable and possible form of life. It is neither an idealistic, moralistic abstraction nor a blessedness amidst diverse commodities. All overtly spiritualistic conceptions of life, insulated from the need to have and possess, are denials of the humanly desirable life. Western modernity was a reaction against the aberrant slant of these overtly ascetic conceptions of life, which it successfully resisted. Levinas wrote in 1963 in the preface to *Difficult Freedom*: "The Other's hunger—be it of the flesh, or of bread—is sacred; only the hunger of the third party limits its rights; there is no bad

materialism other than our own" (1990: xiv). For Levinas, needs of the other person have total ethical priority over the self's, though this ethical excess of responsibility can never fully be executed. He maintains that the ethical excess of human relations should be appropriately mediated through a conception of justice and right that honours rather than betrays the excess that constitutes selfhood. According to the argumentative line of this study, such an ethics demands living with what is needed for a humanly satisfying form of good life and subverting opulence as the most ideal of these various forms of good life. At the same time, when something like the global market becomes an inescapable network that takes everyone in, monetizes everything and privileges life amidst commodity-abundance as the most ideal form of good life, it is evident that the question of justice is thoroughly violated.

Moralistic discourses of development sometimes oppose "good life" against "life with goods", as though having goods is something avoidable and morally unjustifiable. Denis Goulet argues that "having" in the ontological sense means that we cannot sustain our being without having, without fulfilling our needs and imperfections by means of something exterior. A purely perfect being has no need, and a purely imperfect being cannot fulfil needs despite having them. Human beings are needy and can fulfil needs through elaborate strategies. To have, in the existential sense, is the means to be. To have nothing would mean that existence is to be extinguished in nothingness. Human beings "draw other beings into their orbit to sustain their own precarious act of existence" (Goulet 1973: 129). Our tendency to amass and hoard, revel in goods and identify ourselves with them arises out of the ontological exigency to have in order to be. Goulet, like Heidegger, comes to the conclusion that both absolute impoverishment or neediness and conspicuous excess of goods or existing for the sake of the unneeded are dehumanizing. Certainly, we cannot lead a humanly desirable life merely with the bare needs of survival fulfilled. The need to fulfil our potentialities to be more than what we presently are constantly calls for something more. Herein lies the ambiguity of having.

The "not yet" constitutive of the human condition can mean both newer and better ways *to be* and newer and better ways *to have*. Having cannot be the end in itself; it is for the sake of being. The desire to have goods in order to be something more, to exist in a more meaningful manner, is a sacred freedom of democratic societies. Contemporary political spaces and international market are the fields of play for the fulfilment of the need to have in order to be more. However, this field of play is operationalized through the strategy of overproduction, overconsumption, multiplication of wants and the permanent growth and spread of the market. The assumption here is that everyone everywhere will have the abundance of goods which now a few in the affluent pockets of the world have, so that the abundance of goods of those who presently have them can remain a permanent feature of their existence. This is an impossible strategy, given the relative nature of our understanding of what fulfils our needs and the structural limits of the resource base of the planet. It is also evident that conspicuous consumption and developmentalism that promotes it are deeply problematic in view of global justice. Furthermore, conspicuous consumption tends to make consumers identify themselves with the objects of consumption, thus "commodifying" their very self-understanding.

Calculative intelligibility entrenches itself through the multiplication of wants which have nothing to do with needs and through the transformation of the human being into the technologized animal. The present trend of developmentalism which secures the interest of the world's already advantaged without a reasonable hope of justice for all brings into effect the opposite of Goulet's principle of having in order to be more. That is, to be more in order to have, and that alone.

The ineluctability of the international market system, mired in unequal terms of trade and distribution and in ecologically and humanly unjustifiable forms, gives rise to an impending sense of doom. Amartya Sen condones this state of affairs in the name of expansion of freedoms and capabilities of the developmental individual, after stating that the dominance of the west in the contemporary world is culturally stronger than in the age of colonization.

> The threat to native cultures in the globalizing world of today is, to a considerable extent, inescapable. The one solution that is not available is that of stopping globalization of trade and economies, since the forces of economic exchange and division of labor are hard to resist in a competitive world fueled by massive technological evolution that gives modern technology an economically competitive edge (Sen 2000: 240).

Sen goes on to argue that in the long run, Adam Smith's "invisible hand" of economic rationality is going to work for everyone's benefit. He emphasizes that trends are already showing and there is much room for optimism. Sen speaks about winners and losers, and about rehabilitating and pacifying the losers, which in fact undercuts his own pluralistic conception of the capability or freedom to actualize functionings. The freedom not to enter the space of the global market does not seem to be one of Sen's ways of imagining diversity. As far as what economic globalization does to subjectivities of the global south is concerned, Sen cannot imagine any other subject than *homo economicus*.

This sense of evolutionism in economic thought is lamentable. Nussbaum, a compelling analysis of Hellenistic ethics of human fragilities notwithstanding, does not offer anything like a critique of the global market, even though in *Not for Profit* (2010), she is very bothered about the fate of education in the globalizing world, which, instead of catering to building her cosmopolitan citizen, is interested only in producing human resources for the global market. Nussbaum fails to see that the two cannot go together. A calculative, commodity-driven cosmopolitanism cannot at the same time create caring humans for whom reality matters. For them, on the other hand, all beings are producible material for manipulation and consumption, and Being itself means producible material. In fact, the non-dominative option for cosmopolitanism is truly vernacular in texture. It means alertness to our being in common as humans from the moral ethos of our diverse worlds. Vernacular cosmopolitan traditions get levelled for the sake of representing-producing humanity that is cosmopolitan in its commodity-tastes and in its calculative logic of capital. Globally mobile capital, globally mobile individual/learner, united in their calculative intelligibility, are the central elements of the contemporary brand of visible cosmopolitanism, namely globalization.

Thirdly, Aristotle recognizes human agency in the face of human fragility. In this study, human agency means alertness to existential dynamism and human

ascent. For Aristotle, the good life that humans can envisage for themselves is inseparable from the fragile nature of the human condition. Hence, the achievements they aim at and can hope for have a constitutive limit set over them. They do not project their possibilities from a background of abundance and infinitude but they do so with a deep sense of meaningful constraints, reasonable scarcity and a profound familiarity with human finitude. Their being in common makes reasonable ethical claims on their being individuals. These constraints—ontological, economic, ethical and cultural—are written into the very fabric of our existence. And hence, human agency is always already constrained, and human freedom is finite and fragile to that extent. The Enlightenment vision of the unlimited human being, the Nietzschean overman, the completed and fulfilled technologized animal circumvents and forgets the ontological texture of human agency. This vision has created a cultural project of the representing-producing humanity. The problem with this culture is both human and ecological. The human being is dehumanized and reduced into mere human material and technologized animal. The non-human beings are devalued and reduced into the status of being solely resources for human manipulation. Both these results of the Enlightenment vision, which today seeks world-domination, call for urgent correction, even if global humanity is increasingly getting buried within the cultural layers of incredulity and impossibility of alternative visions.

At the same time, existing in abject neediness or destitution is also dehumanizing, and this condition needs to be carefully separated from dignified human existence with the needed and from the glitz and glitter of uncontrolled consumption. Freedom understood as the cumulative circulation of capital for the sake of reckless consumption is also an unfree and compulsive condition like neediness. In a world that is fast becoming a single technological society, destitution and opulence seem to coexist due to the absence of discrimination between needful and needless consumption. That needless consumption can in any way be restrained appears to be a liberal anathema today although destitution is grounded in the rule of unrestrained consumption of some. Standardizing of tastes and behaviours of individuals across the globe for the sake of the uncontrolled reign of capital, resourcification of beings and technologization of human being are grounded in the commodity-centric understanding of freedom.

Therefore, development as human ascent does not mean rising up to possess more advanced but needless goods. Human ascent is not some sort of glorified, special relation between human beings and their commodities, a more complex capability to be the technologized animal. Human ascent can in no way mean increasing per capita possession of something like car ownership. Human ascent does not mean equivalence of consumption patterns and tastes all across the globe. Human ascent is not about being the cosmopolitan globe-trotter, speaking the glib global language, feeling the same standardized global emotions and being the same global entity that the other person is. *Human ascent is fundamentally about moving from less to more meaningful existence, and hence, it can be as much moving from existing with the unneeded to existing with the needed as moving from neediness to fulfilment of needs*. Human ascent means moving from a form of life

that obstructs the emergence of beings in their Being to a form of life that engagingly, caringly lets beings emerge and fulfil their manifold meanings. This is as much true for the needy self as it is for the Other and for all beings.

However, it is not right to say that the necessity of such a manner of encountering the demands that the new world is placing on human beings everywhere arises from the exigencies of the situation. The situation and human beings within the situation are entangled in calculative intelligibility, either elated by the magical possibilities it brings within their grasp or dejected by the elusion of the same possibilities from their grasp. Fallen into and fascinated by the world of calculative intelligibility, human beings are unable to critique it and put it away; rather, they are the executors of the demands that calculative intelligibility places on them. The mood of distress in the face of the demands of the new world, rather, springs from thinking, from reflective phenomenological gaze, from meditative hermeneutics of history and the zeitgeist.

Heidegger's reflective phenomenological gaze sees the elemental violence of technologized existence. His response arises from such a gaze. What does he see? As the field of play of the circulation of the meaning of Being, human beings in their essence constantly tend to be at home and familiar with beings. As the kind of beings they are, they tend to be at home with beings as the precinct of their meaning. "Insofar as human beings are in the midst of beings in such a way that they comport themselves toward beings as such," Heidegger observes, "they must, in accordance with their essence, seek to become homely within a particular site" (HHI: 89–90). However, human essence as the precinct of meaning constantly remains unfulfilled and at risk because appearing beings may also conceal their meaning and may thus not permit humans to be at home with them. Heidegger sees the human being as not resisting but as indulging the risk/concealment (or untruth). Such is the nature of human response to the revealing–concealing play of Being. As the homely precinct of meaning, humans can at the same time be unhomely to the meaningful appearance of beings.

> Yet because beings themselves play out their own appearances, human beings, in undertaking the risk of becoming homely, must place everything at stake in such play and therefore encounter *this*: the fact that the homely refuses itself to them. Constantly on a path toward the homely site, and at the same time placed at stake in the play that repudiates the homely, human beings in their innermost essence are those who are unhomely (HHI: 90).

The human being in short is a strange fusion of hospitable homeliness and hostile unhomeliness for meaning at the same time. The human being is a leaning towards beings, tending to be at home with them, taking issue with its own Being in this tendency towards beings as such and, at the same time, it is denied the completely settled homeliness with beings. The human being is a tending to be homely that turns unhomely all the time!

The globalization of the technological society is the ultimate site of the unhomeliness of the precinct of meaning that the human being is. As the tending to be homely that turns unhomely, Heidegger says that "human beings are the most actively violent beings in the sense of that animal full of cunning that Nietzsche calls the 'blond beast' and 'the predator'" (HHI: 90). This unleashing

of human violence over beings as such through the technological overcoming of beings "is an extreme derivative and essential consequence of a concealed uncanniness that is grounded in homeliness, an unhomeliness that in turn has its concealed ground in the counterturning relation of Being to human beings" (HHI: 90). Existing with the needed and relinquishing the unneeded made available through the world-domination of the violent essence of the technological understanding of Being is the way open for global humanity to recapture their own sites of homeliness with beings.

Development as human ascent stands for a positive programme of action that remains still unclear in its practical, ethical and political details. However, it should at least provoke thought on reimagining consumption patterns, rearrangement of the society's resources for the meeting of everyone's needs to a politically appropriate extent, cultural and political disapproval of conspicuous consumption and standardization of human taste, and letting the new order of global restraint and its more courageous local forms to survive, for the "war on the different" has been the best-known trail in history of world-dominating technological understanding of Being.

According to the line of argument of this study, Amartya Sen's celebratory statement that development is "a momentous engagement with freedom's possibilities" (Sen 2000: 298) should mean *the freedom to pursue one's conception of the good life in the way one conceives it in accordance with the free global restraint of freedom's self-defeatist possibilities. Further, it should mean the freedom to achieve both these without oppression, fascism, further inhumanity and violence towards all-that-is*. Puncturing the current global common sense and making room for new engagements with freedom's possibilities can happen only with political contestation and mobilization, appropriate education, democratic deliberation, discourses of the critical humanities and social sciences, alternative social and development practices, civil society and media activism, gradual but concerted political will formation, pedagogy of both the oppressed and the oppressor, wide public communication of ideas and conviction building among the general public.

Development as human ascent towards living with the needed does not mean an uninteresting existence at the mercy of elemental nature. It, rather, means letting be the natural human animal, letting be the precinct of manifold meanings provided by the human being and letting be the playful human animal that sheds her technologized grimness and boredom. Open to and free for the affectedness of being in common and caringly exposed to the meaning of non-human beings, the human being truly comes into its own as the engaged, care-structured freedom for mortality, fragility, limits and needs.

Human is neither a god nor "the crown of creation"; neither consciousness detached from beings nor the autonomous agent. Human is thoughtful, fragile, fascinated, temporally structured, linguistic openness for Being/meaning as such. Human can technologically subdue all beings and reduce them to resources for manipulation as the exceptional meaning-receiving being, for the contemporary meaning of beings received is itself technological. Human can, at the same time and as the same meaning-receiving being, also articulate, shelter and preserve

the meaning of all beings. In the midst of technological nihilism, human agency should mean responding to the enticing distress of technological reductionism as the essential preserver of the meaning of beings by resisting the violent reduction of beings to mere resources for production.

<div align="center">∗∗∗</div>

Coming back to our preoccupation with Aristotle's understanding of the good life in this section, I want to insist that although he privileged as best life in accordance with reason, he did not think that a universal mode of practical reasoning could help pin down the details of life in accordance with reason.

According to Aristotle's ethical teleology in *Nicomachean Ethics*, the good is "that at which all things aim" (1984b: 154), and the final good that impels all activity is God's life of contemplation, "for all things have by nature something divine in them" (1984b: 117). To hold that that at which all things aim is not the good would be nonsensical for Aristotle, for "that which *everyone* thinks really is so" (1984b: 154; my emphasis). Now, "everyone" should mean from the phenomenological stance of Heidegger "those who share the same understanding of Being which makes every being in a historical context intelligible". That ethical decisions are context-sensitive and varying is a constant theme in Aristotle's practical writings. He writes that "no one nature or state either is or is thought the best for all, neither do all pursue the same pleasure" (1984b: 117), and that the best form of life, the life of contemplation, "would be too high for man; for it is not in so far as he is man that he will live so, but in so far as something divine is present in him" (1984b: 163). While we achieve our best possibilities by living according to reason, divine contemplation is a regulative ideal that impels us. We can only achieve a life which is most akin to divine contemplation, not a perfect life of reason per se (1984b: 165), for pure reason as such is "superior to our composite nature" (1984b: 163).

In Aristotle's writings, practical knowledge has an element of irresolvable indecisiveness about it. His distinction between theoretical (*episteme*), technical (*technē*) and practical (*phronesis*) knowing demonstrates the ambiguity about appropriately theorizing on the good aimed at by practical actions as if it were theoretical knowledge. For Aristotle, both *phronesis* and *technē* are types of knowledge about things that can be otherwise and not about things that cannot be so, as it is the case with *episteme*. Heidegger, lecturing on *Nicomachean Ethics*, Chap. VI: 8 on *phronesis* in 1924–25, observed that the one who deliberates appropriately, the person of practical wisdom (*phronesis*), comes upon what is best for the human being and specifically the best of all practical possibilities. Heidegger emphasizes that "[t]his is what bestows on man the *eudaimonia* that is man's *ou eneka*" (PS: 95) or that for the sake of which. The decisive aspect of *phronesis*, Heidegger insists, is praxis, and "*praxis* is to be understood as a mode of being with others; and insofar as this is the *telos*, *phronesis* is of the character of the *politikē*" (PS: 96). Life experiences are required for the right exercise of *phronesis*. Whatever is the universal of praxis, it has any meaning only when contextualized in terms of the cultural–historical understanding of things and values. Without this mediation, Heidegger argues, practical life cannot be carried out.

Bent Flyvbjerg argued in his 2001 book, *Making Social Sciences Matter*, that the project of the social sciences as such is *phronetic*. Consider Flyvbjerg's summary of the *phronetic* field of study: "Deliberation about values with reference to praxis. Pragmatic, variable, context-dependent. Oriented toward action. Based on practical value-rationality. The original concept has no analogous contemporary term" (2001: 57). Flyvbjerg calls upon social sciences to desist from aping the universal knowledge production and reproduction methods of natural sciences, which are *epistemic*, and technological sciences, which are *technical*. Under contemporary conditions, the identity crisis of the social scientist is practically resolved only when she/he accepts and participates in the universal and global knowledge production strategy of the natural and technological sciences. Flyvbjerg's suggestion for the social sciences in this scenario is "not to develop theory, but to contribute to society's practical rationality in elucidating where we are, where we want to go, and what is desirable according to diverse sets of values and interests. The goal of the phronetic approach becomes one of contributing to society's capacity for value-rational deliberation and action" (2001: 167).

The lack of options in the face of the globalist, technoscientific whirlwind affects also the practical day-to-day engagements with the goals of good life, and accordingly, a life is considered worth its while only if it is tailored in the game-terms of the global market and the developmental individual. Flyvbjerg's call upon social sciences to resist the single-window-viewpoint applies also to our characterization of development as manifold ways of human ascent. There is neither a single good life nor a single way of approaching it. The approach of enhancing capabilities for the undertaking of manifold forms of good life is still pointing towards the single way of liberation through the modern market and its deep layers of assumptions, values and faiths. Monistic orientations of social science are never *phronetic* and, according to Charles Taylor, are unfit for "what is perhaps the most important task of social sciences in our day: understanding the full gamut of alternative modernities in the making in different parts of the world" (1995: 28). In a more focused approach towards political science, Taylor observes that the appropriate concept of politics in India should arise "through an articulation of the self-definitions of people engaged in the practices of politics in India" (1985: 133). Development understood as human ascent according to manifold background intelligibilities is to be considered the antidote to all manners of "organized uniformity".

Liberal theorists routinely claim that their preoccupation is with creating *a single way to the realization of many conceptions of good life*. Nothing could be further from the truth. The single "liberative" way of the modern market has created a single infrangible conception of the good life: commodity-aided, technologized, individualized and consumeristic existence.

Hence, development is characterized here as various conceptions of the good life realized in various ways. 'Various' does not mean arbitrary conceptions of life that cannot be explained as desirable forms in any way. 'Various' does not mean oppressive forms of life that explain away and adapt human enslavement as inescapable. 'Various' includes disappearing marginal practices/cultural forms that are

pleasing and satisfying for their livers but are not as resource-intensive and tech-nologized as the typical modern forms of life. 'Various' includes hybrid forms of life that survive on the edges of tradition and modernity, being neither, but are sig-nificant for their livers. "Various" includes totally disappeared forms of life that were once important and satisfying to those who lived them. "Various" includes, above all, forms of life that are yet to appear in any concrete form but go beyond the modern monistic forms. I return to the idea of the "various conceptions of the good life" in more concrete details in the fourth section of this chapter.

To be modern does not mean to be the autonomous, independent, rational agent and developmental individual in a universal sense. To be modern means, I suggest, to be susceptible to interrogation, to be weighed down by the responsibility to explain one's ways. There is nothing particularly modern in this though, for it means our constitutive need to respond to the Other in terms of our being in common. The expanding horizon of our world of significance with historical modernity, however, has expanded the concrete horizon of questionability and thus of the world of sig-nificance. The uncontrollable opening and breakdown of radical strangeness brought about by historical modernity is the new ethical resource that our aged, original morality of non-allergic response to the Other has to deal with and negotiate. The attunement of questionability is a responsive conversation on how beings are let be in their Being in the various forms of good life, and not the technological, calculative measurement of the "goodness" of the good life. Hence, no form of good life, how-ever non-modern, is completely sealed off to the outside, to our being in common. Every form of good life is open to interrogation. That which has a claim to modern universality is universally and constantly under the purview of the mood of engaged questioning. They are abyssal, contingent and concrete universals that arise out of universal questioning and conversation. The meaning of "logos" as "talk" points to the genuine acknowledgement of our being in common. The question to ask is whether we have at least begun the process of arriving at our genuinely contingent universals. The imperialist process of imposing one's universal on another is doomed to fail. Succeeding with universals is the most genuine act of being in common.

Sweeping and homogenizing understandings of development find acceptabil-ity on account of their simplicity and global entrenchment. That which is well established and functioning is rarely seen as that which calls for serious correc-tion or replacement. Gasper and Truong argue that "the field of development ethics needs to be deepened to better serve those adversely affected by processes of glo-balisation" (2005: 383), but they have nothing to say about correcting the unjust processes of globalization, for they believe that in some magical ways, the same unjust processes are going to bring about justice. It is this compulsion that the technological understanding of Being is bound to precipitate without our realizing it, for according to Heidegger's phenomenological principle, that within which we are engulfed does not come before our eyes.

It is on account of this veiling power of calculative intelligibility that reaction-ary thinkers like Ashis Nandy call for rejecting technological understanding at the outset and accepting it later, rather than "wholesale acceptation followed by an eerie, sheepishly querying coexistence". Nandy writes:

> [T]he political logic of the battle of minds demands that the victims of the oppressive forces in our times first attack the domination of the ideas of modern scientific rationality, history and progress as the organizing principles of all social intervention and then, only then, seriously consider if some elements from them can be safely accommodated in a post-modern science or in a post-development world (1989: 270).

However, as Heidegger untiringly points out, this is impossible. An epochal understanding of Being does not accept rejection. At the same time, it is the matter for thinking and questioning, for it is the hidden historical meaning that makes things manifest to us. "We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices, and also deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature" (MA: 54). Affirming technological understanding of Being in a freeing manner calls for meditative thinking as opposed to calculative thinking. While calculative thinking is one-sidedly focused on instrumental ends and "one-track course of ideas", meditative thinking is about attuning ourselves to the mood of openness to manifold meanings and engaging ourselves with "what at first sight does not go together at all". The critical path of meditative thinking can take us beyond the logic of efficiency, calculation and instrumental reason. Hence, our preoccupation in this study with development as good life variously conceived.

In this sense, everything in the post-war development discourse is necessarily dispensable. What is acceptable in the post-war discourse of development and the whole history of colonization is the initiation of the necessary interrogation of tradition by its authentic Other. It is, therefore, clear that no authentic alternative to the post-war development discourse can be completely blind to these historical encounters with the "outside" or the Other.

***

This study is preoccupied with two dominant manifestations of the technological understanding of what-is: technologization of the human animal and devastation of the planet. While I have dwelt at length on the first of these and concerns arising from it in the fourth and fifth chapters, I have not so far dealt with the second in a focused manner, although that concern could not have been inaudible so far given the central issue of this study. The earth for Heidegger is the field of beings, violently dominated by human power in the last four centuries. I now focus on a positive philosophical conception of dwelling on the earth in the technological age, rather than focusing on the metaphysical underpinnings of the ecological crisis, which I presume is by now clear as the tacit undertone of my study.

6.3 Posthuman Dwelling on the Earth

The most concrete manifestation of the technological understanding of Being during the four centuries since the inception of modern science has been the human-centred transformation of the planet. The humanistic world view that undergirds this transformation makes necessary the use of the inadequate term "posthuman". It is commonly recognized that Heidegger had only travelled half-way between

Enlightenment humanism and radical posthumanism. His most basic ontological distinction between animal and human, and the linguistic exceptionality he invests with the latter are often taken to signal this ambivalence (Wolfe 2010: 41–42).[8] Still, I use the term "posthuman" in this study to signal Heidegger's move away from the Enlightenment spirit of humanism, whereby "in the determination of the humanity of the human being as ek-sistence what is essential is not the human being but Being—as the dimension of the ecstasis of ek-sistence" (LH: 254). Wolfe remarks that posthumanism is not merely about "decentring of the human" in relation to evolutionary, ecological and technological counterparts but is more about "*how* thinking confronts that thematics, what thought has to become in the face of those challenges" (2010: xvi). I shall argue that Heidegger's thinking, with its focus on a non-human-centric conception of meaning, opens up an authentic manner of dwelling on the earth.

I proceed to consider Heidegger's concepts of dwelling and fourfold with an aim to develop a posthuman notion of dwelling on the earth in the light of my concern with development. I argue that being human involves an elemental violence, arising from the existential dynamism and ascent inherent to being human. Hence, my argument is not deep ecological. And yet, technological domination of beings as a whole by the human being, understood as the decentred field of circulation and preservation of the meaning of beings, I argue, can be encountered meaningfully from Heidegger's conception of posthuman dwelling on the earth.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

The ecological phase of capital, as shown in the fourth chapter, comes to be after the successful establishment of capitalistic conditions of production with the progress of modernity. The symbolic conquest of nature and extension of the language of modernity to nature by way of the notion of sustainability is to be seen as capital and, thus, more basically the technological understanding of Being as such, reigning over every aspect of reality, social and natural. The reign is established by the twofold promises of liberation of humanity and sustainability of nature, the free, commodity-smitten individual and the enduringly exploitable resourcefulness of nature, both of which are mediums for the smooth passage of capital.

Heidegger stresses the devastation and human domination of the earth as the most visible trace left by the technological understanding of Being. According to him, this fate is not ordained purely by human doings. It is the destiny of the ecstatic openness of Being provided by human language. It is granted by and sent from out of Being. Technological domination of the earth arises out of the event of Being's manifestation as the essence of technology—enframing. Accordingly, Heidegger observes that Nietzsche, the astute prophet of culture and thinker,

---

[8] This view, prominently articulated by Derrida (2008: 140–160), is sometimes contested. Andrew Mitchell argues that the later Heidegger broke with his own 1929–30 conception that the animal is poor in world and rethought the animal's world-poverty in the 1953 essay "Language in the Poem". Accordingly, animality is no longer conceived "in terms of containment, but instead in terms of exposure to world. A more radical break with the earlier course is hard to imagine" (Mitchell 2011: 74).

was the first to hear unmistakably the call of Being, and he "heard a calling that demands that human beings prepare for assuming domination over the earth. He saw and understood the erupting struggle for domination…" (QB: 321). World wars are "superficial" in comparison with this struggle. "Nietzsche heard that call to reflect on the essence of a planetary domination. He followed the call on the path of the metaphysical thinking granted him … [and] went as far as his thinking was able to go" (QB: 321). The Overman is the essence of the new humanity that dominates over the earth.

Heidegger's Nietzsche understands justice as global humanity's mastery over the earth, which is the determining measure of all human transactions (NW: 185). The post-war discourse of development as the promise of justice for disadvantaged humanity is no different. The complete mastery over the earth is total justice for humanity, the secularized version of the Christian promise of salvation. "Historical progress has replaced the withdrawal from the world into the supersensory. The goal of eternal bliss in the hereafter has been transformed into the earthly happiness of the greatest number" (NW: 165). Technological domination of the earth both centres human beings and fulfils humanistic promise. Without this promise and this centring, desolation of the earth would be meaningless. Developmentalism is meaningful without any hope of fulfilling the promise not only because it is messianic but also because it is about centring total humanity. The ecological phase of capital and its discourse of sustainability efficiently centres total humanity.

According to Heidegger, "the unnoticeable law of the earth" is the range of each being's possibilities within which it dwells on the earth. That is, the earth is preserved "in the sufficiency of the emerging and perishing of all things in the allotted sphere of the possible which everything follows, and yet nothing knows. The birch tree never oversteps its possibility. The colony of bees dwells in its possibility" (OM: 109). This law of the earth is broken by human beings in the age of technology, not arbitrarily but following deeply on the trail of Western metaphysics that now is achieving planetary domination. Human will surges up in the age of technology and "devours the earth in the exhaustion and consumption and change of what is artificial. Technology drives the earth beyond the developed sphere of its possibility into such things which are no longer a possibility and are thus the impossible" (OM: 109). Making what is impossible in accordance with the law of the earth possible is achieved by technology.

Dazzling technological inventions, currently available, are not the proof of the work of technology whereby the impossible is made possible. There is much to come; absolutely miraculous impossibilities are in queue because this age has only begun. However, international development, urbanization and modernization, technologization of production and standardization of living are the less magical impossibilities that technology has already made possible. This was the promise that Truman made in 1949, and this promise is becoming real in many pockets of the world, though the project is still incomplete. Total technological domination of the earth is achieved only through the flatness of uniformity and standardization (AWP: 84), when the world becomes like the modern airport with indistinguishably identical and expansive arrangement of spaces.

We saw the impossibility of the project of global justice in the last chapter. But it is not Heidegger's ontological argument in connection with the problem of the world dominating trajectory of technological understanding. Heidegger does agree that the aporia of progress will make the global realization of justice as will to power impossible. But he believes that technology's miracles are only beginning and technology is the longest and planetary phase of the history of Being, which forces human beings to surrender the dignity of their essence as free openness for Being's manifold manifestations. This is the threatening danger. The highest dignity of human essence is

> … in keeping watch over the unconcealment—and with it, from the first, the concealment—of all coming to presence on this earth. It is precisely in Enframing, which threatens to sweep man away into ordering as the supposed single way of revealing, and so thrusts man into the danger of the surrender of his free essence—it is precisely in this extreme danger that the innermost indestructible belongingness of man within granting may come to light, provided that we, for our part, begin to pay heed to the coming to presence of technology (QCT: 32).

In the technological manifestation of Being, the essence of the shepherd and preserver of the manifold meanings of Being is compromised. Human essence, the open ground of Being's manifold play, turns into a unidimensional track. Human beings are compelled to think about all beings in a uniform way, which Heidegger calls one-track thinking.

> The dominion of this manner of perception is so vast today that our eyes can barely encompass it. The expression 'one-track' has been chosen on purpose. Track has to do with rails, and rails with technology.… This one-track thinking, which is becoming ever more widespread in various shapes, is one of those unsuspected and inconspicuous forms … in which the essence of technology assumes dominion because that essence wills and therefore needs absolute univocity (WCT: 26).

From such thinking and manner of revealing the real, there emerges the compulsive possibility "that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing-reserve" (QCT: 33). Humans themselves and every other form of reality is revealed to the human being, who is the openness for the manifold revealings of Being, as resources for endless manipulation, stockpiling, use and reuse on demand.

The fact that the technological form of revealing the real is efficient means only that calculative and instrumental understanding has taken complete control over human perception, reception, action, agency and freedom. Technological understanding is the modern way of relating to nature[9] and what-is as such as standing-reserve,[10] and with human beings understood as human resources.[11] As the one threatened most, the human being

---

[9] "… the energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is, in turn, distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew" (QCT: 16).

[10] "…what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing-reserve…." (QCT: 26–27).

[11] "… the battle … to employ 'human resources' soberly and without illusion in the service of the absolute empowering of the will to power…" (NW: 191).

… exalts himself to the posture of lord of the earth. In this way the impression comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct. This illusion gives rise in turn to one final delusion: It seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself (QCT: 27).

This is absolute human-centrism. But, at the same time, human lordship also means that the human being is thereby made incapable of encountering its essence as the openness of Being.

The essence of technology, the understanding of all beings as resourceful material, draws into its orbit the expansive field of modern science, the miraculous feats of technological success and human comportment towards the woods as timber, mountains as deposits of coal, river as the treasury of hydroelectric power, nature as sites for tourism, wind as the source of renewable energy and humans as the asset/resource par excellence. If a river like the Ganga is to appear to dwellers along its bank in its profanity, material abundance and exploitability rather than in its erstwhile sacredness, awe and reverence, the Being of the river, its disclosive possibility, is to change first. Being is that which makes beings appear as such and such.

In this sense, the essence of technology is nothing untoward, not a danger. It is the Being of all-that-is in the late modern age. It is but a link in the chain of the history of Being.[12] However, the danger is its closedness, a kind of tunnel-vision. Disclosedness is turned into closedness, disclosure into closure, openness into exclusiveness and world into organized uniformity. If the essence of the human is the openness for Being's manifoldness, technological nihilism is a one-dimensional levelling of Being's manifoldness. This uniformity of reality is indeed a problem for our relation with nature.

∗∗∗

Despite the picture of the dark tunnel into which modern Western understanding of Being has entered in its planetary phase, namely technological nihilism, there is no allusion to a complete, unfree surrendering to this global human fate in Heidegger's writings. I do recognize that there is a deep sense of ambiguity in Heidegger regarding human agency in relation to Being's appearance and withdrawal, giving rise to a classic case of opposing interpretations. However, the path that I see in Heidegger's thinking is not a point of no return.

While discussing about the art of thinking in *What is Called Thinking*? Heidegger remarks that we are not thinking in the technological age not because of human error but because the matter for thought, Being, has lapsed into withdrawal. The withdrawal of Being is manifested as calculative rather than meditative thinking. However, the ontological withdrawal occasioned by the technological understanding of Being means that possibilities of Being that are more

---

[12] Thomas Sheehan argues that according to the most consistent interpretation of Heidegger's thought, the technological interpretation of Being is an inevitable fate of western history and humans can do nothing to get out of this interpretive frame (See Sheehan (1998)). Michael Zimmerman, a longtime champion of the deep ecological interpretation of Heidegger, has now turned around to the plausibility of Sheehan's view. I shall soon distance the argument of this book both from deep ecological interpretation and from Sheehan's inescapability-view of technological nihilism.

meaningful cannot come into presence, and hence what is withdrawing itself might be said to claim the human being more essentially than what is revealing. What calls for thinking, then, is what withdraws. "What withdraws from us, draws us along by its very withdrawal, whether or not we become aware of it immediately, or at all. Once we are drawn into the withdrawal, we are drawing toward what draws, attracts us by its withdrawal" (WCT: 9). Our essential nature, Heidegger writes, includes drawing closer towards what withdraws, and not merely towards what presences and actualizes.

Heidegger emphasizes that we *are* this drawing and pointing towards what is withdrawing. In every revealing of Being that frees phenomena to appearance, there is a corresponding concealing and absencing of possibilities of appearance. Accordingly, possibilities of Being that are not appearing in the openness that we are on account of the world-dominating technological understanding of Being are, nevertheless, drawing us close to them. Meditative/radical thinking and corresponding living amounts to drawing close to the withdrawing possibilities of Being. This pointing towards the absent, what could be, is the essence of the openness that the human is. But Heidegger warns that a quick evaluation of what exactly is withdrawing is not possible on account of the dazzling presence of what appears like technology. The levelling and standardizing stamp of technological understanding makes the appearance of other possibilities rather impossible. Hence, according to Heidegger, essentially humans are pointers and signs not of available possibilities of meaning, but of possibilities of meaning yet not available (WCT: 9–10). They are, thus, agents of yet more meaningful possibilities of Being.

What do we gather from this? Ian Thomson advises to resist the mystical and quietistic interpretations of Heidegger. Rather, passages that speak to us as though Being is some sort of an agent are

> … better heard as a *realistic* acknowledgement of our situatedness within (and, hence, the importance of our *receptivity* to) ontohistorical currents that shape us much more than we shape them. In fact, the later Heidegger came to believe that spitting into the wind of the history of Being is pointless, and that we can change this history only by pushing it forward, developing it to the point where it turns into something else (Thomson 2011: 30).

This means a lot of hard work for those who 'think'—that is, those who are attentive towards the withdrawing, those who are venturesome, those who are poetic, according to the essay "Why Poets?". Hubert Dreyfus supports this view when he says that "[a] new sense of reality is not something that can be made the goal of a crash program like the moon flight—another paradigm of modern technological power" (2006: 366). Neither Thomson nor Dreyfus denies the possibility of gently, if ever so tentatively, moving in the direction of articulating an alternative understanding of reality or experimenting with many such understandings.

Heidegger's thinking since 1936 at least ponders over alternative ontological possibilities. The spontaneous meditations of *Contributions*, *Mindfulness* and *The Event* are expressions of disquiet about machinational understanding's predominance in late modern culture. His later meditations on the fourfold, dwelling on the earth and possibilities for alternative encounters with technology demonstrate his decision about an intellectual position between utter fatalism or quietism and

programmatic decisionism or voluntarism. As Zimmerman argues persuasively, Heidegger's exposition of resolute authenticity in *Being and Time* "had sometimes embraced aspects of voluntarism, subjectivism, and humanism", which he later revised "in trying to understand the essence of subjectivism as *Technik*" and in arguing that "individuals in industrialized cultures are inauthentic not because of lack of personal fortitude but because they have become commodities, objects to be manipulated for gain" (1986: 197). According to him Heidegger's turn was also a turn from resoluteness to releasement, which was not unaffected by the support he rendered to Nazi totalitarianism, a revelation to him about how deeply was the west 'dominated by a subjectivistic understanding of Being'. Heidegger's meditations on alternative possibilities of dwelling on the earth without denying human ascent, thus, are to be located between fatalistic determinism and wilful decisionism.

Similarly, Heidegger's posthumanism was a mid-way position between human-centrism and anti-humanism. Needless to say, Enlightenment humanism, with all its historical connotations and consequences, has deep roots in Greek and Judeo-Christian thought and the specific cultural negotiations of these in medieval, renaissance and modern Europe. In a 1963 interview with the Thai Buddhist monk, Bhikhu Maha Mani,[13] Heidegger distinguished the Western understanding of human being from the Buddhist by recourse to the essential difference of humans from animals. The human is the space of circulation of meaning and human language is this very space. According to him, this human exceptionality cannot be denied wholly. Even if, as Mitchell (2011) argues, the later Heidegger came to see the animal as having a certain accessibility to the world like the human, his posthumanism critically assesses the special human manner of accessing the world through language and reason in response to the technological and subjectivistic modern understanding of Being. Heidegger's posthumanism, if it can be called so, in no way denies or replaces the *house of language* provided by the human being for the event of manifestation of Being. Intelligibility or meaning is not subjectivistic but it also is not independent of human history. The historical space of meaning, the epochal understanding of Being, is *revealed* to humans and not *subjectively* produced by them, but the revealing itself is never unmediated through human essence—response to Being or taking issue with Being or care. What Heidegger rethinks is the dominative, violent and levelling modern understanding of Being and, thus, he rethinks human relation to the logos or Being as such.

Heidegger is reported to have told Bhikhu Maha Mani before the actual interview on camera that his work was dedicated to freeing Western humanity, without denying that humanity's finite Greek origins, from the burdening tyranny of tradition. For Heidegger, a tradition is not oppressively dominative but is the open horizon of possibilities, a horizon that conceals within itself manifold intelligibilities, which are related to the tradition's origins not arbitrarily but in terms

---

[13] I am here referring to the version of this interview available on www.youtube.com, which is said to be the version aired on the German TV channel SWR in 1963 (See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8HR4RXxZw8 and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoYq9EXdpcw, accessed on 3 October 2013).

of their meaning; that is, hermeneutically. The tyrannical nature of Western tradition means the "overwhelming power of the two thousand years since Plato which distort every conversation through the presuppositions engendered by philosophical systems and doctrines, confessional stipulations and religious schisms, and by educational systems" (Pöggler 1992: 58). Heidegger thought that Westerners could no more encounter themselves and reality in any simple manner on account of their overburdening culture, "too much culture", of objectification and technologization. Heidegger praised Bhikhu Maha Mani's simple and spontaneous rather than calculative and ordered manner of questioning. When we consider Heidegger's thought as a whole, the simplicity and spontaneity of encountering phenomena as such is captured in the concept of the fourfold. Before coming to the idea of dwelling and the fourfold, let me make a few remarks of clarification.

First, the critical tone in Heidegger's characterization of modern understanding of Being as technological is to be placed along with his understanding of our most primordial encounter with things of the world in terms of their handiness (*Zuhandenheit*) as equipment (*Zeug*).[14] As Julian Young adds, the human being is "essentially, uniquely, and almost always a worker, *a technological being engaged in technological activity*" (2002: 48; my emphasis). In this primal sense, all cultures are technological, whether Indian, Chinese or Greek. Intervening in nature technologically and turning nature into artefact are central to the dynamic, ascendant ontology of the human being. This primal violence is an inescapable facet of the human condition. Any philosophy of development is a manner of taking into account this essential violence. Without it, human existence comes to naught. Heidegger's insistence that ancient Greeks had the same word, *technē*, for both craft and art, for the whole sphere of bringing forth through human intervention, and his characterization of the essential strife between the concealed sphere of the earth and manifested sphere of the world affirm the elemental violence of being human, the essential strife inescapable for the human condition. Hence, our response to the danger of modern technological absolutism cannot mean abandoning technology but being able to see technology in its essence as "art", as bringing into being or revealing. The saving power Heidegger points to alongside the danger of technological envelopment is art. Modern technology is an extreme interpretation of the elemental strife of being human whereby all beings show up as resources, and so "nothing is any longer able to withstand the business of knowing, since technical mastery over things bears itself without limit" (ET: 147).

Second, I want to reemphasize that in speaking about the essence of technology as enframing (*Gestell*), Heidegger is not speaking at all about machines or technologies as such. He is speaking about the disclosure of all phenomena as resourceful, producible material, the modern Western framework of intelligibility

---

[14] *Being and Time*'s *Zuhandenheit*-analysis is sometimes taken not so kindly. Michael E. Zimmerman writes: "The priority assigned by Heidegger to productivity and to the instrumental understanding of Being led Hubert Dreyfus to depict *Being and Time* as one of the final stages in productionist metaphysics, of which later Heidegger was to become so critical" (2003: 78). Zimmerman is here referring to Dreyfus (1992).

which is now in its planetary phase. Illustrating exceptions to this framework of intelligibility does nothing to Heidegger's overall insight. He is inviting us to see how even the remotest corners of the world are being overwhelmed by technological understanding without resistance and how non-technological practices surviving in the world's cultural margins are being increasingly threatened with extinction. Calculative intelligibility is being celebrated for its liberating power everywhere, but from a postcolonial stance, it is important to see what this intelligibility framework is doing to people whose self-understanding has been unaffected by it until recently. Moreover, who can say that the critique of a culturally dominant intelligibility framework that turns the human being into "a controlled machine", as Heidegger told Bhikhu Maha Mani, and the planet into a storable heap of resources is in itself irrelevant?

Third, Heidegger, who considered the human being essentially technological, is not a Luddite; he does not think that the machine can be or should be replaced with the hand. He is not overawed by the historical unfolding of Being's manifestation as the essence of technology and does not think that humanly nothing can be done about it. The essence of technology, he says, is "a destining that in no way confines us to a stultified compulsion to push on blindly with technology or, what comes to the same thing, to rebel helplessly against it and curse it as the work of the devil" (QCT: 25–26). The cultural envelopment of calculative intelligibility, the pre-eminence of mathematic-scientific interpretation of phenomena and the spell cast on modern imagination by speed, size and efficiency distressed Heidegger as an individual. He, however, argues that when we do not shy away from a historical manifestation of Being but face it squarely, we are already beginning to be free of it. Being is so close to us that we are predisposed to get lost and fascinated with things on account of it, and yet Being is also farthest from us because we have no deliberate, cognitive awareness of it. Only a culturally entrenched understanding of Being can have power over us. The authentic handiness of the equipment of *Being and Time* is dependent on its withdrawal as equipment from our conscious awareness (BT: 99). A reflective grasp of an understanding of Being that rules our conceptions and perceptions releases us from its unfree domination.

Fourth, Heidegger does speak of several ways of responding to the reign of the technological understanding of Being. Human beings cannot destroy or wish away technology because they neither invent nor make the essence of technology. But, they can be open to the mystery of its essence, which is Being as such (MA: 55). At the same time, without humans, there are beings but no Being. Heidegger calls the human being the house and precinct of Being because the circulation of meaning unfolds within the linguistic opening provided by humans. Zimmerman describes Heidegger's position as realism of beings and idealism of Being (2003: 77). In fact, Heidegger's persuasive position is not a simple idealism of Being. Reality is there not because of us. Reality thrusts itself upon us. The meaning of reality is already socio-historically constituted for us to appropriate and participate in, and for this already constituted space of meaning to be in circulation, we are the fields of play.

Can we do nothing to initiate a new understanding of Being? Yes and no. We may incite revolutions and bring to force new scientific solutions, but the historical constitution of meaning is a long-winded process that cannot be set in motion through quick changes and uprisings. Revolutions themselves are meaningful only in terms of the prevalent understanding of Being. Knowing fully well that we do not direct Being, we may nevertheless contribute to epochal changes in ontological understanding by way of our openness to the mystery of Being, and by living and accomplishing our doings meaningfully in that openness.

"Memorial Address" (1955) is probably Heidegger's clearest statement about what we can do to bring about an epochal change. He proposes meditative thinking in opposition to calculative thinking and practicing the Eckhartian releasement towards things or letting beings be. Non-calculative thinking, openness to manifold understandings of Being and ability to free beings according to the meaning they show forth from out of themselves rather than reducing their meaning to the calculative frame can help us "arrive at a path that will lead to a new ground and foundation" (MA: 56). In the technology essay, as we have seen, Heidegger refers to the revival of a very basic sense of art as a form of resistance to calculative intelligibility. In *Der Spiegel* interview, only "a god" is said to have the power to save us from technological nihilism, meaning thereby a trailblazing event, phenomenon, independent power or figure that can ignite and sustain a new ontological epoch.

"The Turning", which is a sequel to the Technology essay, is about human responses to the technological manifestation of Being. Heidegger observes that no new understanding of Being can be set free without human shepherding it into presence/appearance. The coming to presence of the new, however, does not do away with the old, with technology, but will make plain its hidden truth. The transformation and overcoming of an epochal understanding of Being calls for encountering its essence as the first step. For such encountering, responding to the original dimension of language, rather than its instrumental and calculative dimension, is said to be necessary. In *Contributions*, such a response is said to originate out of a second beginning, just as the ontology of technology arose out of the first beginning in Greece. In *Der Spiegel* interview, humans can be said to contribute to the new beginning only as critics, poets and thinkers. However, for Heidegger, thinking ponderously and meditatively, not calculatedly, also means existing, or standing out into the openness of Being or dwelling.

According to Hubert Dreyfus, fostering marginal practices, which are outside the dominion of the technological understanding of Being, can be a way of dwelling in the openness of Being (2006: 366). Similarly, Albert Borgmann champions centering our private lives on non-rule governed focal practices (1984: 209; see also 1992).[15] However, these practices themselves are not insulated from danger because they may not be able to resist the levelling appropriation of calculative intelligibility. Internationalization of traditional yoga is a case in point. Further, while marginal, traditional and focal practices may not be driven by calculative

---

[15] Borgmann's is one of the most elaborate Heideggerian enquiries in the philosophy of technology, which attempts to propose an alternative to technological nihilism.

intelligibility, they should not also be imagined as frozen ideals or universals with certain salvific power over the essence of technology. Technology is not the evil that certain other good practices may surpass. Any manner of procedure, which gives rise to another single unifying revealing of Being, is to be resisted. At the same time, it is necessary to interrogate marginal and focal practices with regard to anything in these practices themselves that may militate against our being in common, that may be oppressive as in the dominant understanding of Being.[16]

<div align="center">***</div>

Heidegger's posthumanism, we have noted, centres on a critical assessment of the technological and subjectivistic modern understanding of Being. It, therefore, is also about a philosophically legible narrative of human existing and dwelling on the earth. Given the modern understanding of Being as resourceful material for production, Heidegger asks whether we can imagine a different future out of the same Greek tradition that gave rise to the technological understanding of Being and Enlightenment humanism. The hermeneutical assumption underlying this question is that a new ontological epoch is never a complete denial of the tradition, but a new appropriation of it.

I argued above for a non-quietistic interpretation of human contribution to epochal transformation through a new appropriation of tradition. An important contribution to the epochal transformation of the technological understanding of Being is a different manner of dwelling on the earth. Having steered clear of quietism, I also want to steer clear of the deep ecological interpretation of Heidegger while addressing the issue of dwelling.

First of all, in this interpretation of dwelling on the earth, it is important to be wary of the deep ecological fascination with a pure, pristine, uncontaminated nature and the Western fascination with wilderness protection. Beings *are* without us, but their Being or intelligibility is entangled with human cultures. This Heideggerian formulation is not a meaningless philosophical quibble. It, rather, means that in so far as we are concerned with the question of reality and speaking about it, that reality is entangled in human meanings, interests and engagements for better or for worse. In fact, there is no pristine nature but only humanly mediated environment as Hegel and Marx taught. The question of conserving pure nature is a deeply political question, which is sometimes seen as enmeshed in the anxieties of the global north about delicately balancing falling ecological health in the face of rising northern standards of living.[17] There is no denying the fact that human mediation of reality has come to mean violent and vicious penetration and reduction of that reality, the earth as such. This historical trajectory of human engagement with nature is deeply rooted in the dynamic, ascendant and essentially technological human ontological structure that lets beings be in their handiness. At

---

[16] Having set in place this caution, we shall return to the question of suitable ways of resisting the planetary sovereignty of the technological understanding of Being through such practices and also through democratically and deliberatively arrived at political actions in the next section.

[17] In this connection, Ramachandra Guha's questionings of western environmentalism and the problems it poses for ecological justice are well-known (see Guha 1998).

the same time, this ontological structure can also be shown as the basis for the sense of development we have defended above. The question that remains is what philosophically legible register of dwelling on the earth can be still imagined from out of the human ontology and sense of development that we have defended.

According to Michael Zimmerman, the deep ecological tenets in Heidegger's philosophy are the following. (i) The human being does not produce or own the clearing of Being but is appropriated as this clearing so that they can let beings be manifest in their manifold forms of coming to presence. (ii) Nature is understood in terms of multiple forms of manifestation including the objectivistic understanding of modern science. (iii) Heidegger's prioritizing of the practical over the theoretical means that all things including nature appear primordially as that which matters to us and meaningful within the network of our involvements rather than as abstract, neutral and exploitable material or object.

Zimmerman also points out that the exceptionality of the human being and its transcendence towards the world through language cannot be accommodated into the deep ecological doctrine, according to which the human being is only one of the citizens of the biosphere with equal rights (see Naess 1973). Heidegger's talk of the human being as the shepherd of Being might echo the Judeo-Christian stewardship view of environmental responsibilities, which might not be acceptable to deep ecologists. Besides, Zimmerman points to Sheehan's view that Heidegger's own account of the history of Being does not logically accommodate the possibility of a new beginning in line with a posthuman, postmetaphysical, nondomineering and ecofriendly encounter with beings, despite Heidegger's own claims to the contrary (2003: 86–90). About Sheehan's view, I shall only remark that he interprets Heidegger's understanding of the human being as the disclosive openness of Being in the Marxian vein as the producing animal. Sheehan sees the impossibility of a new beginning because he interprets the ontological freedom of the human being in Heidegger's writings passively and fatalistically, and consequently, when Heidegger is distressed with technological nihilism, Sheehan sees progressivism, and when Heidegger asserts our role in bringing about a new ontological age, Sheehan sees determinism.[18]

---

[18] It is necessary to insist that Being has no independence from the human being; Being is not a superior power deterministically hovering over humanity. In the 1955 essay, published in honour of Ernst Jünger, "On the Question of Being", Heidegger explains that his manner of crossing out the word "Being" stands for "preventing the almost ineradicable habit of representing 'Being' as something standing somewhere on its own that then on occasion first comes face-to-face with human beings" (QB: 310). The most famous example of this is Plato's understanding of Being as "idea". Such an understanding gives the impression that the human being is excepted from Being, but "he is not only not excepted, i.e., not only included in 'Being,' but 'Being', in needing the human being, is obliged to relinquish this appearance of independence" (QB: 310). Since Being is not "out there", but is in our collective Dasein, in the socio-historical space opened up by us, it is also not a representation, argues Heidegger. We grow into and get familiarized in the understanding of Being that is already there within the collective human world before we enter that space of meaning. And so Being is not a subjective representation. Contributing to opening up a new understanding of Being is possible because Being is not a frozen picture but a dynamic human understanding of reality.

I now move to a non-deep ecological but at the same time preserving-caring interpretation of human dwelling on the earth.

Why do we insist that according to Heidegger there is no pristine, unmediated nature but only humanly mediated environment? As the sole ontological being, the human being is enthralled by beings and always and everywhere engages self-interpretively with beings. Heidegger writes:

> Everywhere humanity makes routes for itself; in all the domains of beings, of the over-whelming sway, it ventures forth, and in this very way it is flung from every route. Thus the whole uncanniness of the human, the uncanniest, first opens itself up … not just that *as* violence-doing they drive themselves in this way beyond what is homely for them … as those who on all ways have no way out, they are thrown out of all relation to the homely, and *atē,* ruin, calamity, overtakes them (IM: 162).

The violently dominating and mono-logical technological understanding of Being also arises out of the human enthralment with beings, the unhomely disposition that always wants to be at home with beings. But this violence has little to do with the originary essence of the human being, namely, the open response to the mani-foldness of Being, and the inceptive understanding of Being as *phusis*.

As that space for the circulation of the meaning of all beings, the human being is in its very essence a being that is open (receiving, freeing, letting be) for the meaning of entities just as they appear from out of themselves. The only onto-logical being is also phenomenological in its essence because it is the space for the manifestation of phenomena. Heidegger's characterization of the Being of the human being as 'care' in *Being and Time* means that the human being is the responsive/responsible openness of Being. A thoroughly ontological conception of ethics, an ethic of care for all beings, an earth ethic, is buried deeply within the layers of the Heideggerian problematic. Human comportments in their constitutive essence mean an engagement of care, of letting be. It is not only an ethic of letting the other human being be Other but also an ethic of letting animals be animals in their essential animality and letting things be things in their essential thingli-ness. Without the ethic of letting beings be in the very way in which they show themselves from themselves, all beings are manifested violently as technologically manipulable objects.

In the essay that supposed to have marked the 'turn' in Heidegger's path of thinking, "The Essence of Truth" (1930), human freedom is spoken of not as existential caprice or exigency, but as 'freedom for what is opened up in an open region'. The ontological freedom of the human being is further clarified as:

> That which is opened up, that to which a presentative statement as correct corresponds, are beings opened up in an open comportment (of the human being). Freedom for what is opened up in an open region lets beings be the beings they are. Freedom now reveals itself as letting beings be (ET: 144; my gloss).

Heidegger insists that "letting beings be" does not mean management, preservation, tending and planning of beings. That would still be technological comportment. Ontological care for beings means the opposite of the technological closure of the open region of Being. It surely means engaging with beings but it means "not to lose oneself in them" (despite "fallenness" being an existential structure of Dasein),

but to withdraw our manipulative meddling with beings "in order that they might reveal themselves with respect to what and how they are, and in order that presentative correspondence might take its standard from them" (ET: 144). This is the opposite of technological understanding, the most extreme form of philosophical constructivism, which imposes on beings the interpretive veil of resourcefulness.

The onto-ethical comportment of responsibility for beings calls for taking our interpretive standards from the manner in which beings appear (for this is the meaning of 'openness') rather than restraining their manner of appearance by imposing a pre-given grid over them. This is, however, not a disengaged stare at the objectness of beings; it is engagement and care for beings in terms of the possibilities of their authentic and manifold meanings. Freedom with reference to the ethic of care relates to how human beings dwell on the earth.

Jeff Malpas's *Heidegger's Topology* argues that Heidegger's understanding of essence has a topological connotation; essence is "that to which the thing itself properly belongs rather than what belongs to it" (Malpas 2006: 267). Malpas argues that essence, thus, also means the proper place/*topos* to which a thing belongs. Heidegger's discussions about human essence constantly refer to a proper home or abode, which evokes images of the homeland, homecoming, at-homeness as well as unhomeliness/homelessness, uncanniness. The proper belonging that determines our Being is in any case a spiritual ethos for Heidegger, which certainly has a sense of the cultural space that determines our socio-cultural constitution as 'this person', the '*Da*' of Dasein. Heidegger reiterates the idea unequivocally in the 1966 interview, where he is visibly worried that technology is uprooting and tearing human beings loose from their home or earth. The loss of this connection with home means human relations are reduced to 'purely technological relationships', whether to the earth or to other humans. This is so because, says Heidegger, "everything essential and everything great originated from the fact that man had a home and was rooted in a tradition" (GS: 106). The *topos* is the humanly mediated cultural/spiritual space or tradition into which we grow and in which we meaningfully dwell.

The trivialization of the home in the name of globality and technology is a danger because what replaces the homely, the global, is itself something that has had a homely origin. The indiscriminate cultural and economic globalizing that is current, therefore, has an uncanny, self-alienating effect on communities and subjectivities of the global south as we saw in the last chapter. At the same time, the home is nothing like a walled enclosure. Home is itself uncanny, vulnerable, porous; there is something unhomely about our wanting to be at home with beings. Globalizing technological society is, however, a total denial of our wanting to be at home with beings.

Dwelling means being at home with beings and belonging to the topos despite the fundamental uncanniness or unhomeliness of being human, the violence inherent to the human condition. Only if the *topos* were a home could we dwell as if things mattered. Only if we dwelt at home could we take issue with our Being and become authentic, could we care for things, preserve them and let them be in their Being. Technological nihilism absolutizes our fundamental homelessness so that one place appears to us equivalent to the other, and all things appear to be uniformly reducible to their resourcefulness.

In *Being and Time*, Being-in (*In-sein*) is taken to be dwelling in the most involved sense. The 'in' in Being-in does not signify a non-mattering, indifferent manner of liquid being in a bottle; rather, the 'in' is as in 'being in love'. According to Heidegger's etymological argument, *innan* in old German meant *habitare*, to reside, to dwell, to be accustomed or familiar with, to look after. 'In' of Being-in is not primarily a proposition, but 'inhood', the state of being existentially engrossed in something, the human being's existential characteristic of getting absorbedly lost in what it engages with (BT: 80). However, the human being is not only a dweller upon the earth in this sense; she/he also builds and produces and thus transforms the earth, nature, into artefact.[19] How do we understand these apparently opposing structures of human existence, namely, dwelling in familiarity and concern, and making or building, which brings with it an element of violence to dwelling? Heidegger offers an interpretation of building as inherently bound up with dwelling.

In the 1951 essay "Building Dwelling Thinking", Heidegger's discussion of dwelling is once again etymological as in *Being and Time* ¶12. What is the rationale of the etymological argument? Language and its human speakers according to Heidegger together make the 'house' wherein dwells Being. As such, the manifesting and withdrawal of Being comes about within language and with us. Forgotten meanings of primal words do not stand for flimsy linguistic changes but

---

[19] *The Body in Pain* (1985) by Elaine Scarry argues that "it is the benign, almost certainly heroic, and in any case absolute intention of all human making to distribute the facts of sentience outward onto the created realm of artifice, and it is only by doing so that men, and women are themselves relieved of the privacy and problems of that sentience" (1985: 288). Scarry means by "artifice" the whole realm of human imagination that has the advantage of being real, sharable and collective (1985: 171). Artifice has a double consequence: "to project sentience out onto the made world and in turn to make sentience itself into a complex living artifact" (1985: 255). So, for Scarry, artifice is a workable and culturally significant response to the problem of pain which gives rise to human artefacts. But I would hasten to suggest that the ontology of the artifice/artefact should begin from a more complex understanding of pain–pleasure mélange that constitutes the turbulent movement that existence is. Should pleasure only be conceived negatively as relief from pain so that every artefact takes the place of a reliever? This moralism appears to me unwarranted. The site of the artefact is the whole space of the movement of life occupied by the mélange of pain–pleasure. The artefact relieves the human body-subject from pain as well as gratifies her desire, but does so always as if by inhabiting the body-subject as Scarry insists. Indeed, there is a moral imperative to direct our self-expressive powers primarily to relieving pain on account of its power to destroy the self. This moral critique, I think, needs to extend to contemporary material culture for which the ceaseless production of the artefact has become a sport by itself and for itself. Heidegger's ontological reflections on dwelling, building and producing in terms of care have such a moral angle. For him, pain opens up the most intimate gathering of the meaning of Being, existing, and its internal differentiation and inherent antagonism (QB: 305–306). Pain is integrated into our existence as affected selves. To create and have the world means pain as well, for "everything that is alive … is imbued with pain.… Everything that is alive, is painful.… By virtue of this power it is fit to join in that harmony of mutual bearing by which all living things belong together. In keeping with this relation of fitness, everything that lives is fit, that is to say, good. But the good is good painfully" (Heidegger 1982: 181). Pain interrupts the exceptionality of human selfhood and unites it with life and nature as such. Since being human also means being open to the inclemencies of the weather, the hardness of the earth and the eventuality of being pinched as well as caressed on the skin, our understanding of human selfhood is incomplete if we do not take note of pain.

for concealing something essential and for revealing something else, which is but a transformation of meaning/intelligibility. A historical change in language use, say the attempt to make language more precise and calculative in its meanings, also marks a historical change in human essence. Language is not an instrument of expression, but as Charles Taylor points out, it is a constitutive aspect of our being human (see 2007). Heidegger puts forward his etymological arguments in the belief that when language withdraws the simple meanings of words "its primal cell does not thereby become incapable of speech; it merely falls silent. Man, though, fails to heed this silence" (BDT: 146). Hence, it is possible, through careful study, to give heed to these withdrawn meanings in our contemporary discourses.

Heidegger observes in this spirit that the word "*buan*", meaning "building" in Old English and High German, means "to dwell", signifying "to remain, to stay in a place". It is from "*buan*" that the new German word for "to build", "*bauen*", is derived, though its old signification, to dwell, is lost. This signification, however, is preserved in the German noun "*Nachbar*" and the English "neighbour", which come from the Old English word "neahgebur" (neah = near; gebur = dweller), the near-dweller. Heidegger suggests that if the original meaning of *bauen* can "still speak", his argument about building as dwelling or Being-in can come alive.

The word "*buan*" is imbued with a dynamic sense of dwelling, which is at the same time building. It means Being-in-the-world, "the manner in which we humans *are* on the earth". Dwelling on the earth in this sense means "to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine" (BDT: 145). "To build" in this sense does not mean "to make" but to take care, to cultivate, to nurture, to tend and attend to the development of things towards their natural *telos*. But "to build" does not only mean "*colere*" or "*cultura*" (tending and cultivating), but also means to construct, to raise up edifices (*aedificare*). But both these senses of building have to do with human dwelling on the earth. Both these senses of building mean inhabiting the earth. Our buildings of various hues receive their signification from the fact that we are dwellers in the above sense. We do not dwell because we build; rather, we build because we are dwellers. It must not be forgotten that Heidegger's argument here is not merely etymological because the etymological argument is echoing *Being and Time*'s interpretation of the essence of the human being as care.

While in the word "*buan*" the sense of Being-in, familiarity with and care for things is evident, according to Heidegger, the Gothic word "*wunian*", which like "*buan*" means to remain or stay in a place, is more revealing about how dwelling on the earth is to be experienced. According to the signification of this word, dwelling means "to be at peace". Heidegger points out that the German word for peace, "*Friede*", does not merely mean being safeguarded from harm but it means positively "to spare"; that is, to leave something to its own nature or Being, to its preserve of peace, to let beings be.

> To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. *The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving*. It pervades dwelling in its whole range. That range reveals itself to us as soon as we reflect that human being consists in dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth (BDT: 147).

Heidegger envisaged this manner of human dwelling on the earth in his early writings by way of the notion of *being-in-the-world* and in his later writings by way of the *fourfold*, which is the ensemble of meaning preserved in the unity of earth, sky, mortals and divinities.[20]

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

The human, as long as it is, is never completely closed off because a certain luminosity and transparency is always intrinsic to existence. Heidegger calls this existential structure disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*). The human is the "clearing" (*Lichtung*) for entities to show up in one way or another, and it is so not through another entity but itself. The "*Da*" of Dasein is the clearing, the openness of Being, on account of which entities are "accessible in the light or hidden in the dark". Meaning as such is housed in this language-permeated openness, which is "world" or Being or, as I shall argue below, also the fourfold.

World is defined in *Being and Time* as "'[t]he wherein' of an act of understanding" (BT: 119) and the essence of the world or worldhood as "that referential totality which constitutes significance" (BT: 160). World is not an entity like nature but the horizon which conditions the possibility for all our encounters with entities like nature. Julian Young remarks that Being in the sense of intelligibility "is just a synonym for that which, in discussing truth, Heidegger refers to as (fundamental) horizon of disclosure and as 'world' in the ontological sense" (2002: 11). Young contrasts this sense of Being with the sense of unintelligibility and concealment or earth as depicted in the strife between earth and world in "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1935). In "On the Essence of Ground" (1929), Heidegger writes that "Being (not beings) is given only in transcendence as a grounding that finds itself in a projecting of world" (1998: 132). In the seminal "On the Essence of Truth" (1930), as Young points out, the historical possibilities of a historical people are said to be "conserved in the disclosure of beings as a whole" (ET: 146) and the essence of truth is said to be "that which, self-concealing, is unique in the unremitting history of the disclosure of the 'meaning' of what we call Being—what we for a long time have been accustomed to considering only as beings as a whole" (ET: 153). In the Letter, too, world is said to be the clearing of Being alone (LH: 248). In "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry" (1936) we read:

> [L]anguage first grants the possibility of standing in the midst of the openness of beings (the clearing). Only where there is language, is there world, that is, the constantly changing cycle of decision and work, of action and responsibility, but also of arbitrariness and turmoil, decay and confusion. Only where world holds sway is there history (HEP: 56; my gloss).

In short, world is the realm of meaning as a whole—Being itself or "that on the basis of which entities are already understood"—constituted in and through language, not only articulated linguistically. The world is the *topos* where we dwell, build and preserve, the home where things matter, where we can authentically take issue with our own being.

---

[20] In the 1949 essay "The Turning" (1949), which is about responding to the technological understanding of Being, Heidegger asks: "Will we dwell as those at home in nearness, so that we will belong primally within the fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities?" (TT: 49). He implies that our capacity for responding to the technological age hinges primarily on dwelling within the fourfold or being-in-the-world.

Heidegger's later thought is often seen as centred on the notion of "the event" (*Ereignis*) of Being's manifestation. The event is not merely the historical site of intelligibility; it means the reciprocal relation of appropriation between Being and human. Intelligibility and the human-linguistic house of intelligibility appropriate each other mutually in order that a historical understanding of beings as a whole can come to pass. Unconcealment or truth of Being is housed in historical epochs of human communities. Epochs are constellations of historical intelligibilities. But, as we saw in the second chapter, it is not given to us to know the causes, reasons, grounds, whereabouts or genesis of the event. All our efforts to explain the event causally can only take us back to further and further events of Being's manifestation (Sheehan 2006: 90). Heidegger observes that the unfolding of a world "cannot be explained by anything else nor can it be fathomed through anything else … causes and grounds remain unsuitable for the world's worlding" (T: 177). Heidegger's phrase "*es gibt*" (it gives) stresses that the event is not of human making. According to Iain Thomson, this emphasis may be seen as a way of saying that the onto-historical currents of our world shape us more than we shape them (2011: 30).

Malpas points out that the idea of the event of manifestation and appropriation prefigures in the 1919 lecture course, *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*. Speaking of lived experience, Heidegger remarks that the experiencer appropriates the experience to her/himself and the stream of experiences appropriates the experiencer to itself. The stream of experiences "is not a process but rather an *event of appropriation [Ereignis]*.… If I understand it in this way, then I understand it not as process, as thing, as object, but in a quite new way, as an event of appropriation" (2008: 60). Malpas observes that the event is the experience of the disclosive happening (2006: 218). Hence, more than event *Ereignis* may be said to be the unfolding eventality of Being.

Now, in the 1950 essay "The Thing", Heidegger contends that eventality can appropriately unfold only within the "fourfold", and when it so happens, such space of intelligibility is in fact the "world". "The appropriating mirror-play of the simple onefold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, *we call world*" (T: 177; my emphasis). That is, eventing *is* worlding. The unfolding of the historical essence of humanity, or of gods or earth or sky, is dependent on the fourfold. Similarly, things enveloped in rich cultural meaning, as opposed to the unmeaning and merely theoretical presence of objects, can arise only out of the fourfold. The world as fourfold can be authentically attained only by dwelling amidst things. Heidegger remarks that authentic things and dwellers are becoming fewer on account of calculative intelligibility. "But things are also compliant and modest in number, compared with the countless objects everywhere of equal value, compared with the measureless mass of men as living beings" (T: 180).

The elements of the fourfold are earth and sky, mortals and divinities. Meaning emerges and maintains itself in the interstitial space arising out of the ensemble of these four. As Young observes, the first pair in the foursome, earth and sky, stands for natural elements, and the second pair, mortals and divinities, for cultural elements.

> Earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising up into plant and animal…. The sky is the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the

changing moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds and blue depth of the ether (BDT: 147).

The two natural elements of the fourfold enthral and overwhelm us. The more objective and neutral the way phenomena appear to us, the less they arise out of the fourfold, and the less powerful, meaningful and forceful they are. Our nearness to such phenomena is decreased through calculative intelligibility, and they become controllable and conquerable. Hence, earth and sky are not scientific objects for theoretical scrutiny; they are the earth and sky that we experience as both these affect us and impinge on us in their nurturing and threatening, enchanting and overpowering ways.

The cultural elements, mortals and divinities, shape and infuse with significance all phenomena that we experience meaningfully, phenomena that matter to us and that we care about. Mortals are humans in their capability for death as death; that is, in their authentic receptivity to their finitude as beings who live on the earth and under the sky. The finite end point of human existence, death, anticipatively orients the finite possibilities of human situations. Mortal beings of the fourfold receive and foster finite meanings.

"The divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead. Out of the holy sway of the godhead, the god appears in his presence or withdraws into his concealment" (BDT: 147). What "gods" mean in such passages is a matter of controversy. According to Charles Taylor, the gods of later Heidegger stand for the intrinsic or strong goods of our cultural ethos (2007: 449).[21] They do not seem to be, in any case, the gods of traditional religions; rather, they seem to stand for those events or figures or symbols, which can attract around them certain meanings that a historical community holds in awe. That some of these cultural forces and figures are divinized, even appropriated by institutional religions, is secondary. The gods, in this sense, evoke the sense of the holy, the sense of awe that Being or meaning is granted to us rather than made, constructed or created by us. The holy, thus, means eventality of the world, the space of meaning which inspires wonder and authority. The gods too are, at the same time, not produced by humans. They too are granted by an understanding of Being. They are not "idols" that have nothing to do with the world. In fact, Heidegger awaits a new god for eventing the post-technological world. The new god or last god is said to mean

---

[21] Julian Young writes: "'the gods,' *die Göttlichen*, literally are 'the godly ones'.… In some sense, therefore, the gods *are* the 'divine destinings'…, the fundamental *ethos* of a community…" (2006: 374). Young continues that in "*Being and Time*, Heidegger's word for the divine destinings is 'heritage.' And he speaks there of heritage as being embodied in 'heroes' (BT 385, 391), more or less mythologized figures preserved in the collective memory of a culture, who embody, collectively, what it is to live properly as an Athenian, a German, a New Zealander, or whatever. Heroes are, in a word, 'role' or—much better—'life' models. The gods of later Heidegger are, I suggest, the reappearance of *Being and Time*'s heroes, rethought in a deeper and richer way" (2006: 374–375). So, for Young, Heidegger's gods are divine destinings emanating from magical cultural figures, who could be thought of as a modern version of the Greek gods, and not merely the moral frameworks of a culture, although that could be one of the divine destinings.

"the other beginning of the immeasurable possibilities of our history" (CP: 326). As Heidegger told Bhikhu Maha Mani, such a sense of the divine and the sacred is central to being human. It means looking beyond the merely human.

A pure, unsullied nature is, therefore, a myth. All our meaningful encounters with nature as something sacred, as something to be preserved and cherished, as the nurturing ground of all life, or even as the reservoir of resources for production, the useful par excellence, always already means an understanding mediated through the world or fourfold. It is always the case that the fourfold houses a conception of the things of the earth, earth itself and the artefacts we turn earth into (earth), a conception of the elemental forces of nature and how we may negotiate them (sky), a conception of the meaning-bestowing forces that hold sway in our culture and point to us our place on the earth and under the sky (gods), and a conception of the fact that earth, sky and the forces of meaning that hold sway over world independently of us affect, enthral or disillusion us in one way or another (mortals).[22] Only in the gathering unity of the fourfold can anything be meaningful, whether nature, human beings or gods. The stream in the woods never becomes a matter of our engagement, something which we think we must conserve and care for, if it were a pure thing of nature, totally independent of us. On the other hand, the conception of beings as totally dependent on us, as objects to a subject, as resources to a producer and as raw materials to a worker, makes them meaningless, uniform items. They are not things in Heidegger's sense. Meaningful things emerge out of the interstitial space of meaning: world or fourfold.

Hence, Malpas points out that "the very idea of nature as that which could be 'pure'… and distinct from the human already runs counter to the way in which even nature emerges as nature, along with the human, only within the fourfold, and so only in relation to all four of the elements that are there gathered together" (2006: 234–235). This also means, Malpas emphasizes, nature, humans and divinities should not be conceived in any order of priority within the fourfold. None is prior to any other in the fourfold, and it is in their belonging together or unity that they make sense. The human, therefore, is in no way the centre of the "world" of meaning, but an element of it. We should hear Heidegger's dismissal of Sartre's statement that we are in a situation where there are only humans (Sartre 2001: 32) because we are "precisely in a situation where principally there is Being" (LH: 254) as implying the unity of the posthuman world, and not as any sort of antihumanism. This alone is meant by the decentring of the subject. Intelligibility emerges out of the way natural and cultural forces and events affect our exposed, vulnerable and responsive selfhood; we do not create it. To the extent that we are vulnerable openness to these forces, we do not centre them. We are neither the

---

[22] According to Heidegger, the fact that a scientific conception of nature holds complete sway in fully modernized societies means that science itself is divinized. He told Bhikhu Maha Mani that the communists' god was science. The unconditionality of the belief in science, that is trust in the certainty of the results of sciences, is a belief that is in a certain way something which transcends the human being, and hence a religion according to Heidegger.

only nor the central participants in the emergence of meaning. However, the historical trajectory of Western engagement with meaning and its origin has been leading to a uniform and calculable understanding of meaning, centred on the human subject, which now is in its planetary phase as developmentalism. From a Heideggerian stance, posthuman thought is nothing but thoughtful response to this situation.

Human beings, as the finite, mortal openness of Being "*are* in the fourfold by dwelling" (BDT: 148). It is as dwellers and builders ("preserving that dwells") that we authentically participate in the fourfold. Preserving means securing and maintaining the fourfold in things, for without "things" that are rich in cultural meaning there is no oneness/unity of the fourfold. Within the fourfold, mortals "nurse and nurture the things that grow, and specially construct things that do not grow… *Dwelling*, insofar as it keeps or secures the fourfold in things, is, as this keeping, *a building*" (BDT: 149). Things modern and things traditional can be gatherings of meaning in this sense and can make our dwelling–preserving significant. The problematic angle of technological modernity is the way it disrupts the gathering of the fourfold in things. Genuine buildings, whether modern or traditional, preserve the fourfold in this manner; such buildings are "a distinctive letting-dwell". In this sense, a "place" is "that open, cleared, yet bounded region in which we find ourselves gathered together with other persons and things, and in which we are opened up to the world and the world to us" (Malpas 2006: 221). A place does not conceal the thingliness of things and the manifoldness of meaning.

That manner of dwelling which specially preserves the thingliness of things saves the earth and begets peaceable nurturing of beings Heidegger calls "the festival". Festivals are not work breaks as modern holidays are. The festival is suggestive of a world of meaning that subverts the productionist metaphysics of the subject, according to which humans are first of all workers and producers. Heidegger's ontology, rather, suggests that humans are festive sites for the unfolding of meaning. Humans disclose beings in their Being, in their meaningfulness as things, rather than produce them. *Being and Time*'s concernful dealings with things should not be interpreted as fascination with work and production but as our engaged, care-structured approach towards beings, out of which, it is true, the reductionist technologism of modernity could emerge, which is however neither its original nor most significant possibility. Heidegger would not deny that these two extreme possibilities of festival and productionism coexist within the same ontological openness just as he affirms repeatedly that the site of the danger of technologism is also the site of the saving power. The saving power that the festival suggests is definitely a post-technological manner of dwelling on the earth with the needed and not the superfluous. Heidegger rejects the protestant ethic of the frugal human entrepreneur/worker, who toils hard to amass capital, cumulatively multiplies it and endlessly holds it in circulation. The paradigm of endless production and consumption militates against the Heideggerian spirit of living with the needed as caretakers of the earth. The festival evokes joyful fulfilment of being the disclosive site that the human animal is.

The festival means, simply put, to be the openness of Being, letting the fourfold open up in the play of meaning or eventality. Being on a holiday literally means to be at a sacred, "holy" site. The holy is, Heidegger writes,

> the law which ordains its measure in a different way than does human law. Seen from this viewpoint … the holy reigns above all *dispositions,* because it is the sending of destiny.… This destiny, which is sent by the holy, is the festival. The festive character of the festival has its determinate ground in the *holy.* The holy lets the festival be the wedding festival that it is. Such letting-be of a being in its Being is the primordial greeting. The festival is the primal event [*Ereignis*] of the greeting, in which *the holy* greets, and in the greeting appears (R: 128).[23]

The festival is as poetic an event as eventality itself is poetic because the festival as the celebration of the event of Being's manifestation brings forth (*poiesis*) Being festively—that is, with a flourish. The festival is unrestrained letting beings be; it is "to fetch something home into its essence, in order to bring the essence for the first time into its genuine appearing" (QCT: 28); it is "to give utterance to insight into that which is" (TT: 48).

There cannot be an impervious separation between the festive, the everyday and the fully technological. Perfectly festive poesy might never be. Our everyday practice of authentic posthuman dwelling on the earth has to be the interface between perfect poesy and absolute technology. This means manners of preserving and caring for things as things and letting the Other be Other in our caring involvements. In the ecological phase of capital, our totalizing industriousness can reduce the planet to a pool of resources. Posthuman dwelling, therefore, means also subversion of total industry and political will-formation in favour of preserving and safeguarding the earth and festive holidaying. Nothing suits the festival more than living with the needed. In this way, posthuman dwelling subverts calculative intelligibility, the ground of capital that powers human industry in the modern age, and consumerism, the endless preference satisfaction of the modern individual.

From the perspective of posthuman dwelling on the earth, then, development cannot mean unlimited transformation of nature into artefact, unlimited production for the sake of global justice and unlimited planetary expansion of the reductive technological culture. Justice or responding to the Other's neediness can be understood only as free restraint of the global proliferation of wants and free, reasonable chances for everyone to meet her/his needs. With the admirable achievement and global spread of science and technology, it is now possible to imagine satisfying and healthy life for people everywhere, if only sufficient free space is made for them to find their manifold ways to meaning and fulfilment outside and also within and on the borders of the dominant techno-capitalistic form of contemporary life.

I shall now proceed to paint a provisional, tentative picture of the manifoldness I have been speaking about in development conceptions and acts according to the posthuman manner of dwelling on the earth.

---

[23] For discussion of a festive peasant, see Heidegger (2000: 74).

6.4 Various Development Imaginations

I have so far proceeded in three ways in this chapter. Firstly, the "sense" of development is characterized as the ascendant ontological dynamism of humans which constantly lets them imagine and effectuate more humanly desirable forms of life. Secondly, I characterized the ascendant dynamism more positively as desire for good life conceived variously. Thirdly, I characterized our posthuman dwelling on the earth as preservers in the light of the capitalization of nature and conspicuous consumption, paraded as development. In this section, I come back to the idea of development as good life variously conceived in order to look closely at the various conceptions of development.

Development today is a minefield of contestations, controversies, resentments and dissensions. Imaginations of the good life do come into conflict. Within developmental states like India, the world of the outcasts of development is painted with cynicism, suspicion and rage. Goulet's observation that development is a dialectical process that continuously churns out both positive and negative developments is indisputable. Aseem Shrivastava and Ashish Kothari observe in their recent book:

> India is important to TNCs today because even if only 20–25 per cent of the country can be roped into the global consumer economy, it amounts to over 250 million people, which is more than the size of the populations of the UK, France and Germany taken together, and almost the size of the US (2012: 323).

Development is not innocent of calculations. Neoliberal developmentalism levels off the various imaginations of development and thus fosters a large underbelly of discontents and protestations. With the neoliberal notion of progress as endless growth, these contestations can never come to a halt.

The globally organized uniformity of developmental imaginations can be contested only when good life is imagined in relation to the world/fourfold. To be sure, world is a finite space of meaning, not fully insulated from the outside. It is porously open, and its boundaries and terrain are indeterminate. It can never be fully brought to light and clarified. When we deny this vulnerability to world, we deny our very being in common. From this denial arises fascist and parochial communities that are closed off to the outside, substantivized ego-communes that repel being in common. At the same time, the porosity of the world, its hospitality and openness cannot be the door to uniformity, equivalence and standardization, leading to the homogenous resourcefulness of things and technologization of the human animal. Imagining development and good life variously comes down to mean stemming the global tide of transforming human essence into controlled machine and the concomitant ecological ramifications of this transformation.

Hence, I have rejected both deep ecological and quietistic interpretations of Heidegger. The encounter between Heidegger's philosophy and environmental or development thought need not be deep ecological. The deep ecological interpretive line of Heidegger came into prominence following a spate of essays by Michael Zimmerman in the 1980s. That Zimmerman himself has come to entertain suspicions about the use of Heidegger's thought for deep ecology is in a sense a

blessing in disguise. This scenario opens up Heidegger's thought for a more dynamic and politically viable possibility in relation to the global south.[24] In this book, I have been drawn to Heidegger on account of such a possibility. The non-deep ecological and not triumphantly developmental approach I have followed can be summarized under the following two briefs.

1. The term "development" itself, for want of a better term, need not be abandoned, because it stands for the ascendant dynamism of the human condition, but the post-war "development discourse" calls for reasoned, strategic and politically viable forms of resistances because it seeks to establish in every part of the globe the reign of calculative intelligibility through neoliberal developmentalism, which leads to technologization of humans and devastation of the planet. Resisting the dominant development discourse is not a rejection of "development", which is a reactionary and ecofascist response to developmentalism, blind to human ascent and to human destitution. This is not the option proposed in such postdevelopment literature as Escobar's *Encountering Development* (1995). Jeering criticism of postdevelopment is itself a techno-modernist response, buttressed by the belief in salvation through the market and technology.

2. The ecomodernist discourse of "sustainable development" with its technological and capitalistic optimism also calls for resistance.[25] On the other hand, a

---

[24] Neil Evernden in *The Natural Alien* refers to George Steiner's observation that worshipping objective science and exploitative technology is the natural culmination of western metaphysics according to Heidegger, and so this thought in its environmental format naturally calls for saving the earth. Evernden concludes: "Even though his concern is almost exclusively with humanity, the understanding he brings to his subject points to a radically different relationship between humans and earth" (1993: 68). Evernden is right in considering Heidegger's thought as subversive of the purely technoscientific human relation with the earth. However, for him, Heidegger's statements in "Building Dwelling Thinking" about dwelling in terms of saving the earth has deep ecological resonance. I have argued in this chapter that the deep ecological reading does not recognize Heidegger's manner of problematizing nature–human encounter by way of a less violent human engagement with nature rather than leaving nature alone. More importantly, human encounter with the earth is central for the unfolding of the fourfold.

[25] For a critique of sustainable development discourse, see Escobar (1995: 192–210) and Davison (2001). Davison's book critically discusses the Promethean promise of the idea of sustainable development, according to which "the earth can be effectively managed as a device capable of ensuring the indefinite survival and moral well-being of humanity", and discusses "the ways in which the language of sustainable development coopts, marginalizes, and oppresses cultural discourses and practices of sustainability not defined by the technocratic agenda of ecomodernism" (2001: 36). The study of Ingrid Leman Stefanovic, *Safeguarding our Common Future* (2000), is problematic because her interpretation of the notion of sustainability does not sufficiently challenge the exploitative market ideology behind that notion as exposed in the Brundtland Commission Report, *Our Common Future* (1987). For her, the cultural shift that is called for "may mean that individual, human needs and means of meeting those needs are evaluated more realistically from the perspective of obligations that announce themselves in terms of the *relation between* human requirements and the existing landscape" (2000: 144). Emphasizing Heidegger's stress on context and care without taking into consideration his critical account of the technological essence of modernity could end up with the proposal of a hopelessly unequal world in terms of resource use.

non-quietistic reading of the later Heidegger can mean responding to human destitution, technologization and environmental devastation without any necessary supposition of sustainable development. "No single man, no group of men, no commission of prominent statesmen, scientists, and technicians, no conference of leaders of commerce and industry" (MA: 52) can usher in epochal changes. At the same time, humans can be thoughtful participants in epochal changes by attuning themselves to the distress or the lack of distress in distress. Giving voice to the distress or our deeply buried cultural anxiety can bring about a freeing relationship with the essence of technology. For this, several steps of unlearning like the following are necessary: (a) ponderously receiving the cultural essence or meaning of technology, (b) being open to manifold meanings despite the dominant technological meaning of things, (c) advancing individual and political sensitivity to and initiating political discourses of the technological essence of culture, (d) reviving meaningful marginal social practices inhibited by technological domination, (e) initiating new social practices that either develop a free relation to technological understanding or resist it, (f) persisting with them irrespective of negative evaluation in terms of the dominant understanding, (g) marshalling social awakening about resource intensive lifestyles, commodity fetishism, consumerism, inequality, displacement, migration and environmental decadence, (h) perceptively resisting or accepting techno-modernist benchmarks, (i) responding appropriately to the invasion of the global market into every facet of global human existence, and (j) being open to the manifold senses of the good life. Without such subversive responses, I believe, the non-quietistic interpretation of Heidegger's critique of techno-modernity cannot be complete.

Resistance, however, calls for caution. *First of all*, Heidegger's tinkering with fascistic politics forewarns that self-assertive, violent or totalitarian counter domination strategies themselves affirm rather than resist the wilful and power-driven essence of technology.[26] *Secondly*, resistance to developmentalism in the global south in fact has nothing to do with soldiering to forge a non-Western alliance against the global north. That would be slamming the door in the face of our being in common. Hence, global south can only mean *vulnerability and distress (or the lack of distress in distress) in the face of developmentalism and the world-dominating trail of the technological understanding of Being*. It means distressed and at the same time seduced and consensual participation in the calculative intelligibility

---

[26] The hermeneutic communism of Vattimo and Zabala rejects both developmentalism and revolutionary violence in this spirit. They write: "Communism and hermeneutics or, better, 'hermeneutic communism' leaves aside both the *ideal of development* and also the general call for revolution. Unlike Alain Badiou, Antonio Negri, and other contemporary Marxist theorists, we do not believe that the twenty-first century calls for revolution because the forces of the politics of descriptions are too powerful, violent, and oppressive to be overcome through a parallel insurrection: only such a weak thought as hermeneutics can avoid violent ideological revolts and therefore defend the weak" (2011: 3).

of capital and self-interest of the modernized individual. Global south means all spaces of resistances to technological understanding and all spaces of human distress in the face of the formulaic and calculable. In this sense, globalism can only mean resilient global solidarity against calculative intelligibility and its concretion as development. That advanced and critical Western philosophical expression has set sight on distress emanating from the global domination of the essence of technology clearly directs our attention to the geographical west and the alternatives there. However, the geography of the global south has any meaning only with reference to post-war developmentalism and the world-dominating trail of technological understanding.

Thirdly, resistance against calculative intelligibility can neither be a global solidarity *for* romanticizing the "primitive" nor *against* acceptable political forms of social and economic equality.[27] Hence, what calls for resistance are not only the myriad cultivations of the essence of Western technology but also elite techno-modernist solidarities against those who are most vulnerable in the face of the gradual world-domination of technological metaphysics in the global south. However, subversive discourses against dominations of all types are constantly in danger of calculated appropriation for the sake of dominant interests. It is not therefore surprising that the postmodern, poststructural method of tearing apart the conceptual universes of dominant frames is often taken recourse to by conservatives in

---

[27] Although Heidegger's philosophy of the essence of technology neither demonized technology nor imagined its elimination, there is no doubt that he personally disliked technological modernity and modern democracy. In *Der Spiegel* interview, Heidegger stated categorically that he was "unconvinced" that democracy was the political system that could "accommodate itself to the technological age" (GS: 104). In "Why Do I Stay in the Provinces?", a 1934 article in the Nazi newspaper *Der Alemanne*, he exhibited a distinct aversion for city life and claimed that his work had an inner relationship to the Black Forest and its people, which "comes from a centuries-long and irreplaceable rootedness in the Alemannian-Swabian soil" (2010: 28). In 1955, Heidegger told an audience of his hometown Messkirch that the new world created by science and technology since the seventeenth century has given rise to a "new relation of man to the world and his place in it", whereby the world itself is appearing "as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought", which nothing can any longer resist (MA: 50). Heidegger laments that this epochal change has given rise to "the turmoil of the big cities" and chaining of rural people to radio, television and the modern techniques of communication, which remove them from their fields and farmstead, the earth, the change from night to day, "the conventions and customs of his village" and "the tradition of his native world" (MA: 48). The critical distance from and openness towards tradition and custom wrought by modernity does not seem to interest Heidegger in such passages. Iain Thomson concludes that Heidegger's own personal dislikes for the modern did not make him a Luddite and "the philosophical implications of Heidegger's thinking far exceed the rather narrow conclusions he himself drew from them" (2005: 70). To be on the path of a thought should indeed mean to be able to set sight on the possibilities of that thought, rather than be limited by the constraints set by the thinker.

the west[28] and right-wing Hindu nationalists in India (see Nanda 2003). The project of resistance can only be vigilant and awake with regard to the deft operations of such sabotage, and confront and challenge it constantly. It cannot be fully prevented.

Fourthly, there cannot be the sanguine conclusion that these resistances would soon capture centre stage. We will come back to face this difficulty in the next chapter, but it needs to be emphasized in passing here that judged by the logic of the dominant technological understanding all resistant conceptions of the good life would appear infeasible, inefficient and morally indefensible. For manifold understandings of good life to become acceptable, Heidegger points out, a new beginning is to be instituted.

After his activism of 1933, Heidegger's activism is an activism of responsive thinking rather than willing. Meditative thinking is clearly a subversive response to technological nihilism, but any activism after 1933 has to be non-decisionistic, non-voluntaristic, distinct from the techno-modernist will-to-power, and indeed, as Hannah Arendt puts it, a turn towards willing "*not* to will", a recompense for his own fall into the original sin of will-to-power in 1933 (Arendt 1978: 173). We are, then, speaking about a "weak" activism, where the resoluteness of the will sees no "moment of vision", no abyssal clarity of the project of subversion, no resoluteness of purposeful action. Subversive action is the expression of distress in the face of technologically organized uniformity. Subversive action is anxious, distressful and irresolute ushering in of the manifoldness of Being's manifestation, and therewith also manifold conceptions of the good life.

<center>***</center>

---

[28] Bruno Latour discusses such appropriation of critique by unanticipated quarters in the essay "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam?." Latour is anxious about the fact that social constructivist critiques of positing ideological arguments as matters of fact are being used to discredit credible matters of fact as disguised ideologies. He notes that "entire Ph.D. programs are still running to make sure that good American kids are learning the hard way that facts are made up, that there is no such thing as natural, unmediated, unbiased access to truth, that we are always prisoners of language, that we always speak from a particular standpoint, and so on, while *dangerous extremists* are using the very same argument of social construction to destroy hard-won evidence that could save our lives" (2004: 227; my emphasis). Fearing the trivialization of critique, he asks: "What has become of critique when a book that claims that no plane ever crashed into the Pentagon can be a bestseller?" (Reference here is to Thierry Meyssan's *911: The Big Lie*, 2002, but Latour also referred in the previous sentence to Jean Baudrillard's *The Spirit of Terrorism and Requiem for the Twin Towers*, 2002.) Latour is calling for sanity in the critical enterprise not by being more "objective" but by desisting from distinguishing between matters of fact and matters of concern. For him, even scientific objects are matters of concern; they are "things" like Heidegger's jug in "The Thing" or bridge in "Building Dwelling Thinking". The social scientist's job is to show that all objects are constructed, thick and, thus, matters of concern, through more and not less empiricism, to show that "all entities, including computers, cease to be objects defined simply by their inputs and outputs and become again things, mediating, assembling, gathering many more folds than the 'united four' (of Heidegger)" (2004: 248; my gloss). How does it help us get away from those who want to sabotage our project? I suppose by showing empirically how their objects of love are constructed for the sake of their own destructive pet projects, and showing how the objects of others as not based on such projects. I fail to see how this could be of help since the project of sabotage itself constructs its object on the strength of an impassioned moral narrative.

Aiden Davison points out three problems with regard to the weak activism of Heidegger. (i) In the Heideggerian approach, there is no reason to hope for a different order of everyday practices in the post-technological epoch. (ii) Modern practices are all claimed by the essence of technology, except the practice of meditative thinking, and Heidegger's and Heideggerians' references to authentic practices and genuine "things" are all pre-modern. (iii) This amounts to the dualism of praxis and *theoria*, the collapse of praxis into technological understanding and the displacement of praxis by thinking (Davison 2001: 136–138). I do agree that we need to move away from Heidegger's occasional betrayal of his own romantic yearning for the primitive, and his ambivalences on the issue of human agency. However, it is by now clear that in this study, I have been steering clear of both romanticization of the primitive and passivism. But Davison agrees that "we need to be careful in our questioning of Heidegger's displacement of *praxis* to recognize that late-modern life is increasingly enframed within a frenetic productivism" (2001: 139). Here, Davison is experiencing the difficulty Heidegger also experienced and faced squarely. There is the logic of calculation and efficiency at work in the modern culture, which frames and claims every practice, every thought to itself. This logic itself is a cultural development, spread over about two thousand years and is now in the planetary phase of its development.

A good exemplification of the power of the culture of calculation is the type of solutions we envisage for the environmental crisis. Pavan Sukhdev's ambitious *Corporation 2020* envisages a green economy by 2020, and making corporations "green" is the only solution available to Sukhdev because "today's corporation is perhaps the most important institution in modern society" (not religion in any case, but not even the government), and the optimism of his claim rests on the belief that all positive and negative material effects of businesses "deserve measurement, disclosure, and management" (2012: 5). This optimism that the corporation is our new promise of salvation, that the ecological crisis is technologically manageable and that, for the rest, the modern market and corporate systems can go on with business as usual are probably necessary ways of approaching the issues from a techno-modernist perspective. One need not disparage the green economy initiative. But Heidegger's argument is only that such paradigms are envisaged right from within the technological understanding of Being and cannot, therefore, be subversive of that understanding, which is its source. Heidegger's answer to this difficulty is meditative thinking, which, I think, unlike Davison, is also praxis.

I want to come to the issue of praxis with the help of the four claims made by Hubert Dreyfus in the essay "Heidegger on Gaining a Free Relationship to Technology" (1995). Firstly, Dreyfus claims that we can have a free, non-technological and meaningful relationship with items of modern technology.[29] Secondly,

---

[29] This follows from the distinction Dreyfus makes in the essay between technologies and technological understanding of Being and his reference is to Heidegger's example of the highway bridge in "Building Dwelling Thinking". Bruno Latour's call to collapse the Heideggerian distinction between thing and object, and to analyse the cultural layers of what are supposedly mere technological objects just as we do with things or cultural objects might be significant when we consider how such objects are reified in terms of meaningless efficiency.

Dreyfus points out that there is the possibility of a middle way in the technological age between complete technological nihilism and a new epochal understanding of Being, which is "releasement towards things and openness to the mystery".[30] Thirdly, Dreyfus argues that coming to understand the essence of technology by itself has no freeing capacity but can only foster the saving power in our marginal practices.[31] Fourthly, Dreyfus argues that Heidegger's statement "only a god can save us" means that only something that can gather the many marginal practices into a meaningful and cohesive whole can delegitimize the centrality of technological truth.[32]

I suggest that we take Heidegger's puzzling phrases like "meditative thinking", "releasement towards things" and "openness to the mystery" as modes of praxis. Meditative thinking in fact should break the dualistic separation between theory and practice. What Heidegger objects to is not praxis as such but practices in the modern world that toe the line of efficiency, measurability and technological reductionism to the extent that the entrenchment of the techno-modern mode of thought and action disparages our other meaningful and non-efficient manners of approaching, dealing with and thinking about phenomena. Let me now dwell a bit longer on Heidegger's notion of meditative thinking with an aim to show how it is not bereft of praxis.

The later Heidegger makes a clear distinction between what he calls simply "thinking" or "meditative thinking" and traditional thinking (WCT: 55). Meditative thinking is said to be the act of "moving away from the attitude of representational thinking" (PI: 32). The new way of thinking is a sensibility towards the non-efficient and incalculable. In 1955, Heidegger characterized philosophy as "co-respondence which responds to the Being of being" (WIP: 69), something that "occurs in different ways according to how the appeal of Being speaks" (WIP: 75), and something that is tuned and attuned so that "our attitude is adjusted

---

[30] According to Heidegger, releasement and openness "grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way. They promise us a new ground and foundation upon which we can stand and endure in the world of technology without being imperiled by it" (MA: 55). Heidegger notes that in this way, our autochthonous life in the world may someday be recaptured "in a changed form".

[31] In Dreyfus's passage of reference, Heidegger says that through coming to understand the essence of technology, "we are not yet saved. But we are thereupon summoned to hope in the growing light of the saving power. How can this happen? Here and now and *in little things*, that we may foster the saving power in its increase" (QCT: 33; my emphasis). Dreyfus interprets "little things" as marginal practices such as non-efficient comportments like friendship, using local stuff and encouraging non-market-efficient political relations. These need not be pre-modern but could be contemporary although non-mainstream. I must here mention Davison's fear that most examples of non-efficient marginal practices betray a fascination with the pre-modern. This, however, is unwarranted, for we can pinpoint, as I have been trying to show throughout this study, several contemporary practices and imagined progressive practices, which are non-efficient and meaningful, are worthy of our committed attention.

[32] Dreyfus also refers to Heidegger's statement in "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1935) that in the openness for Being, "there must be a being in which the openness takes its stand and achieves constancy" (OWA: 36). This being, around which can centre the new cultural clearing, Dreyfus insists, is Heidegger's god.

sometimes in this, sometimes in that way" (WIP: 77). Because the essence of the human being is "care", philosophy is an attunement towards Being. This is also the later Heidegger's characterization of "thinking". In the 1930 lecture "On the Essence of Truth", we read: "Philosophical thinking is especially the stern and resolute openness that does not disrupt the concealing but entreats its unbroken essence into the open region of understanding and thus into its own truth" (ET: 152). In the 1946 essay "Anaximander's Saying", the essence of philosophy is said to lie in being claimed by Being. Philosophy is not myth but "comes into being only out of, and in, thinking. But this thinking is the thinking of Being. Thinking does not come into being. It is insofar as Being presences" (AS: 265).

Elsewhere, Heidegger speaks of philosophy as metaphysics, as representational thought coming to an end, but adds that this does not mean "thinking" as such is coming to an end—thinking as responding to Being according to Being's appeal. In the initial part of the Letter, this manner of thinking is juxtaposed against action. The action of thinking is thinking, not effecting. The act of thinking relates Being to the human being. Action in the sense of effecting or bearing results "lies in Being and is directed toward beings. Thinking, in contrast, lets itself be claimed by Being so that it can say the truth of Being" (LH: 239). That is, action arises out of Being as the background of entities of one kind or another; thinking, on the other hand, relates the human being to Being. Thinking as such has nothing directly to do with beings; it has anything to do only with the Being of beings, their meaning. Thinking is not commitment to action but commitment to the truth of Being and its history, which determines all human conditions and commitments. For Heidegger, the interpretation of thinking as either theoretical or practical already circulates within the technical interpretation of thinking since Plato, whose privileging of theory over practice is a reactive attempt to preserve the independence of thinking from "acting and doing". But "the fact that observation is a kind of concern is just as primordial as the fact that action has its own kind of sight" (BT: 99) because theory and practice "are possibilities of Being for an entity whose Being must be defined as 'care'" (BT: 238). However, since Plato's separation of the two, thinking has been haunted by the ideal of science. According to Heidegger, the rigour of thinking does not lie in "technical-theoretical exactness of concepts" but "purely in the element of the truth of Being and lets the simplicity of its manifold dimensions rule" (LH: 241). Thinking is belonging to and listening to Being; it means loving and favouring something by bestowing its essential possibilities to itself and thus letting it truly be.

In Heidegger's understanding of thinking as response to Being, it is to be noted that thinking is the "engaged" comportment towards beings as a whole and the place of beings within the "whole" or Being; thinking is not disinterested gazing, measurement or calculative ordering of phenomena. Moreover, thinking is response to contemporary history and milieu in as much as the history of Being determines the present. What is necessary to get away from the technological interpretation of thinking is to be open to the meaning of phenomena just as they appear and make their appeal to us. Heidegger's own thinking, which exemplifies "thinking" in the sense advocated, is a distressed response to the technological manifestation of Being in an attempt to open up spaces for a new thinking, a new response to Being.

In "Building Dwelling Thinking", after the exposition of dwelling and building as letting beings be in the active sense of preserving them, Heidegger remarks that "thinking itself belongs to dwelling in the same sense as building" (BDT: 158) because thinking is the letting be of the work of truth without any specific directedness towards entities, whereas building is precisely letting entities be what they are in the sense of cultivating and making. Building and thinking are inseparable in our authentic being-in-the-world or dwelling. In *What is Called Thinking?*, the good thinker's act is compared to that of a good cabinetmaker:

> If he is to become a true cabinetmaker, he makes himself answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering within wood—to wood as it enters into man's dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature. In fact, this relatedness to wood is what maintains the whole craft (WCT: 14–15).

That is, just as the essence of the cabinetmaker's craft is the attuned and caring relatedness to the wood, so is the thinker's craft the attuned and engaged relatedness to Being.

Hence, it is to be noted that for Heidegger, *what we do and how we do what we do (our action as such) is essentially the very "letting be" that thinking itself is*. Such action is exemplified in the good cabinetmaker's craft. It is also exemplified by the essential meaning of "use":

> 'To use' means, first, to let a thing be what it is and how it is. To let it be this way requires that the used thing be cared for in its essential nature—we do so by responding to the demands which the used thing makes manifest in the given instance (WCT: 191).

This sense of acting or "letting be" the thing with which we are engaged is evident also in the sense of "building" expounded in "Building Dwelling Thinking". *Action in its essential sense, then, is such letting be of entities with which we are concerned in their Being*, and so "essential thinking is an action" (IWM: 236). Heidegger emphasizes in the Letter that "thinking is a deed. But a deed that also surpasses all *praxis*. Thinking permeates action and production, not through the grandeur of its achievement and not as a consequence of its effect, but through the humbleness of its inconsequential accomplishment" (LH: 274). There is no priority of thought over action or action over thought. Action and thought are ways of letting beings be. Thinking is already acting and acting is already thinking.

Wilful action is frowned upon by Heidegger because according to him, such representing-producing action arises out of the technological understanding of Being, because "the will to action, which here means the will to make and be effective, has overrun and crushed thought" (WCT: 25). At the same time, Heidegger does admit that it is through human speaking and acting that the truth of Being *happens* among beings, and the truth of Being is not merely in "thinking" in the sense enunciated above. Happening of truth in this sense is historical. The work of art, according to "The Origin of the Work of Art", is one way of the unfolding of the truth of Being. After stating this, the essay gives a list of ways in which the truth of Being unfolds.

> Another way in which truth comes to presence is through the act which founds a state…
> A still further way in which truth comes to be is in the thinker's questioning, which, as

the thinking of Being, names Being in its question-worthiness… Science, by contrast, is not an original happening of truth but always the cultivation of a domain of truth that has already been opened (OWA: 37).

Hence, the fundamental political actions of the human being, her authentic religious and ethical actions, her important philosophical and technological actions, which include science, are other ways of letting truth happen.

Heidegger frowns upon instrumental thinking and acting that arise out of the technological understanding of Being. His project is to inaugurate another mode of thinking and acting.

> Thus everything depends on this: that our thinking should become more thoughtful in its season. This is achieved when our thinking, instead of implementing *a higher degree of exertion*, is directed toward *another provenance*. The thinking that is set in place by beings as such, and is therefore representational and illuminating in that way, must then be relinquished to a thinking that is brought to pass by Being itself and is therefore in thrall to Being. All attempts are futile that seek to make representational thinking, which *remains metaphysical, and only metaphysical, effective, and useful for immediate action in everyday public life* (IWM: 282; my emphasis).

Such thinking is an originary action which is not about the useful and the effective. An action like "founding and building of the *polis* as the essential place of history, which is determined by the holy" (R: 112) is not different from such acting. The festivals of letting beings be in their Being are the meaningful and sacred moments of history. Modern technology also is a letting be, but a letting be that obstructs all other revealings.

It is, then, actions and ways of being that reinforce the technological understanding of Being that Heidegger looks at with suspicion in the time of distress, the epoch of preparation for a new beginning. What are the developmental actions and ways of being that do not reinforce the technological ontology of modernity?

***

From the point of view of development as various conceptions of the good life, developmental actions that do not reinforce the technological ontology of modernity can only be conceptions that do not strengthen the calculative intelligibility of cumulatively circulating capital and representing-producing individual. Post-war developmentalism has successfully made both these acceptable cultural forms in the global south. Ashis Nandy writes that the post-war development discourse

> taps some of the basic human motives and aspirations. At this plane, and perhaps only at this plane, the universalist assumptions of mainstream development theories seem to have a secure foundation in human experience, only this universalism ignores that these motives and aspirations were the ones that some of the major civilizations of the world had carefully kept under check (1994: 13–14).

That is to say, the neoliberal model of development successfully exploited human self-interest for instituting the techno-capitalistic structure of the global market and competitive culture. In Heidegger's terms, it is the appropriation of human essence by the world-dominating technological understanding of Being that has led to the global emergence of the profit-seeking, self-interested and competitive

individual. Heidegger also writes like Nandy that only in the modern era, the technological understanding of Being became the comprehensive interpretation of Being for the understanding of all beings as beings. Previously "its scattered appearances and efforts had been incorporated into the comprehensive realm of culture and civilization" (WP: 217). That is, previously civilization curtailed the full worldwide development of technological understanding but post-war global culture set it free for unbridled development.

In 1909, Gandhi raised the same issue, painting modernity as a civilization of machine, materialism and efficiency. Hence, the Gandhian alternative to developmentalism is certainly significant. Reflecting over *Hind Swaraj* after thirty years of its initial publication he wrote that its message was not romanticization of tradition but "an attempt to see beauty in voluntary simplicity, poverty and slowness" (1960, Vol. 70: 242). Reminiscent of Heidegger's anxiety over the domination of technological understanding, Gandhi told his close disciples in 1939 that a nonviolent society could not be built "on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages" (1960, Vol. 70: 296). Gandhi put his faith in exploitation-free rural economy. He advised economists in 1916 that it is futile to dream to have wealth like America through non-American and non-violent methods (1960, Vol. 13: 315). Gandhi idealized the rural life, but it is to be emphasized that he did not endorse rural feudalism and despotism. He rather endorsed a network of interconnected and highly democratized village republics. He did not idealize the typical village life of India; the rural life he imagined was a category of its own. "We have got to be ideal villagers," he told in 1935 (1960, Vol. 60: 251–252). Frugal, dignified, satisfying, healthy lives within considerably egalitarian rural republics—that was Gandhi's idea of development.

This vision of Gandhi was challenged both by Nehru and Ambedkar for different reasons, but good ones. In a letter written to Gandhi in 1945 regarding the Gandhian picture of the new India, a union of considerably free village republics, Nehru wrote: "A village, normally speaking, is backward intellectually and culturally and no progress can be made from a backward environment. Narrow-minded people are much more likely to be untruthful and violent" (1997: 152). Nehru looked up to a technologically advanced India with every citizen's basic needs fulfilled, for which Gandhi's village-centrism, he thought, was an impediment. Though for Nehru the village could not be the centre of the Indian economy, he still believed in the Gandhian ideal of the Indian village as a social and political unit for representative democracy to be meaningful in India (Jodhka 2002: 3350), an ideal that received a political form in his grandson Rajiv Gandhi's Panchayati Raj institution. Nehru too believed that the Indian was emotionally tied to her village and its traditions.

The idea of the Indian village was comprehensively challenged by Ambedkar. He challenged the generous picture of rural India, painted both by Europeans and upper caste Indian writers. He understood the typical Indian village as a caste bastion, where caste Hindus lived in the main village space and the untouchables in ghettos. Hindu social stratification for him was fully reflected in the Indian village's spatial as well as social arrangements (Jodhka 2002: 3350). In one of his best-known quips during the debates of the Constituent Assembly for the formulation of

the Indian Constitution in 1948, Ambedkar asked the supporters of the village republics model: "What is the village but a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism?" (1994: 62). This is why all forms of the survival of the Gandhian village republics model in the Punchayati Raj system of local self-government, especially in the extra-constitutional, broadly caste or community-based khap punchayats in north-western India, raise fears of discrimination, stagnant orthodoxy and traditionalism (Pal 2004). The city-based culture of anonymity and individualism is sometimes posed as the best bet against caste discrimination.[33] Taking these several complications into consideration—the stealthy entrenchment of the technological understanding of Being and its consequences as well as traditional systems of inherited inequalities—we can only hope for a viable form of decentralization, where the emergence of life forms that value the non-efficient and meaningful forms of our encounter with phenomena is somehow possible.

Postdevelopment writers have called for an alternative model to the post-war development discourse for long and have been heavily criticized for their lack of clarity and specific alternative proposals that can equal the salient features of the current model like global market, relentless wealth creation and unrestrained individual freedom. Unless we abandon this way of juxtaposing alternatives, we cannot even claim to understand and appreciate the postdevelopment critique and alternative. Escobar's alternatives are neither different forms of the current model nor are they premodern forms. While focusing on the resistances to developmentalism since the late 1980s, Escobar notices "an interest in local culture and knowledge; a critical stance with respect to established scientific discourses; and the defense and promotion of localized, pluralistic grassroots movements" (1995: 215). According to field information in relation to his native Columbia, Escobar observes complex processes of cultural hybridization, producing multiple traditions of modernity. Modern, premodern, anti-modern, amodern and postmodern forms coexist in happy pluralism in some of Escobar's locales. He also notes that there is a close interaction in these areas between intellectual and social life, which would mean that there are intellectuals involved in these developmental mobilizations as Paulo Freire once did. Escoboar's emphasis on hybridization sounds interesting to me because he also has the rider that "these processes of hybridization necessarily unmake long-standing traditions of domination" (1995: 219). Hence, he wants the alternatives to be hybrids so that tradition is challenged and traditional situations of "unmoving" and hence non-developmental life are once and for all shattered in order to create the non-market forms of good life.

This is an interesting scenario from a post-technological perspective. The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA or Save Narmada Movement)[34] did not finally succeed in stalling the Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat, although it did effect a

---

[33] Sociologist TK Oomen writes: "Caste discrimination cannot be practiced in situations of anonymity as castes do not have clear cut physical differences (unlike races). That is why caste discrimination is absent in public places in urban centres. But the moment the veil of anonymity is lifted, caste discrimination comes alive" (2005: 102; my gloss).

[34] For details, see the official website of NBA, Friends of River Narmada: http://www.narmada.org/.

World Bank pullout from the project. However, the NBA and its charismatic leader, Medha Patkar, have helped cast a permanent shadow of suspicion on the big dam in India. The movement successfully interrogated the legitimacy of development displacement, raised the question of ethnic otherness in relation to tribal land alienation in the name of development, brought the ecological disaster facing the nation to the centre of national imagination unlike no other and has acted as a vigilant advocate of the rightful rehabilitation of the displaced. Escobar's hybrid spaces of resistance cannot be merely about fight over new livelihood options; it has to be also about political contestations of the dominant techno-modernist understandings and their assumptions of power relations.

That a purely and totally "other" option to technological understanding cannot emerge as the post-technological option is philosophically interesting. Doesn't it defeat the subversive intent towards technological understanding and its concretion in developmentalism? It is never the case that new and authentic possibilities that emerge in a people's horizon are ahistorical and fully disconnected from tradition. New possibilities indeed are ways of freeing the future from the domination of our fateful pasts, but they are, at the same time, new ways of appropriating the past which never ceases from repeating. New possibilities of development are possibilities of the good life conceived variously and outside or on the margins of the organized uniformity of calculative intelligibility.[35]

To be sure, we are in a thoroughly transitional phase before an epochal change, and as Heidegger fears, the present phase of technological epoch could prove to be the longest epoch in the history of Western metaphysics, an epoch still only beginning in its trail of planetary domination. What is to be awaited is merely the openness of Being which *lets be* Being's manifoldness and thus decentres technical mastery, flattening uniformity and unquestioned cultural acceptance of calculation, acceleration and gigantism. Such attuning to the openness of Being "anticipates all the open comportment that flourishes in it… However, from the point of view of everyday calculations and preoccupations this… appears to be incalculable and incomprehensible" (ET: 147). Hence, while there is no clear picture of what is going to be a future epoch, it is already clear that if it has to be another epoch different from the present, it ought to be centred on an understanding of Being that undercuts calculative intelligibility in some way. As for the present time of preparation for the advent of the next epoch, the time of distress and gleeful abandoning to technological nihilism ("the lack of distress in distress"), *development in the sense advocated in this study means socially embedded economic practices, which are meaningful not only and not primarily from the point of view of efficiency,*

---

[35] It is interesting that such marginal practices themselves can be described as moving beyond postdevelopment and instituting local development alternatives which are outside the calculative intelligibility of neoliberal economic logic. George Curry argues that "one way forward for postdevelopment thinkers is to engage more fully with the expanding literature on nonmarket economic relations associated with gift exchange and the social embeddedness of economies, the latter pioneered by Karl Polanyi" (2003: 406). Exemplifying his thesis with small businesses in Papua New Guinea, he demonstrates how modern market has got enmeshed with and is partly transformed by locally driven nonmarket practices like indigenous gift exchange.

calculation, profit and individual self-interest. These practices are about preserving rather than violently manipulating beings and the earth itself.

An ontological epoch is always a mélange of several ways of looking at the world. The default of God experienced by Hölderlin says Heidegger,

> does not contradict the fact that a Christian relationship to God continues among individuals and in the churches, and it certainly does not disparage this relationship to God. The default of God means that a God no longer gathers men and things to himself visibly and unmistakably and from this gathering ordains world-history and man's stay within it (WP: 200).

What dominantly gathers phenomena together today in their meaningfulness is technological understanding, and hence that which aims to subvert this dominant paradigm cannot locate itself within it. Technological understanding, moreover, has the character of gradually stifling and making extinct all other forms of understandings that still marginally exist within the technological world. That is, these understandings cannot any more preserve their worth in the technological world as technology was able to do in other ontological epochs and gradually centre an ontological age around itself. Development as good life variously conceived is a manner of persistent questioning and subverting of the technological understanding of Being.

<p align="center">***</p>

Several subversive development strategies and movements are currently emerging in different parts of the global south however modestly. They seem to be emerging in a spontaneous manner in response to the distress that the technological culture wields over every aspect of life. Shrivastava and Kothari's *Churning the Earth* (2012) has an account of some of these with reference to India in a chapter interestingly titled "Stories from Tomorrow: From Developmentality to Ecologicality". Their concerns and commitments are strictly ecological. They champion radical, grassroots democracy for which "face-to-face neighbourhood assemblies are far more conducive… than huge societies living off a technologically overdeveloped edifice of unsustainable mass production. And regionally and locally grounded economies—as opposed to globally networked ones—may be both the precondition and the result of such a grass-roots democracy" (2012: 252). They consider "a new commitment to place" as central to their argument as it would be with Heidegger. They dwell on several interesting stories of political and developmental experiments in India, which cannot be easily categorized as modern or premodern. They argue that these alternatives would better serve both the health of the planet and human equality.

Shrivastava and Kothari emphasize that it is impossible to foster grassroots democracy today unless communities mobilize themselves against failures of grand interventions instituted by governments and MNCs. In the global north, given the firm establishment of technological understanding and its capitalist social form, with its work of promise fulfilled in tangible ways, such mobilizations might be rather unimaginable. Moreover, the post-war development project in a way defines the global south. Hence, the global south is also that space where alternatives to technological understanding of development are still alive could be thoughtfully preserved and new or hybrid ones could realistically emerge.

One such instance that Shrivastava and Kothari narrate is about the Adivasi ("aboriginal dwellers" literally; tribal communities of India) village Mendha-Lekha

in Gadchiroli district of the state of Maharashtra. The village records success-
ful mobilizations against two mega dams and against a paper mill that heavily
extracted bamboo from the area. Inhabited by the Gond tribe, Mendha-Lekha is
a largely self-governed village because community decisions are taken in village
meetings (*gram sabha*). According to Shrivastava and Kothari, sound developmen-
tal markers and a fair degree of forest conservation and ecological sensibility have
been achieved on account of the mobilizations in the village. Despite all challenges
still facing the village, Mendha-Lekha became "one of the first villages in India to
obtain the community right to manage their forests under the Scheduled Tribes and
Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, thereby
reversing the act of the colonial government in taking over their control under the
Indian Forest Act 1927" (2012: 271).

However, such illustrations are in fact inadequate because although they
embody alternative futures for sure, internal cleavages and inequalities of power
in any cohesive picture of groups and communities become questionable on close
scrutiny. They are valued for the significant forms of good life they demonstrate
which do not necessarily follow the efficient and calculative logic of modern capi-
talism and individualism. But the difficulty of demonstration cannot be fully over-
come. We cannot invoke pure forms of life except as imagined futures, whereas
real forms can represent a new ontological epoch only imperfectly. Several con-
crete marginal practices are also hotbeds of gender, caste and class inequalities
and the crassest of prejudices. Even still they do embody alternative imaginings.
But manifold non-efficient forms of good life also tend to carry forward traditional
prejudices and injustices. As we have noted, Escobar says that sometimes they
reconfigure also traditional power equations; if they do, they come close to perfect
representations of imagined alternative futures.

Partha Chatterjee's recent claim about the working of democracy, especially in
the global south, also comes to the same conclusion. Mobilization of disadvantaged
social groups for taking advantage of the developmental state happens often not
within the efficient, polished spaces of the civil society but within the turbulent spaces
of political society. Chatterjee points out that mobilizations of the political society are
typically insensitive to questions of gender equality and sometimes involve strategic
use of violence. But he does not deny the significance of the democratic mobilizations
of political society, but in them, "one can discern the inescapable conflict between
the enlightened desires of civil society and the messy, contentious, and often unpalat-
able concerns of political society" (2004: 77). Chatterjee exemplifies this problem by
referring to the fact that the proposal to reserve a third of the Indian parliament for
women legislators was opposed by backward caste leaders because they feared that
their quota of reservation, gained through years of struggle, would be wrested away
by upper-caste women legislators. Chatterjee's suggestion is certainly not to accept
tamely these difficulties but to be careful not to be hoodwinked by the clear moral
logic of the civil society, which usually undercuts, disparages and delays the play of
democracy within the spaces of political society and alternative development imagin-
ings. Moral vigilantism is often powered by the status quo and can act strategically to
maintain the technological, "civil" logic of democracies.

However, this is paradoxical. If the appreciation of the non-efficient but meaningful forms of good life is not to be a romanticization of the premodern, questions of power, privilege, gender, caste and inequality in general have to be addressed. At the same time, if the alternative spaces of development during the long transitional epoch are typically hybrid spaces as Escobar contends, the uneasy lingering of premodern and modern forms with the alternatives cannot be arrested. The lingering of oppressive practices, however, calls for our responses as ethical beings. This is why I shall claim in the next section of this chapter that there is need to cultivate and foster manifold conceptions of the good life or alternative development imaginings despite the tremendous ambivalence associated with that task.

An important form of manifestation of technological understanding is the competitive comportment. Competitive economic and political actions occupy centre stage in the modern individual's life. Relentless industry and anxious busying are measures of the modern individual's good life. The technological comportment basically means reducing all phenomena to handy, resourceful forms, and this comportment cannot dominate existence without anxious, relentless enterprise. This form of existence is increasingly becoming the way of life of the ideal modern individual at least in the urban centres of the global south. Heidegger laments in *Der Spiegel* interview that purely technological relationships are dominating modern life. At the same time, neither are our economic and political lives avoidable nor are our material and social lives a screen for setting our sight on a higher life. Life as such is entangled constitutively in materiality, community, embodied experience and self-interpretation.

Hence the question of cooperative rather than competitive economic and political ventures. Competitive market is the default economic system of the last few centuries, which today has taken a global shape. With its inherent inequality, competitive economy engenders the competitive politics of distribution. Nevertheless, achievement of equality is unlikely in a diverse polity of multiple loyalties like India since the majority that does not stand to gain from the country's high economic growth is a thoroughly divided house (see Mazumdar 2014). However, the leeway for cooperative economic and political ventures is shrinking with the global entrenchment of technological understanding. Economically successful cooperative ventures like Amul are themselves deeply entrenched in the competitive economic ethos of market, politics and techno-management.[36]

In this study, we have conceived community with Heidegger, Levinas and Nancy as the meaning of our finite freedom. Our solicitous openness towards the otherness of persons and our concerned openness towards things delimit the

---

[36] Could it be that Marx's insight is right after all that we cannot achieve community and cooperative humanity, our authentic being in common, without first dismantling, even if coercively and violently, the grossly unequal structures of our socio-economic life, whatever be our most modern forms of political life, whether democratic or socialistic? Could it be that this primary violence is the essence of modernity and the goal of technological understanding? Could it be that it is impossible to be modern and then post-technological without violent technological overwhelming? This stark, pessimistic danger is distressing and calls for genuinely cooperative humanity, unconstrained by ceaseless productionism, consumerism, technologism and inequality.

infinite freedom invested with the atomistic, self-interested, economistic modern individual. The meaning of this delimitation is expressed variously in accordance with our conceptions of the good life, but these post-technological conceptions reinforce rather than wear off our being in common. Without the cooperative politics of restraint, without delegitimizing human freedom as disciplined labour, ceaseless production, unequal distribution and wanton consumption, without the freedom to let beings be in their manifold meanings, it is difficult to understand what would be post-technological about our various imaginings of development as good life. This emphasis on community, as we have seen, is not communitarianism, communism, communalism or multicultural identity protectionism. The emphasis is ontological, though not without the ontic affectedness of the sensibility of being open to the Other. This being the case, there is no reason why one cannot be individual and the individuated self in terms of a modification of our being in common. "Self" means nothing but owning up this very being in common.

We have said very little about various development imaginings. This limitation of our study constitutes, in fact, the very meaning of the phrase "various development imaginings according to one's conception of the good life". In this connection, Heidegger's proposal is very relevant. He sees that non-technological forms of life have to emerge out of, first, understanding the essence of the dominant frame of the age, and, second, encountering the consequent possibility of release from its all-embracing grip.

> It would be both short-sighted and presumptuous if we wanted to disparage modern axiomatic thinking. But it would also be a childish and pathetic notion if we were to believe that this modern thinking would let itself be bent back upon its great and open origin in the thinking of the Greeks. *The only fruitful path leads through and beyond modern axiomatic cognition and its concealed grounds*. First of all, this cognition persists in the commonplace representation of axioms, Principles, fundamental principles, and their roles. We must reflect upon how we relate to the supreme fundamental principles. It is clear: we adhere to them without reflection (PR: 20; my emphasis).

These possibilities, which are radically strange vis-à-vis our modern sensibilities, cannot be already available to our grasp. We experience possibilities in and through our being-in-the-world. To this extent, our possibilities of experience are definitively delimited by our horizon of experience. If we can say anything of the post-technological future meaningfully, it only means that we are already in the time of distress.

Nonetheless, development desires of people are real, and popular disavowal of an understanding of Being and its work of promise is impossible. But the unanticipated encounters with the injustices and limitations of the calculative intelligibility of capital and efficient individual provoke them to think about innovative alternatives, thus bringing to fulfilment some of their own conceptions of the good life. No doubt, post-technological development desire is not palpably real. Indeed, if it were so, a phenomenology of that desire would have been unnecessary. As the procedure of unearthing the hidden possibilities of Being, as the conversation about possibilities that are "not yet", as the disquieting and questioning attunement, critical and hermeneutic phenomenological philosophy is that much closer to the region of "error". Heidegger writes:

> No knower necessarily stands so close to the verge of error at every moment as the one who philosophizes. Whoever has not yet grasped this has never yet had any intimation of what philosophizing means. What is ultimate and extreme is what is most perilous and insecure… In reveling in the idea of philosophy as absolute knowledge, one tends to forget this perilous neighbourhood of philosophizing (FCM: 19).

Hence, the subversive intent of these sporadic acts of resistances in our technological age, which we have recounted, is insufficient to gather and centre a new ontological epoch. This intent and these acts reveal the distress. They also reveal the hidden possibilities of Being.

In this section, I have inadequately and vaguely alluded to certain specificities of the post-technological idea of development. I have based this proposal on a non-quietistic interpretation of Heidegger. I have argued that the Heideggerian project of resistance to the technological epoch calls for thinking and responding to Being in its manifoldness, and acting in relation to this thinking of the manifold possibilities of Being. A more freeing ontological epoch has been the subject of this study. In the next section, I shall further elaborate on the post-technological sense of development and argue for communicating this sense of development.

6.5 Communicating Development as Good Life Variously Conceived

We have argued that "development" can be understood as a hinge word that captures human yearning for the good life variously conceived, but always conceived with reference to the context and history of human life. The stress on history and context means that from a phenomenological-hermeneutical stance, all human possibilities, including the possibilities of good life or development possibilities, could be said to arise from the "world" or the background of meaning. Development is not to be defined narrowly, but to be envisaged in the broadest sense possible for bringing to the fore the futuristically emergent sense of desire for the good life that is undeniably present in all our talk about the development of a people, as opposed to their under-fulfilled life. The techno-economistic manner of conceiving development as the unceasing movement from less to more affluent, primitive to modern, unscientific to scientific, manual to technical, simple to sophisticated, irrational to rational forms of human life is thus to be undermined.

With Denis Goulet, we have understood development as human ascent from less to more humanly desirable forms of life. The more comprehensive the understanding of development is, the more clearly can one accommodate social, political, cultural, economic, ecological and other desirable goals in development planning and policies (Goulet 1973: 333). The moral question of the kind of human being that a society wants to create through its developmental aims is not irrelevant to this understanding because communities are always moulding and recreating their own humanity in some way when they experience the transformative social process of development. Understood as the aspirational movement of human ascent,

development does mean *change* but it does not in any necessary sense mean a more technological change. The essence of the human is to be unfinished and incomplete, to be persistently "not-yet" as long as it is. Development, in this sense, is the very essence of being human. But it is not a uniform change as modernization would like us believe it is; it, rather, can mean a variety of social and human transformations to the extent that we can speak of "developments" in the plural. A post-technological conception of development is sensitive to this pluralism.

Development itself is famously defined as freedom (Sen 2000) and capability expansion (Sen 1989). But, again, there are varieties of ways to become free and the privileging of economic freedom does not serve the post-technological conception of development. In fact, economism, in all its varieties, can itself be an unfreedom, complementing the domination of calculative intelligibility. Human freedom is a finite transcendence within and through the "world". A techno-modern understanding of development does not acknowledge the freedom to make real various conceptions of the good life. The content of the "desire for the good life" is not something uniform as postdevelopment theory has successfully argued.[37] However, if development is understood as human ascent from less to more humanly desirable forms of life, the good life variously conceived, a spontaneous response to the never-complete, always-surging-ahead character of the human condition, why is it necessary at all to communicate development as good life variously conceived? If development is constitutive of the human condition, isn't it better to assume that no special effort at communicating development is necessary?

<div align="center">***</div>

The majority of the world's people live on the margins of modern nation states. They are the "other" of the properly constituted privileged social sphere called "civil society" because they are not adept in the tools of participation in that sphere. As we have seen, the Indian postcolonial political theorist, Partha Chatterjee, calls the political domain of their negotiation of the modern state "the political society".[38] Can they wilfully resist subjugating forms of life proposed in the name of development?

Those who live on the margins of the modern nation states experience modernization differently from the privileged participants of "the civil society". The

---

[37] Escobar writes: "The deconstruction of development by the poststructuralists resulted in the possibility of imagining a post-development era, one in which the centrality of development as an organizing principle of social life would no longer hold" (2000: 11). The post-technoscientific conception of development as ascent to good life means decentring development as modernization.

[38] See: Chatterjee (2001). Chatterjee characterizes "political society" as neither pre-modern nor modern, but existing in opposition to the sanitized political space occupied by the civil society. The disadvantaged masses of the Indian population, for instance, can stake claim to modern governmental amenities as their right only through the often illegal and sometimes violent political processes that happen typically within the domains of the political society. Despite the darkness and the squalor of the messy domains that politicize the marginalized, Chatterjee considers the political society as fulfilling democracy, the government of the governed. Without the politics of the political society, it is indeed hard to imagine how a post-technological conception of development could imaginably take shape.

dialectical nature of development as modernization gives rise to several contradictions. We cannot often predict the nature of the outcome of modernizing development. When the gigantic technological processes of modernization begin to unfold, developmental subjects tend to lose control over what they consider worthwhile from a non-economistic point of view about good life. The new rationality of efficiency and calculation establishes the hegemony of technological understanding. Communities quickly succumb to their inability to render reasons for still upholding their own conceptions of the good life or even for resisting the contradictory effects of the developmental processes in the face of the dominant calculative logic of technological understanding, and thus develop self-doubt. The dominance of the metanarrative of modernization disallows space for the cohabitation of other conceptions in a people's cultural-intellectual universe. For Heidegger, the danger of the essence of technology is this very intellectual imperialism: "it drives out every other possibility of revealing" (QCT: 27). Hence, first of all, communicating development as good life is necessary for freeing marginalized communities from the intellectual imperialism of the developmental/technological understanding.

Secondly, communicating development, understood as various conceptions of human ascent, helps lay bare development discourses and processes in their entrenchment in techno-modern structures of power. Development and power have strong historical links. The idea of economic development originated in Western Europe as the logical child of the scientific revolution. Discovery of new lands, technological inventions, nationalism, industrialization, urbanization, colonization, and today, globalization—all these have followed ever since. It has been a long history of the deep and inextricable entanglement of technology, power, imperialism and modernizing development. As we have noted in the third chapter, the charm of the modernization narrative caught the imagination of the erstwhile colonies when they became independent states, as economic development came to many of them in their search for national power (Arndt 1987: 112).[39] Together with the international advancement of clusters of national power, modernization consolidates power in social pockets of privilege intra-nationally as well. In such contexts, development communication is the unshackling of people from oppressive and deeply entrenched micro-structures of power. In *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), Paulo Freire observes that while the fascination for freedom and better life have universal appeal for people, the oppressed and the vulnerable are also characterized by the "fear of freedom". The "subjects of development" go by prescriptions handed down by the privileged, their oppressors, and by the narratives they themselves have built on the basis of these prescriptions (Freire 2005: 46–48). Deconstructing such handed down stories, thus, becomes a goal of development communication.

Thirdly, existential understanding of development as the restless desire for one's conception of the good life can often meet with considerable passivity. Attainment

---

[39] H.W. Arndt notes that the pursuit of modernization as an ideal continues in the nations of the global south "in part by considerations of national power and status, of concern primarily to national elites" (1987: 175). International power as a development goal continues today ever so ardently in India even as millions of Indians have no hope to rise above their status as the permanent underclass.

of good life is attainment of the more humanly desirable life form in a dynamic and positive response to the possibilities arising within the world or horizon of a people. Especially in communities that live on the margin, passivity towards developmental possibilities can occur in two distinct ways. First, there can be the struggle to maintain the status quo. Such communities look at tradition and history passively. They approach the human ascent with indifference and restrain or even negate their desire for good life. Development communication in this context means deconstructing the social status quo and making human ascent possible. Second, there can also be the case of the horizon or world (background) which is devoid of sufficiently animating possibilities for human ascent. The world always includes possibilities for good life, but these could remain interpretively unclear and hidden. In this context, development communication means clarifying and freeing possibilities of the good life within a people's horizon. In such contexts of passivity, reclaiming development communication to its full force is necessary for the unfolding of human ascent.

Thus, development communication is necessary because the monolithic discourse of modernization helps accumulate power in clusters of privilege both internationally and nationally, and because the "subjects" who are galvanized in the name of development are unprepared participants in the niceties of the civil society, which is the proper domain of the discourse of development as modernization, often artificially insulated from the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections. Those who are vulnerable may neither have the idiom nor freedom to responsibly own up to new strategies critically. Further, dynamic communication is necessary in developmentally passive social contexts to free authentic possibilities of human ascent from various forms of restraint. Communicating the development narrative from within a people's "world" and locating it right there alone can make them authentic "subjects" and agents of development. The gigantic and contradictory results of the processes of development as modernization should not lead to the desertion of human agency and helpless resignation to the contradictions of modernization; rather, development communication should empower peoples on the margins to embrace and own up to development critically.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

If development communication is necessary for these and other reasons, it is of paramount importance to decide how this communication is to be undertaken. In various contexts of necessity, development communication is often undertaken in a detached, ahistorical, one-size-fits-all manner. In opposition to this mainstream approach and exploiting Heidegger's philosophy of communication, I want to now argue for a radically engaged and "worldly" approach to development communication. The emphasis of this exposition is the "world-disclosive" character of authentic communication.[40]

---

[40] For a lucid and critical account of Heidegger's understanding of the world-disclosive power of language, see Lafont (2000). In the ensuing discussion, I look at Heidegger's notion of communication as world-disclosive. Therefore, I shall have to overlook several otherwise interesting aspects of Heidegger's views on language and communication. For instance, I shall overlook whether Heidegger treated the non-world-disclosive functions of language, or, whether he was a linguistic idealist. Many such issues are raised in Lafont's book and in a symposium on the book, published in *Inquiry*. See Dreyfus (2002), Carman (2002), Okrent (2002), and Lafont (2002).

Notwithstanding the decentring of Dasein in his later writings,[41] Heidegger's work in its entirety subscribes to human exceptionalism from the ontological standpoint. In 1946, dissociating his philosophical position from modern humanism and existentialism, Heidegger still insisted that *only* human beings accessed "the clearing of Being which alone is 'world'", armed with the exceptional constitutive capacity of language, something that other living beings lacked in its world-disclosive power (LH: 248). In this sense:

> Language is the house of Being. In its home human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of Being insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying (LH: 239).

"Being" is the manner of manifestation of entities and the articulation of their manifestation by the human being in language. It is the priority of the human being for the articulation and communication of the meaning of all-that-is, and its exceptional uniqueness in being "worldly", that we should exploit in relation to development communication.

The root of the philosophy of communication in *Being and Time* is Dasein's disclosedness—the claim that humans are naturally lighted up beings (*Lichtung*, clearing), and in their light, they illuminate all entities. The disclosedness of humans is first of all manifested in the fact that they are always found in one mood or another because they are always already affected by their world in some way (attunement). And so, they are not insulated spirits, but beings constitutively impinged on by the outside. The second way in which humans disclose Being is through a pre-cognitive comportment towards their world of significance (understanding). They constitutively possess a practical competence in dealing with the field of openness or world into which they find themselves thrown. Their ontologically and linguistically exceptional status arises from this fact that they are in their situation always with an inkling of Being. They have a familiarity, a non-reflective insight into the possibilities available within their world. Heidegger draws every single element of the whole phenomenon of intelligibility from this primordial understanding. The third constitutive element of disclosedness is falling. In their absorption and engrossment in the world (of things and other Daseins), humans tend to fall away from their own authentic possibilities. This is why they are susceptible to inauthenticity in the average mode of existence.

---

[41] I want to reemphasize at least two significances of the term "Dasein" (BT: 32–35). First, inquiring into the Being of entities and into its own Being is a possibility of Being for Dasein. Second, the etymological meaning of the word "Dasein" stresses the structurally unified character of human beings as "Being-in-the-world". That is, the self and the world, in opposition to the Cartesian prescription, are conceived as constitutively united. The second significance is of prime importance when we consider Heidegger's understanding of the world-disclosive power of communication for the purpose of thinking about development communication. There is only an ontological decentring of Dasein in the later Heidegger. Instead of the ontology of Dasein (fundamental ontology) in *Being and Time*, the later Heidegger's focus is on the history of Being as such. Human exceptionalism in terms of language for the articulation of Being is not thereby abandoned.

The ambiguity of understanding, the most primordial form of intelligibility, is clarified in interpretation. Thus, the world or an element of it, which is already understood, comes to mean *as* something. Now, meaning does not arise arbitrarily, but refers back to a background, a set of presuppositions, a context of significances—in short, the world. That is to say, the *as*-structure of interpretation is drawn from a *fore*-structure: a context (fore-having), a perspective (fore-sight), and a set of vocabulary and concepts (fore-conception). A possible derivation from interpretation is assertion, though all interpretations need not lead to an assertion. Assertion can be a pointing out, a predicating, or a communicating, but every time it is expressed in language. *Communication*, in this narrow sense, is speaking forth for the sake of sharing the meaning of something encountered in the world with others, and thus making it *common*. Assertive communication is significant because, in this way, even if the entity, of which an assertion is made, is not close at hand, it is made close, sharable and common. Such communication is a *way of Being toward* the entity talked about, whether one is the speaker or the listener. The meaning thus conveyed in assertive communication refers to the world of the speakers and listeners, and not to some supposedly unworldly "valid meaning" that has gained currency (BT: 197–198). Heidegger takes pain to show that every assertion that communicates has its fore-structure; that is, its base in the referential whole or the world (BT: 199; BPP: 210).

The whole phenomenal sphere of disclosedness—attunement, understanding and falling—is articulated in discourse/talk/*Rede* or language (BT: 400).[42] Here, discourse is the most primordial linguistic phenomenon—the articulation of the intelligibility of understanding, which always is affected somehow by the world. Anything that can be so articulated is meaningful; in fact, meaning *is* this very articulation. What is talked about in discourse is the "world", the totality of significance, and so, discourse is always "worldly" (BT: 203–204). Discourse or language in the later Heidegger is the whole sphere of our communicative competency, which makes us ontologically exceptional.

Heidegger has a second account of communication which is ontologically broader than the specific case of assertive communication, and hence more useful for our understanding of development communication: "that communication which is grasped in principle existentially" (BT: 205). Communication, in this sense, is the articulation of Being-with-others understandingly in the world. By existential communication, the way we are affected by the world (attunement) becomes sharable with others. But it is not the sharing of a deeply interior experience with others. On account of our sociality (Being-with), our familiarity with the world (understanding) and the way we are affected by it (attunement) are in harmony

---

[42] I take Lafont's view that discourse is not prelinguistic articulation of intelligibility but language in its most primordial form. Discourse was Heidegger's word for the Greek "logos", which he translated as "talk", so that the human being becomes the talking animal rather than the *animal rationale*, when translating *zôon lógon échon* (Lafont 2002: 237–238). Further, Heidegger clearly mentions that language is the expression or explication of discourse (BG: 204). The later Heidegger abandons the terms "discourse" and treats language as such in its ontological priority. Lafont's interpretation ensures continuity between the early and the later Heidegger.

with the way these phenomena come across to others. Being-in-the-world already implies communicability and commonality. The phenomenon of *com*municability attests to the fact that human beings are not encapsulated spirits, but are beings that always stand outside themselves ontologically. Communication in this sense attests our being in common. Owing to disclosedness, entities become discoverable; owing to communicability, they become sharable. As Dreyfus notes, what is significant here is the inexplicability of understanding communication as the message conveyed between two monads as in the Cartesian model. Such an account "treats language as a context-free code". Communication, on the other hand, is made possible by a shared world. "In communication something is explicitly shared on the background of an already shared affectedness and understanding" (Dreyfus 1991: 221).

So, the conceptual backdrop of Heidegger's understanding of communication is the notion of Being-with—the common sharing of a world by many Daseins or our being in common. Strictly speaking, without a shared world, there can be no communication. If at least by picturesque imaging one cannot recreate the world of what is reported, the report cannot communicate. This is especially significant for development communication. Good communication, we should not think, creates community; rather, it presupposes community and existential communication (Biemel 1986: 71). Without being in communion with the people in their world, the development communicator cannot imagine the good life with them. For Heidegger, degenerated communication is idle talk and passing the word along. Though groundless and distanced from the world, idle talk can still make average understandability possible (HCT: 268–269).

Language in its outward form makes existential communication explicitly sharable. As Being-with, human beings are factically always already communicating beings, but what is in common existentially is not appropriated and explicated without the public aspect of language. In the intonation, modulation, tempo and manner of speech of expressive communication, the way the world affects us and how we are responding to it understandingly is made explicit. Further still, the full force of existence itself as an aim of communication is articulated in poetical discourse. To the whole of our communicative competency belong our abilities to hear and listen, keep silent, gesture, demand, warn, pronounce, consult, intercede, assert, proclaim, abide by or resist what is communicated and so on. From the prior counderstanding of the world with others arises the possibility that we can have a sense of appropriateness and inappropriateness of the way in which something is said. Because we are *in* the world understandingly and moodily, the way we primordially access a noise is not *as* pure sound but as the cooing of a cuckoo or a motorbike creaking by. To listen to anything like a pure noise, disentangling it artificially and scientifically from the world is a precondition. Communication ability singles out humans. They show themselves as beings that talk. Vocal expression is not unique to humans; what is unique to them is the way they discover the world and themselves through their communicative competency (BT: 204–209).

The later Heidegger understands linguistic ability as the very condition for the disclosedness of the world, and not the reverse. He writes that "language first

grants the possibility of standing in the midst of the openness of beings. Only where there is language, is there world… Language is not a tool at man's disposal, but that primal event which disposes of the highest possibility of man's Being" (HEP: 56).[43] If in *Being and Time*, the nature of language is left unsettled (BT: 209 and 400), the later Heidegger settles it by primordializing language as the precinct and house of being (WP: 232). The linguistic base of human existence is underlined without losing the circularity of the hermeneutical context of language.[44] The later Heidegger radicalizes our communicative nature without compromising our embodied, embedded, psychosomatic nature, as Lafont observes: "… the intersubjectivity of communication is possible only against the background of an *already shared*, world-disclosing language (an 'already 'shared' about which of discourse,' in the words of *Being and Time*)" (2000: 105). But language does not disclose a world that is there beforehand; the world itself *is* in and through language.

Before coming to the import of this exposition of Heidegger's conception of communication for development communication *by a third party* (a development expert, for example) to a people or a person, I want to emphasize the primacy of the *self-communication* of development. Unless the subject of development communicates development as a definitive possibility to her/himself at one stage or another of the development process, there can neither be the "subject" nor her/his development. Instead, there can only be objectified multitudes goaded into development. Self-communication ("self" understood individually and communally) allows the subject to own up to development as "mine". However, self-communication of development as a definitive possibility many a time may not be possible because of the passivity existing in communities and because of the entrenchment of people's lives in the irresistible sway of the narratives and structures of power, as already discussed. Hence, the role of careful communicators, who are in close contact with the "world", either from within the community or those who insightfully incarnate themselves therein, is paramount for opening up authentic possibilities of development for self-communication. The task of development communicator, in this sense, is a hermeneutical-phenomenological task—unlocking and manifesting authentic possibilities. However, without this "careful locating" and sharing the world, development communication would turn out to be the artificial "pasting" of alien possibilities upon the people's world. There is no such thing as a world inherently resistant to development. A world is a living system of meaning, responsive to stimulation and inherently dynamic. Hence, it is possible

---

[43] We read in another essay: "Where language is not present, as in the being of stones, plants, or animals, there is also no openness of beings, and consequently no openness either of that which is not a being … or emptiness" (OWA: 46).

[44] Heidegger writes: "We—human beings—are a conversation. Man's being is grounded in language; but this actually occurs only in *conversation*.… Speaking, then, mediates our coming to one another.… We are a conversation, that always also signifies we are *one* conversation. The unity of a conversation consists in the fact that in the essential word there is always manifest that one and the same on which we agree (which is Being), on the basis of which we are united and so are authentically ourselves. Conversation and its unity support our existence" (HEP: 56–57; my gloss).

for communicators to pick authentic possibilities from within it for development, for authentic communication is world-disclosive, and, thus, evokes self-communication of development.

In the totality of my exposition of Heidegger's philosophy of communication, the communicative power of language for development can be located because development primarily is not about amassing more goods, but about encountering a different story, an alternative narrative. Development is about decisively determining the models of being and doing for a people in close contact with their world. Genuine communication, communicates "development" as ascent to "the good life", locating it right within the people's field of significance (world). If development communication does not articulate how the world of the people will be transformed in some way but will continue as well in a significant sense, that development cannot be authentic. We make sense even of alien notions in reference to our world. Communication of development is an interpretation of the life of the community hitherto and hereafter. The task of genuine interpretation is "never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves" (BT: 195); that is, *how* interpretation stands in terms of the world of the communicatees. Communicators do not *sell* or *manufacture* development; they, rather, *plant* and *grow* it in the world of people. To communicators of development, the "contextual import" of Heidegger's insights speaks about the difference and manifoldness inherent in their task, the caution to be exercised in incarnating "universalist" models, the ways to decide on methods and strategies, and the very manner of "speaking" development.

How the modern idea of secularity, a particular variety of it, got instituted in a predominantly religious India during the freedom movement is an interesting case in point. Thinkers of the Indian Renaissance like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Vivekananda thought that "India could take the path of religion to arrive at modernity" (Basu 2002: 168). Vivekananda diagnosed spiritual life as the nerve of the Indian nation, and so he prescribed imparting "even secular knowledge through religion" (2007: 213). Hence, the question, as Sudipta Kaviraj raises it, is: "How could a society and its culture deeply infused with religious ideas of the most plentiful kind come to have a language in which even the possibility of a world in which religion had no serious place could be conceived?" (2013: 94). In Rajeev Bhargava's view, Indian secularism is different from its Western counterpart on several fronts, and these differences are closely linked to the context of deep religious diversity in which it arose and sustained itself, despite the bloody national partition on religious lines at its initiation (2011). Referring to Bhargava, Kaviraj argues that

> Indian state secularism was not an imitation of the French or the American design. The variations arose not from a 'failure' to follow these models, but from a deliberate crafting of different rules to respond to a historically distinct situation. Against the conventional judgment of every divergence as a 'failure', this argument re-evaluates them as deliberate acts of political craft, and steps of innovation (2013: 95).

Despite the deep inadequacies of Indian secularism and its continued failures, we must admit that it is at least locatable within the Indian "world". Without some

form of positioning "within" and knotting the transformation to the context, it is difficult to see how the arbitrariness and futility of imposing alien conceptions on a people can be dealt with. If there are any universals in development discourse, desire for the good life and desire for self-worth will figure in the list (Goulet 1981: 4). Hence, cultural freedom is a value to be defended.

Development communicators often whine about the inertia of the subjects—in fact, about people unwilling to become "subjects" of development, about them not owning up to the development act, and resisting rather than accepting change. In this context, what Heidegger says about language is very pertinent: "In the word, in language, things first come to be and are. For this reason, too, the misuse of language in mere idle talk, in slogans and phrases, destroys our genuine relation to things" (IM: 15). "Thing" in the phenomenological sense is the phenomenon about which we speak. "Development" as the phenomenon of our discourse first comes to be in our language. Its Being, the manner of its manifesting among a people, is determined by the narrative that the communicator presents. Without their identifying with the narrative and partaking in the way of unfolding of development, the act of development is bound to fail. It would be preposterous to presume that there is no desire for the good life among a people; what is not there is the desire for what they cannot "see".

If Heidegger's insights on the concept of the "world" are right, uniform modernization, in its typical form, is a process of "de-worlding" a people. Deworlding deforms and deracinates a people, and destroys the environment. Displacement and homelessness, literal and spiritual, result from long, mindless modernization. The potential of Heidegger's ecological philosophy for "environmental communication" is explored elsewhere (see Kinsella 2007). Hence, let me now reassert my view throughout this study that a critique of techno-modern developmentalism with an eye to the possibilities of communicating a development that is "worldly" for humans and friendly towards planet earth is the need of the hour.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In communicating development today, we come across a profound predicament: the all-conquering project of modernization and the planet that cannot take it all. It is not the planet alone that is precariously poised. Contradictions are many. The land is scientifically beckoned to yield more and the plant called forth to produce the perfect fruit. But when the perfect fruit is thus produced, there lurks the fear of artificial substances that are behind the fruit's perfection, and hence, there is clamour for fruits produced unaided—surely, a tacit romanticization of the natural. There seems to be an unstated consensus that if we could have the natural in the right quantity to fulfil our desires, we would. The problem is with our burgeoning desires and with the dearth of the natural. Don't we call forth the seas, the rivers, the mountains, the forests, the skies to yield more? In fact, ethical justification of technology for feeding the world's poor is not uncommon (see Levinas 2001: 190).

In tune with the technological reordering of the land, modernizing society reorders itself for achieving the perfect community. But when the national community is brought forth, there is the anomaly of the refugee from outside it, and people within it who live on the margin. When the disadvantaged form a majority as in

India, national moral outrage is widespread. But solutions, once again, are delimited by techno-modern approaches. If land is privately owned in a near-absolute sense as "property" right of the citizen, it cannot be redistributed, and notions of privilege cannot be dislodged.

We thus have a family of concepts, the accumulated sediments of the techno-modern culture, which have become our commonsense and reason. This intellectual paradigm ties our hands and exhausts our options, even as the modernization project curves towards its breaking point. This same inherited family of ideas defines our path of thinking, our philosophy, our sciences, our arts and our very language. They determine our institutions, our lives and fates. As a generation of the inheritors of the earth and the world with others, it is necessary for us to respond to our "breaking points". In the uncanniness of this anxiety, we are distressed about the techno-modern world and catch a glimpse of post-technological alternatives.

Post-technological existence means the anxious desire to subvert the hegemony of monolithic technological understanding of Being, the undeniable background imaginary of modern consciousness. A post-technological notion of development admits manifold conceptions of good life. In saying so, certainly, the fate of the Planet, the home of life, in our technological era, is a concern. But in this post-technological conception of development, the concern is also about "humanity" as such, about the inhumanity of destitution and unfulfilled human existence amidst global abundance, about existential boredom and anxiety in the face of vulgar commodification, about the atomistic insularity of the modern liberal individual and about the damaging privilege of capital and calculative intelligibility.

Technological understanding is the distinctive phenomenon of modern consciousness with its inherent tendency to legitimize a reductive view of value and reality so that one can speak of the modern age, the age of technology, in terms of an incredulity towards all "unscientific" narratives that do not measure up to technological reduction. Reductive rationality renders understanding formulaic, and learning and culture cracking of formula. In terms of formulaic understanding, phenomena look unambiguous, organized and fixable; they can be unwound as if by reverse engineering. Understanding is unravelling. The approach of modern humans towards human existence and all phenomena, meaning and value, seems to be entrapped within the iron cage of reductive, formulaic understanding. Several realms of significance that resist formulaic understanding, therefore, stand completely disparaged and undermined. With the deconstruction of the neutrality, objectivity and positivity of modern science and technology, thanks to the work of Foucault, Lyotard and Kuhn among others, the play of power behind modern knowledge and a certain insufficiency of critique cognizable in knowledge classified as technological and scientific lie today in the open. And so, the all-encompassing technological reductionism today appears unfounded more than ever. A post-technological response to techno-modern culture means the rejection of technological reductionism that has stretched itself to every sphere of judgment, learning and culture.

The reductive view of reality is not formulaic emptily but in a definitive sense as "enframing" (*Gestell*), which is the realization of the ontotheological history of Western metaphysics (that is, the study of Being or ontology in terms

of the highest being or theology) in the modern technological age, according to Heidegger. Hence, enframing or technological understanding is not merely calculative, formulaic and reductive rationality, but is a comprehensive understanding of reality as resource only for the sake of human manipulation. Though enframing as the essence of technology precedes the age of science, the scientific age completes its technological essence "as a destiny of the truth of beings in their entirety" (WP: 217). The danger hidden in enframing is the blinding tunnel vision that forbids other approaches towards reality and meaning. Modernization, in its typical vulgar form, is the rule of enframing.

The hegemonic character of technological understanding and its concretion in modernization is revealed in the rejection it stimulates of anything that resists its project of viewing reality as resource to be conquered, stockpiled and used. By evoking incredulity towards other values, methods and ways of viewing the world by weighing them against technological efficiency, they are gauged as impediments to modernization, slated to be overcome. An ecological example in this regard is the practice of maintaining a "sacred grove" (*law kyntang*) among the northeast Indian matrilineal hills tribe, the Khasis, which has withered away with modernization. According to this practice of the Khasi traditional religion (called *Ka Niam Tynrai*), each Khasi village set aside a portion of community land for maintaining a community forest, from where it was a taboo to pick even a leaf. The modern environmentalists have obtained an official sanction for the practice in the name of protecting the green cover (Shangpliang 2009: 222–223). However, revival of such traditional practices in the aftermath of the ravages of modernization does not usually meet with success, for from the standpoint of technological understanding, they would appear frivolous and fictitious.

Undoubtedly, then, we have a technology dilemma. But, with the valorization of technological understanding, solutions turn out to be still technological. At the same time, those who venture to be post-technological cannot return to a past of no science and no technology. For Heidegger, denial or vilification of technology is unhelpful because technological understanding, enframing, is the metaphysical ground of the modern age; that is, the moderns tend to understand the Being of entities in technological terms. Post-technological understanding does not gain even an inch by turning a blind eye to technology. Such an understanding of what-is is neither quietism nor Luddism; nor reclaiming a religious or traditional past as we have noted repeatedly in this study. However, one needs to conclude that the assertion of difference, the search for new methods, looking for alternatives, and envisaging other forms of human happiness and fulfilment should begin with understanding the web of calculative intelligibility and recognizing its extensive presence. Post-technological understanding is creating options, getting at and into their non-technological sense, and not any pointless wrestling with technology. In fact, the emancipatory potential of technology can be properly harnessed only within an open field of sight. Caught up within its own colour-blinding vision, technological understanding undermines itself. Captivity is locking the open, even if set up in a golden cage.

It is not merely as individuals that we respond to the hegemony of calculative intelligibility. We respond as socially embedded individuals, and as communities

summoned to development as modernization. The question, therefore, is necessarily political. Post-technological understanding is a project of the political society, those on the margins, who are called to ("pushed toward") development. Equally, it is a project of civil society, for which, the menacing dimensions of technological understanding are neither alien nor new. Post-technological understanding is questioning the universalistic programme of capital, the medium of modernization and the way capital pits the political society against the civil. The good news is, several accounts of resistance and struggle, alternative proposals, heterogeneous notions and demystifying realizations of unpleasant truths are now available, as I have noted above. Post-technological understanding is also—and in a sense fundamentally like the self-communication of development—a project of the self. "Unscientific", non-formulaic thinking can open up to us vistas of meaning and reality that are truly significant but are alien to the horizon of technological understanding.

Development as modernization is the realization of the metaphysical essence of the technological age: the calculative view of reality as resource for use. In the name of modernizing development, much violence done to people and their landscape, to their identity and form of life, is tolerated. It is pertinent to communicate a development that does as little violence as possible to people, their world, and the environment. For the articulation, execution and the very survival of less violent alternatives to modernization, the field of sight needs to open up. This opening up is post-technological understanding. Hence, deconstruction of the dominance of technological modernization becomes the central component of development communication. Post-technological understanding as the opening up of the field of vision is possible only with the demystification and deconstruction of technological understanding. From a post-technological perspective, development communication is not "proclamation" of expert (scientific) decisions and opinions, but clearing of the field of sight of the subjects of development for them to locate development possibilities within their "world".

From a post-technological perspective, development is a creative process, a poetic act as *technē* is for Heidegger; it is an authentic "bringing forth" from the realm of the available. As temporalizing and historizing beings, we connect our future with our past and understand our past in terms of our future. In anticipating our authentic possibilities, be it development possibilities, there is a "coming back understandingly to one's ownmost 'been,'" which "arises, in a certain way, from the future" (BT: 373). Overarching development models like modernization seriously rupture the temporal structure of the peoples' sense of self by disfiguring their past and leading them to unowned, uncertain futures.

When development communication takes a post-technological perspective, it steps beyond humanism/human-centrism and utilitarian, humanistic, technological environmentalism. It subverts technological understanding by viewing the good life as something beyond technical calculations, and by asserting technology as one of many understandings at our disposal. Beating consumerism, balancing resource use, reinventing the environment as the home of life and dwelling in it while sparing and preserving the earth (BDT: 147) can be achieved only by subverting the privileging of technological understanding. The critique of

technological understanding is not the critique of an abstraction; it is the critique of a history, of a historically dominant way phenomena have presented themselves to us, of how they determine the way we are and act. So, what is disquieting is not the *idea* of technological understanding, but its deep rootedness in Western industrial modernity, the monolithic intelligibility it globally entrenches and its monistic conception of truth and the good.

A desirable way of communicating development anywhere close to a post-technological perspective is to build the narrative in symbols and metaphors, stories and beliefs embedded in the local language, landscape and "world" of the people. The world is a more-or-less porously bounded horizon of significance, in some sense complete in itself, but not sealed off to the outside. Communities welcome and nurture outsiders and outside phenomena. Development communication does not exploit this hospitality, but is awake to destroying the sense and sensibility of the "world" unrecognizably. The notion of the good life in a people's world can remain intact, even when they accept particular practices to achieve it. Technology can certainly be one such practice without its hegemonic regime. Post-technological understanding only decentres technological reductionism, not eliminates it. Development communication, in this sense, is a programme of giving voice to one/some of the possibility(ies) available in the subjects' world. Having recourse to indigenous symbols is not a clandestine "technique" to "paste" an unowned conception upon a people's world. Instead, the symbols are intrinsic to the narrative; without them the story would not hold. The communicator authentically engages with the community in making their vision of the good life explicit, and in expanding the range of its possibilities. She guards the narrative from being cut to size by technological understanding, and from being run down by the technological value of speed, the efficiency of time. The concern with speed unsettles the envisaging, nurturing and implanting of the development act.

Post-technological understanding is also redefining happiness, and wrenching it away from the seduction of commodities. The ontotheology of technological understanding sees only the transcendental stability of good, truth and value, and not their contingency and finiteness as incarnated forms in human existence. Post-technological understanding is alertness to contingency. It is reclaiming the colours of our vision, rendered colourblind by the long sway of technological understanding. Only the myriad hues of our vision will make the contrasting possibilities of development and happiness visible. When development communication is alive to this rich range of multiplicity and can make sense of it without discomfiture, it is invariably in the openness of post-technological understanding.

<div align="center">***</div>

At the end of this long chapter on the idea of development, the promised idea of development might still seem rather unforthcoming. However, as we said in the course of the chapter, the difficulty is constitutive to the question raised by this work. A precisely laid out actionable agenda might not be unfree from technological reductionism, and I must confess, the writing of this book itself is unavoidably caught up in that very reductionism. And yet, the argument is not that technological society is

to be done away with, which is an impossible proposition, or that one could only be a passive spectator to the reign of technological understanding. Every possible act of resistance available to us today might as well be not fully free from calculative intelligibility, which is not evidence against the possibility of resistance but evidence for the deep, distressing entrenchment of technological understanding of Being even in the global south. I shall deal with this distress in the next and final chapter.

We began this chapter with the epigraphic statement of Jacques Ellul about the strange dream of humanity at the end of the nineteenth century—the dream of absolute abundance, total technologization and perfect happiness. According to Robert Nozick's spirited attack against utilitarian hedonism, we would not choose an experience machine which would inundate us with happy sensations because "what we desire is to live (an active verb) ourselves, in contact with reality" (Nozick 1974: 45). There are things that matter to us other than the flood of happy sensations like wanting to have the sense that we are leading this life ourselves. The promise of developmentalism, although constantly evasive, is similarly disconcerting. Vattimo and Zamba write: "In a condition where the weak are increasing, the neoliberal road of a capitalist economy, with its focus on intensified development, is confirmed as not only socially unproductive but also destructive for humanity in general" (2011: 121). But it is not merely neoliberal developmentalism that is destructive. Community in any meaningful sense can be conceived as a scheme of cooperation arising out of our being in common only if modern atomistic individualism is also undercut together with calculative intelligibility and technological understanding of Being as such. In chapter four, we have discussed at length how modern notions of capital and individual are inextricably tied together. Manners of undermining both have to be imagined as vantage points to an era of a different post-technological social sense and development.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Ambedkar, B. (1994). *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and speeches* (Vol. 13). Bombay: Government of Maharashtra.
Arendt, H. (1978). *The life of the mind: Willing* (One-Volume Edition, Vol. 2). San Diego, CA: Harcourt.
Aristotle. (1984a). *Magna moralia* (St. G. Stock, Trans.). In Barnes, J (Ed.), *The complete works of Aristotle* (Vol. 2, Revised Oxford Translation). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Aristotle. (1984b). *Nicomachean ethics* (W. D. Ross, Trans.). In Barnes, J. (Ed.), *The complete works of Aristotle* (Vol. 2, Revised Oxford Translation). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Arndt, H. W. (1987). *Economic development: The history of an idea*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
Basu, S. (2002). *Religious revivalism as nationalist discourse: Swami Vivekananda and new Hinduism in nineteenth century Bengal*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Baudrillard, J. (2002) 2013. *The spirit of terrorism* (C. Turner, Trans.). London: Verso.
Benyamin. (2012). *Goat days* (J. Koyippally, Trans.). New Delhi: Penguin.

Bhargava, R. (2011). Should Europe learn from Indian secularism? *Seminar: Minorities and Pluralism* 621. Online: www.india-seminar.com/2011/621/621_rajeev_bhargava.htm.

Biemel, W. (1986). Poetry and language in Heidegger. In J. J. Kockelmans (Ed.), *On Heidegger and language* (pp. 65–105). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Borgmann, A. (1984). *Technology and the character of contemporary life: A philosophical enquiry*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Borgmann, A. (1992). *Crossing the postmodern divide*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Buchanan, B. (2008). *Onto-ethologies: The animal environments of Uexküll, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Deleuze*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Calarco, M. (2004). Heidegger's zoontology. In M. Calarco & P. Atterton (Eds.), *Animal philosophy: Essential readings in continental thought* (pp. 18–30). New York: Continuum.

Calarco, M. (2008). *Zoographies: The question of the animal from Heidegger to Derrida*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cameron, J. (2000). Amartya Sen on economic inequality: The need for an explicit critique of opulence. *Journal of International Development, 12*(7), 1031–1045.

Carman, T. (2002). Was Heidegger a linguistic idealist? *Inquiry, 45*(2), 205–215.

Chatterjee, P. (2001). On civil and political societies in post-colonial democracies. In S. Kaviraj & S. Khilnani (Eds.), *Civil society: History and possibilities* (pp. 165–178). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chatterjee, P. (2004). *The politics of the governed: Reflections on popular politics in most of the world*. Delhi: Permanent Black.

Collins, H. M. (2009). The new orthodoxy: Humans, animals, Heidegger and Dreyfus. In K. Leidlmair (Ed.), *After cognitivism: A reassessment of cognitive science and philosophy* (pp. 75–85). New York: Springer.

Curry, G. N. (2003). Moving beyond postdevelopment: Facilitating indigenous alternatives for 'development'. *Economic Geography, 79*(4), 405–423.

Davison, A. (2001). *Technology and the contested meanings of sustainability*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Derrida, J. (1997) 2008. In M.-L. Mallet (Ed.), *The animal that therefore I am* (D. Wills, Trans.). New York: Fordham University Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and time, division I*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1992). Heidegger's history of the being of equipment. In H. Dreyfus & H. Hall (Eds.), *Heidegger: A critical reader* (pp. 173–185). Cambridge: Blackwell.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1995). Heidegger on gaining a free relationship to technology. In A. Feenberg & A. Hannay (Eds.), *Technology and the politics of knowledge* (pp. 97–107). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (2002). Comments on Cristina Lafont's interpretation of *Being and time*. *Inquiry, 45*(2), 191–194.

Dreyfus, H. L. (2006). Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics. In C. B. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger* (2nd ed., pp. 345–372). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Düttmann, A. G. (2008). Making poverty visible: Three theses (A. De Boever, Trans.). *Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy 4*, 1–10.

Elden, S. (2006). Heidegger's animals. *Continental Philosophy Review, 39*(3), 273–291.

Ellul, J. (1954) 1964. *The technological society* (J. Wilkinson, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Escobar, A. (2000). Beyond the search for a paradigm? Post-development and beyond. *Development, 43*(4), 11–14.

Evernden, N. (1993). *The natural alien: Humankind and environment* (2nd ed.). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again* (S. Sampson, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Freire, P. (1968) 2005. *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.) 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum.

Gandhi, M. K. (1960–1994). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi,* in 100 Vols. New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Gasper, D., & Truong, T.-D. (2005). Deepening development ethics: From economism to human development to human security. *The European Journal of Development Research, 17*(3), 372–384.

Goulet, D. (1971) 1973. *The cruel choice: A new concept in the theory of development*. New York: Athenaeum.

Goulet, D. (1981). In defense of cultural rights: Technology, tradition and conflicting models of rationality. *Human Rights Quarterly, 3*(4), 1–18.

Guha, R. (1998). Radical American environmentalism and wilderness preservation: A third world critique. In R. Guha & J. M. Alier (Eds.), *Varieties of environmentalism: Essays north and south* (pp. 92–108). Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1959) 1982. The way to language (P. D. Hertz, Trans.). In *On the way to language* (pp. 109–136). New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1929) 1998. On the essence of ground (W. McNeill, Trans.). In W. McNeill (Ed.), *Pathmarks* (97–135). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1939) 2000. As when on a holiday… (K. Hoeller, Trans.). In *Elucidations of Hölderlin's poetry* (pp. 67–99). Amherest, NY: Humanity Books.

Heidegger, M. (1919) 2008. *Towards the definition of philosophy* (T. Sadler, Trans.). London: Continuum.

Heidegger, M. (1934) 2010. Why do I stay in the provinces? (T. Sheehan, Trans.). In T. Sheehan (Ed.), *Heidegger: The man and the thinker* (pp. 27–30). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Jodhka, S. S. (2002). Nation and village: Images of rural India in Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar. *Economic and Political Weekly, 37*(32), 3343–3353.

Kaviraj, S. (2013). Languages of secularity. *Economic and Political Weekly, 48*(50), 93–102.

Kinsella, W. J. (2007). Heidegger and being at the Hanford reservation: Standing reserve, enframing, and environmental communication theory. *Environmental Communication, 1*(2), 194–217.

Krell, D. F. (1992). *Daimon life: Heidegger and life-philosophy*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Lafont, C. (2000). *Heidegger, language, and world-disclosure*. Trans. Graham Harman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lafont, C. (2002). Replies. *Inquiry, 45*(2), 229–248.

Latour, B. (2004). Why has critique run out of steam?: From matters of fact to matters of concern. *Critical Inquiry* (Special Issue on the Future of Critique), *30*(2), 225–248.

Levinas, E. (1963) 1990. *Difficult freedom: Essays on Judaism* (S. Hand, Trans.). Baltimore, MA: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Levinas, E. (1990) 2001. In the name of the other (M. V. Gendney, Trans.). In J. Robbins (Ed.), *Is it righteous to be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 188–199). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Malpas, J. (2006). *Heidegger's topology: Being, place, world*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Mazumdar, S. (2014). India's economy: Some reflections on its shaky future. *Futures, 56*, 22–29.

McNeill, W. (1999). Life beyond the organism: Animal being in Heidegger's Freiburg lectures, 1929–30. In H. P. Steeves (Ed.), *Animal others: On ethics, ontology, and animal life* (pp. 197–249). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McNeill, W. (2006). *The time of life: Heidegger and ethos*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Meyssan, T. (2002) 2013. *9/11: The big lie*. London: Cornot Publishing.

Mitchell, A. J. (2011). Heidegger's later thinking of animality: The end of world poverty. *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual 1*, 74–85.

Naess, A. (1973). The shallow and the deep, long-range ecology movement: A summary. *Inquiry, 16*(1), 95–100.

Nancy, J.-L. (1999–2008) 2010. *The truth of democracy* (P.-A. Brault & M. Naas, Trans.). New York: Fordham University Press.

Nanda, M. (2003). *Prophets facing backward: Postmodern critiques of science and Hindu nationalism in India*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Nandy, A. (1989). Shamans, savages and the wilderness: On the audibility of dissent and the future of civilizations. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, *14*(3), 263–277.

Nandy, A. (1994). Culture, voice and development: A primer for the unsuspecting. *Thesis Eleven, 39*(1), 1–18.

Nehru, J. (1945) 1997. Nehru's reply to Gandhi. In A. J. Parel (Ed.), *Hind swaraj and other writings* (pp. 152–154). New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

Nozick, R. (1974). *Anarchy, state, and utopia*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Nussbaum, M. (1987). *Nature, function, and capability: Aristotle on political distribution*. WIDER working paper, WP, 31. Helsinki: World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University.

Nussbaum, M. (1993). Non-relative virtues: An Aristotelian approach. In M. C. Nussbaum & A. Sen (Eds.), *The quality of life* (pp. 242–269). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Nussbaum, M. (1986) 2001. *The fragility of goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy* (revised edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (2010). *Not for profit: Why democracy needs the humanities*. Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press.

Okrent, M. (2002). Equipment, world, and language. *Inquiry, 45*(2), 195–204.

Oomen, T. K. (2005). *Crisis and contention in Indian society*. New Delhi: Sage.

Pal, M. (2004). Caste and patriarchy in panchayats. *Economic and Political Weekly, 39*(32), 3581–3583.

Pascal, B. (1658–62) 1995. *Pensées and other writings* (H. Levi, Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pöggeler, O. (1992). West-east dialogue: Heidegger and Lao-tzu. In G. Parkes (Ed.), *Heidegger and Asian thought* (Indian edition, pp. 47–78). New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Sachs, W. (2010). Introduction. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power* (2nd ed., pp. xv–xx). London: Zed Books.

Sartre, J.-P. (1945) 2001. *Existentialism and humanism* (P. Mairet, Trans.). In S. Priest (Ed.) *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings* (pp. 25–57). Abingdon: Routledge.

Scarry, E. (1985). *The body in pain: The making and unmaking of the world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (1989). Development as capability expansion. *Journal of Development Planning, 19*, 41–58.

Sen, A. (2000). *Development as freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Shangpliang, R. M. (2009). Ecological basis of Khasi ethno-cultural traits. In T. B. Subba, J. Puthenpurakal, & S. J. Puykunnel (Eds.), *Christianity and change in northeast India* (pp. 219–231). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Sheehan, T. J. (1998). Nihilism: Heidegger/Jünger/Aristotle. In B. C. Hopkins (Ed.), *Phenomenology: Japanese and American perspectives* (pp. 273–316). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Sheehan, T. J. (2006). Reading a life: Heidegger and hard times. In B. G. Charles (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger* (2nd ed., pp. 70–96). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shilliam, R. (2012). Redemption from development: Amartya Sen, Rastafari and promises of freedom. *Postcolonial Studies, 15*(3), 331–350.

Shrivastava, A., & Kothari, A. (2012). *Churning the earth: The making of global India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Stefanovic, I. L. (2000). *Safeguarding our common future: Rethinking sustainable development*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Sukhdev, P. (2012). *Corporation 2020: Transforming business for tomorrow's world*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Taylor, C. (1981) 1985. Understanding ethnocentricity. In *Philosophical papers: Philosophy and the human sciences* (Vol. 2, pp. 116–133). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1995). Two theories of modernity. *Hastings Center Report, 25*(2), 24–33.

Taylor, C. (2007). Heidegger on language. In H. L. Dreyfus & M. A. Wrathall (Eds.), *A companion to Heidegger* (pp. 433–455). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Thomson, I. D. (2005). *Heidegger on ontotheology: Technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thomson, I. D. (2011). *Heidegger, art, and postmodernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Truman, H. S. (1949) 2010. Inaugural address. In A. M. Schlesinger & F. L. Israel (Eds.), *My fellow citizens: The inaugural addresses of the presidents of the United States, 1789–2009* (pp. 300–308). New York: Infobase Publishing.

Vattimo, G., & Zabala, S. (2011). *Hermeneutic communism: From Heidegger to Marx*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Swami Vivekananda (2007). *The complete works of Swami Vivekananda* (Vol. 5). Kolkata: Advaita Ashram.

Winkler, R. (2007). Heidegger and the question of man's poverty in world. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies, 15*(4), 521–539.

Wolfe, C. (2010). *What is posthumanism?*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Young, J. (2002). *Heidegger's later philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Young, J. (2006). The fourfold. In C. B. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger* (2nd ed., PP. 373–392). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zimmerman, M. E. (1981) 1986. *Eclipse of the self: The development of Heidegger's concept of authenticity* (revised ed.). Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.

Zimmerman, M. E. (2003). Heidegger's phenomenology and contemporary environmentalism. In C. S. Brown & T. Toadvine (Eds.), *Eco-phenomenology: Back to the earth itself* (pp. 73–101). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Chapter 7
Development and Distress: Concluding Remarks

> *Systematic violence and threat of violence at times direct, at other times silent and indirect but no less vicious is being used by the state under the guise of liberalization, privatization and globalization to dispossess millions who live traditionally on a natural resource base, forcing them to abandon rural livelihood based on agriculture, horticulture, fishing, craftsmanship, cottage or small-scale industries. Set adrift to end up in the cities, the dispossessed are now condemned for being poor. The miserable living spaces they manage to create are at perpetual risk of being bulldozed in the name of some 'illegality' or 'encroachment', defined by the expropriators of their traditional livelihood.*
> —Amit Bhaduri and Medha Patkar, "The State and Its Stepchildren", 182.

Abstract This chapter dwells on two themes related to the idea of development as good life variously conceived as opposed to the post-war conception of developmentalism understood as the ontic planetary concretion of technological understanding of Being as such. Firstly, it dwells on the notion of the lack of distress in distress as the global entrenchment of technological nihilism continues unabated. The absence of ontological distress is developed in the chapter in relation to the infeasibility of the promise of establishing the developmental society globally, the implausibility of justice for the global south and the improbability of the hope of social emancipation for people everywhere. Secondly, the chapter dwells on Heidegger's insistence that the still inconceivable power of salvation from global technological nihilism can arise only from the Grecian world. It is argued that this claim can be best understood in terms of the inherent violence of enframing. This chapter stresses the difficulties of succeeding with alternative proposals of development.

Keywords Distress · Promise · Justice · Hope · Violent · Saving power

A positive intent always underlies critical philosophy. Jürgen Habermas calls the dark and gloomy *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944) and its critique of Enlightenment morality and science a 'myopic perspective', which made Horkheimer and Adorno "insensitive to the traces and the existing forms of communicative rationality" (1982: 30). Reflecting on their essay in 1969, Horkheimer and Adorno thought rather that their aim in (1944) was "to take up the cause of the remnants of freedom, of tendencies toward real humanity, even though they seem powerless in face of the great historical trend" (2002: xi). They were explaining "why humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (2002: xiv). The positive intent of the present study of developmentalism, understood as the concretion of the planetary takeover of the ontology of technology, was I believe evident throughout, especially in the last chapter.

In 1935, Heidegger rubbished categories like optimism and pessimism as childish (IM: 41) and since then regularly he talked bleakly about technological understanding. In 1966, he told probing interviewers that "the essence of man is framed, claimed, and challenged by a power which manifests itself in the essence of technology, a power which man himself does not control" (GS: 107) and that philosophy could do nothing about "the superior global power of the unthought essence of technology" save "awaken, clarify, and fortify the readiness" for a new epochal gathering of meaning (a god). However, a hidden hope, a well-guarded optimism belies such talk of Heidegger.

In the 1962 lecture "Time and Being", Heidegger charted the difficulty and promise underlying his life's work. Because it reviews and destructs the whole history of philosophy, he said, his thinking was less than philosophy, and "the direct or indirect effect of this thinking on the public in the industrial age, formed by technology and science, is decisively less possible … than it was in the case of philosophy" (EP: 60). He also says that this thinking "remains slight" on account of the fact that it remains merely "preparatory" in essence and has no "founding character". Its supposedly humble aim is to cultivate "a readiness in man for a possibility whose contour remains obscure, whose coming remains uncertain" (EP: 60). He then speaks about the meaning of his work, which I would like to quote at length:

> *We are thinking of the possibility that the world civilization which is just now beginning might one day overcome the technological-scientific-industrial character as the sole criterion of man's world sojourn.* This may happen not of and through itself, but in virtue of the readiness of man for a determination which, whether listened to or not, always speaks in the destiny of man which has not yet been decided. It is just as uncertain whether world civilization will soon be abruptly destroyed or whether it will be stabilized for a long time, in a stabilization, however, which will not rest in something enduring, but rather establish itself in a sequence of changes, each of which presenting the latest fashion. The preparatory thinking in question does not wish and is not able to predict the future. *It only attempts to say something to the present which was already said a long time ago precisely at the beginning of philosophy and for that beginning, but has not been explicitly thought* (EP: 60–61; my emphasis).

Hence, Heidegger's large oeuvre is concerned with the readiness for a new opening in the clearing of Being provided by the human being so that the manifold

meanings of Being, which now are obstructed by the dominating singularity of technological understanding, can be variously reclaimed by different human communities. Rupturing the monistic understating of Being in Western philosophical tradition, Heidegger believed, is important because the metaphysical frame of technologically organized uniformity that is now dominating the world is metaphysically Western in origin.

In as much as, this is the aim of Heidegger's thinking, both optimism and pessimism are equally part of my project, which takes off from Heidegger's argument about the dissolution of Western metaphysics in its new planetary avatar as technological understanding. The positive sketches of the last chapter represent optimism, but the undeniable difficulty of gathering these practices into a culturally dominant form of meaning, which can gradually undermine the global hegemony of technological understanding, represents pessimism. Would manifold understandings of the good life or various development conceptions be allowed to flourish? Would the violent ethos of technological understanding tolerate alternative understandings? The above quoted words of Heidegger are not silent on this difficulty, although they also express his positive aims. If anything really can prepare us for a new ontological beginning, any event in history or any social process, then it is our manifold understandings of good life first and foremost. But the post-war discourse of development, a definitive planetary concretion of technological understanding is a seductive enticement and, at the same time, an obstruction for the manifold possibilities of Being to present themselves to us in the clearing of Being. There lies the difficulty.

Hence, it has to be said that while an optimistic line of thought regulates this project and I think Heidegger's project as well, caution is to be exercised and the difficulty is to be understood. This aim animates the present chapter.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

We have discussed in detail in Chap. 5 the dialectics of the promise of justice for the global south. The epigraph to the present chapter is a glaring testament to the contradictions of the promise of developmental justice. The post-war development narrative is not simply and straightforwardly about bread for the hungry, although that is its unique selling point. The juggernaut of developmentalism impacts the global south as technological modernization and subjectivities and communities there as technological self-understanding. In the name of the hungry, development transforms the way the subject sees the world.

Development as a process of comprehensive metamorphosis of the global south is not complete. What seems complete is the ineluctability of developmentalism, its thoroughly unproblematic appearance and the inevitability of its logical progress. Total, often eagerly awaited and largely unopposed sway of technological understanding and developmentalism is coming to hold spellbound every corner of the global south just as the north. Among those who await developmental salvation are also those at the receiving end of the technological society. As we have noted in Chap. 3, this promise and this seduction form the constitutive procedural logic of technological understanding and that which lies beneath its success. The transformation is ontological because what is established globally is the singularity of

Western subjectivity. No moral critique can puncture it, for morality and culture are alchemized into its own figurations.[1]

According to Heidegger, the most uncontroversial moral logic that sustains the world-dominating trajectory of technological understanding is the purposive belief that peaceful exploitation of natural and human resources is possible without limit and can put at rest the restiveness of human existence and make it happy (WP: 221). This may be called the undisputed *developmental principle* and promise. The second formulation of the Kantian categorical imperative, the golden rule virtually, which limits human responsibilities to rational humanity alone, further supports the above principle of development. Technological conquest of the planet and the Other in order to make her adept in calculative thinking and adept in its use in the global market thus becomes morally legitimate projects.

Enframing is an overall understanding of reality as that which lies about out there like a huge reserve of resources to be represented, produced and reduced to manipulable forms for the sake of satiating the apparently insatiable human desire for gratification. We should not imagine that this planetary understanding of reality can be successfully resisted by religious states, traditional monarchies and conservative governments. On the contrary, the most glaring contradictions spring up precisely there, for amidst obvious inequalities and orthodoxies visible marks of technological understanding pile up, the new logic of calculation is put at the service of further widening disparities, new products are put at vulgar display, new forms of violence take the place of traditional methods of repression, political vengeance and reactionary nationalism, and infallible dogmas begin to seek justifications according to the formulaic logic of enframing. Both violently and seductively overcoming resistance is constitutive of enframing.

Treating reality as exploitable material induces humans to treat the Other in that vein as illustrated in the history of colonialism, both European and native. The atomistic treatment of self, understood as invested with inalienable rights, reinforces the treatment of reality as exploitable material. Techno-modern individualism, however, finally draws into its centripetal orbit self as such so that self-understanding itself becomes technological. The image of the rights-vested, sovereign, self-determined, self-gratifying individual is parasitic on the understanding of reality as exploitable material, thoroughly profane and fully conquerable. Therefore, I have argued in this book that *we should begin to imagine socio-economic equality separately from the image of the self-contained, self-gratified individual. Cooperating human beings living with the needed in terms of their*

---

[1] We have seen how Levinas challenged this view in Sect. 5.1. For him, ethical encounter disrupts the understanding of Being or world and to that extent does not depend on it. Ethics challenges the reduction of the Other to the self and to her world; rather, it positively lets the Other be in her otherness. For Heidegger, too, I have argued 'ethics' can be seen as letting the Other be in her otherness when we consider *Being and Time*'s discussion of the positive modes of solicitude. For Heidegger, however, the manners of letting the Other be other positively are still dependent on our understanding of Being. They can be termed ethical only if they in fact let the Other be other.

being in common is truer to human ontology and human equality. I have argued in the last chapter that this imagination can be fostered in manifold ways. Let me now dwell a little longer on the "caution" I spoke about a while ago regarding how difficult it is to foster such an imagination.

<div align="center">***</div>

The poststructural turn in social theory and philosophy, as I pointed out in the introductory chapter, emphasizes that all that is meaningful is constructed and all that is constructed does not arise from a privileged foundation or centre. So, while there is incessant social construction, there is no constructor as such, for subjectivity itself is a construct. There is no transcendental signified or referent to infuse our constructions with definitive meaning; "there is no outside-text; *il n'y a pas de hors-texte*" (Derrida 1967: 158). Without a ground, meaning is decentred, dispersed and is abyssal. Undoubtedly, we are in an age of endless contestations, where we do not anymore have the privilege of a reference-frame to locate ourselves firmly to discriminate definitively between what is contestable and what is not. Consequently, every narrative that is prima facie cogent hides within itself elements that can puncture its cogency.

Accordingly, if the market is brought under a comprehensive critique, it is immediately shown that what makes up the narrative or discourse of the market are importantly also non-market elements, things sealed with the sign of sweat and toil. The interior of a modern refrigerator in the remotest corner of the globe is housed by things made in hamlets and huts from all over the world, under all kinds of conditions, things that smell of the earth and things that do not come through the facile network of the modern market. A single wall-of-four shelters a world more complex than the market. Similarly, a critical account of development stitched up together with technological understanding of beings as its central thread can be dumped as mono-logical and not receptive to multiple processes that make up modernization. Therefore, development either already contains within itself critical alternatives pointed out or critical alternatives are done in by their own aporias.

How do we respond to this manner of puncturing a narrative by demonstrating its internal aporias, thus making them disparaged in the process? First of all, this playfully critical strategy, which can disparage every critical narrative, of course, can itself be submitted to the same or other critical strategies. If everything is constructed, we must see how critical narratives too are constructed. Secondly, strategies that belittle critical exercises to lay bare dominant narratives may be seen as benefitting dominant narratives themselves and their domineering adherents. This is why Bruno Latour is bothered about the future of critique in "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam?." In fact, sound poststructural exercises of critique deny only the perfectly settled façade and founded character of our texts and meanings. They do not deny the reality of these texts. They invite us forever to rupture, question and transform our peaceably perched narratives.

But, it must be said that everything is not constructed by us; we participate in the upkeep, maintenance and uncritical adulation of handed down and even borrowed constructions and traditions. Furthermore, everything is not simply constructed in the sense that we have not created them. We are neither their authors nor creators;

we rather uphold them. Dasein is claimed by the prevalent understanding of Being rather than Dasein creating and claiming them. As Charles Taylor points out, the contemporary Nietzschean fascination with total constructivism finally "leaves the agent, even with all his or her doubts about the category of the 'self', with a sense of untrammelled power and freedom before a world that imposes no standards, ready to enjoy 'free-play', or to indulge in an aesthetics of the self" (1991: 61). For Heidegger, reality comes to the fore as a result of a two-way process: beings dynamically affect us—we must say that in this affecting they communicate with us—and the precinct of language that we provide as human communities is constituted by the way beings affect us and communicate with us. We merely and somewhat passively provide the space for the production, circulation and maintenance of meaning. There is human involvement and agency in the activity of bringing forth meaning, but this involvement does not mean that an individual is capriciously producing meaning in reckless abandon. In understanding the meanings of things, we moodily attune ourselves to them so that they can manifest their meanings from out of themselves. Hence, our predominantly active and central role in the process of constructing meaning in postructural constructivism should be undercut. What creates and uncreates itself in dominant as well as marginal interpretive frames is reality itself impinging on us in its own ways in terms of the clearing provided by us.

Not attuning ourselves to the predominant revealing/concealing activity of the technological understanding of Being banishes our agency into the captivity of the planetary interpretive frame of enframing. We thus become hapless actors in cooperation with technological understanding. However, we do not thus attune ourselves to the singular and absolute truth of this dominant understanding. While technological understanding is the dominant driver of contemporary global culture, it is not the single mode of accessing the real even in contemporary west. Heidegger observes that several other understandings of Being coexist with the predominant technological understanding. They exist as marginal understandings, stifled, sidelined and dominated by enframing. Its domination is both seductive and violent. "The African Sahara is only one kind of wasteland," writes Heidegger. "The devastation of the earth can go hand in hand with a guaranteed supreme living standard for man, and just as easily with the establishment of a uniform state of happiness for all men" (WCT: 29). The global south is the current field of expansion of enframing. I think that the planetary domination of enframing is incontestable, though how to interpret this domination is open to contestation. In this book, I have offered an interpretation of the unfolding of technological understanding in the global south.

Distress or plight (*die Not*) is the disconcerting manner by way of which technological understanding affects us according to Heidegger in *Contributions*. I shall now underline the distress in the face of the unfolding of development as modernization, the concretion of the essence of technology in the global south.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

First, on the distress of promise. The techno-modern development principle promises to gratify and fulfil the human animal. But the human being is penetrated in its very Being with an incurable nullity, a not-yet that is fulfilled only when it is

not. Human selfhood is permeated with a primordial "not". Thus, the promise of technological modernity as such is distressing, for it is a promise that cannot be kept.

The primordial existential "not" is characterized in the following three ways in *Being and Time*. The thrown basis of human existence is null first and foremost. Heidegger emphasizes that the human being "is never existent *before* its basis, but only *from it* and *as this basis*. Thus 'Being-a-basis' means *never* to have power over one's ownmost Being from the ground up. This '*not*' belongs to the existential meaning of 'thrownness'. It itself, being a basis, *is* a nullity of itself" (BT: 330). We neither know whence we come nor where we are headed. We surge up in existence and live out our existence with a peculiar, anxious, finite and powerless manner of taking issue with the "mineness" characteristic of our existence. Since we have no control over the beginning point, end point and the finite stretching between these two temporal points of our existence, and yet since this existence is primordially our own, we anxiously gather up between birth and death our finitely and fragilely posited existential moments in terms of a groundlessly meaningful sense of "our own existence".

Secondly, the basis of the possibility-powered character of our existence too is abyssal. Self-understanding constitutively is openness towards possibilities or "projection". Hence, while choosing some possibilities, the human being "constantly *is* not other possibilities" (BT: 331). We are thus constitutively situated in thoroughly finite, somewhat unfree and imperfect existential scheme of choices. We cannot choose all possibilities that seem fascinating to us. We cannot often choose even the most fascinating of our choices for they lie beyond our reach. Our choices are temporally determined by a finite horizon, constrained by our "null" origin and "null" fate. Our scheme of choices would have been very different if we had a different origin, a different existential horizon or a different direction and focus.

Thirdly, everyday human existence is characterized by groundless, inauthentic falling amidst beings and away from one's own authentic self on account of the primordial nullity penetrating existence. Human existence maintains itself between absolute inauthenticity and total authenticity, with no hope of ever becoming totally authentic except at death. The authentic moments of human existence are so flashy that they are constantly, anxiously grappling with inauthentic, socially levelled existence. Inauthenticity is not a moral fault of individual existents but is characteristic of the elemental nullity constitutive of existence. "In the structure of thrownness," writes Heidegger, "as in that of projection, there lies essentially a nullity. This nullity is the basis for the possibility of *in*authentic Dasein in its falling, and as falling, every inauthentic Dasein factically is" (BT: 331). Factically, therefore, existence is falling into the world of things of which it is fascinated about, into a social scene that it has not chosen on premeditation, and away from its own authentic possibilities that it can resolutely choose and make its own.

The three existential nullities of thrownness (relating to past and to attunement), projection (relating to future and to understanding) and inauthenticity (relating to present and to falling) mean that we *cannot* have power over our

thrown basis, we *cannot* have power over all our projected possibilities and we *cannot* have power over our mode of factical existence. Hence, possibility-driven dynamism and human ascent characteristic of existence *cannot* mean limitless, capricious freedom. Our freedom is restricted by our fate, heritage and destiny and by the scheme of existence we settle on out of our finite set of possibilities, constrained by our socioculturally produced horizon of existence. Our social horizon is already constructed and handed over to us, and hence, our control over it is thoroughly restricted. Our relationship with our social situatedness is one of love and hate: we are inordinately in love with it, for without it we cannot make sense of our "mineness"; we are at least covertly and sometimes overtly in revolt with it for the constraints it places on us.

Techno-modern developmentalism promises to gratify and fulfil the human animal. We have argued in this study that the meaning of this project arises from the inherent dynamism of human existence. However, the historical trajectory of the developmental project calls for personal and political disapproval of the frantic scheme of technologically aided, perfect human fulfilment. On the one hand, the elemental nullity of existence, which we have characterized above, defeats the project of perfect fulfilment; on the other hand, the history of this project calls for a more equitable distribution of the world's resources. The project of perfect fulfilment, which rides on the unrealistic promise of universally perfect fulfilment, is defeated by the concentration of resources in small pockets of global humanity and by the reduction of all beings into resourceful forms for the sake of this project, leading to the devastation of the earth and the global acceptance of the ideal human being as the technologized animal. Production and consumption in terms of needs, generating political will without fascistic measures against overproduction and commodity fetishism and creating conducive social context for heroic personal simplicity, seem to be the guideline for a way out of technological nihilism.

This is not merely the saner option on account of resource limitation; it is saner more importantly on account of the necessity to value the fragility and finiteness constitutive of the human condition. There is intuitive force in the idea that the human animal wants to rise above its given conditions and its present possibilities; similarly, there is intuitive force in the idea that the human animal wants to locate itself in its finite world of meaning rather than in a mechanically and technologically determined perfect existence. The ideal of technologized animal negates the constitution of human existence as we know it and further adds to existential anxiety through boredom, artificiality, disconnection from reality and the inescapability of death. It is in search of this precarious balance between human ascent and human finiteness that we take recourse to technological props, but in the process plunge into technological nihilism and transform human essence itself, the openness of meaning, into the technologized uniformity of a singular meaning, from the anxious animal who takes issue with its Being into the technologized animal. We have argued in this study that these dilemmatic historical trajectories of humanity are avoidable.

The distress of techno-modern developmentalism, however, arises not only from the technologization of the human animal and from the devastation of the

planet. What is most distressful about technological modernity is a peculiar "lack of distress in distress". "The lack of a sense of plight," argues Heidegger, "is greatest where self-certainty has become unsurpassable, where everything is held to be calculable, and especially where it has been decided, with no previous questioning, who we are and what we are supposed to do" (CP: 99).[2] This lack of distress in distress explains the awe that binds exploited and dispossessed humanity to technological understanding. They in fact gain little from this new way of understanding what-is, including themselves. They in fact have neither the wherewithal nor the adeptness to manage in the new, technological world. They ought to "lose" themselves in order to be represented and produced as the resourceful beings, who access reality in its resourcefulness alone. What characterizes the lack of distress in distress in the case of the dispossessed is not achieved development but the promise of techno-modern development. That which binds one's will and interest by means of the excess of promise alone can make one forgo current interests and way of being a self for the sake of something unknown. In this manner, distress produces itself as not distressful and, more, as that which is of invaluable significance.

Heidegger characterizes the lack of distress in distress ontologically as the obstruction of truth, which is the unconcealment of the manifold possibilities of Being. He writes that the lack of distress "is due to this *obstructing* of the essence of truth as the ground of Da-*sein* and of the grounding of history" (CP: 99). This is what Heidegger refers to as the forgetfulness of Being by beings and abandonment of beings by Being. The lack of distress stands for the transformation of human essence as openness of Being and its manifoldness. The techno-modern epoch of Being, through excessively blinding bedazzlement, obstructs this openness. Through technologization of human essence, through ravaging, pillaging and laying the earth to waste, through obstructing the openness provided for meaning by human existence, technological modernity is more distressful than any other historical epoch even at that epoch's fag end. This distress is more because its hidden, distressful essence is dynamically projected as promising, developmental, emancipatory and peace- and happiness-enhancing.

The domination of the technological understanding of Being means that another sense of Being can become thought-worthy only when technological nihilism or forgetfulness of Being (or simply meaninglessness of all phenomena on account of their organized uniformity) has become distressful. According to Heidegger, philosophers are questioners (CP: 12) and philosophy's task is to raise the question of Being and question the forgetfulness of Being in the technological age. This too has become impossible because philosophy itself has been dominated by technological understanding. "Philosophy is hounded by the fear that it

---

[2] What Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly in their translation of 1999 render as "distress" for the German "*die Not*," Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu render as "plight" in their translation of 2012. Throughout this book, I have been using the latter translation for quotes, though I use in my discussions the former translation's rendering of "*die Not*" as distress.

loses prestige and validity if it is not a science. Not to be a science is taken as a failing that is equivalent to being unscientific. *Being, as the element of thinking, is abandoned by the technical interpretation of thinking*" (LH: 240; my emphasis). Philosophy raises itself to the rank of science through logical analysis with the ideal of achieving clarity.

The most distressful aspect of technological modernity from the point of view of development is perhaps its violent projection of itself as the global standard and the violent rejection of alternatives. We have argued the case of the violent essence of technological understanding at length in Chap. 3. The most visible presence of this violence can be seen in the logic of representation and objectification, the demand to render sufficient reason, the arbitrary fixture of basis of the sufficiency of reason, and disparaging and effacing from view that which does not follow its violent logic. But this violence need not be only representational. Escobar points out that it was not a mere coincidence at all that

> … the vast majority of the approximately 150 wars of the last four decades were fought in the Third World, many of them with the direct or indirect participation of powers external to the Third World. The Third World, far from being peripheral, was central to superpower rivalry and the possibility of nuclear confrontation (1995: 34).

American extension of support in the 1940s to eclipsing European colonialism was not innocent according to Escobar because American interest was also centred on the resources of the colonies, "most clearly perhaps in the case of Middle East oil" (1995: 31), the battle for which continues to this day with the simmering presence of war in that region led by America. Homogenization of difference and accumulation of resources are the concrete manifestations of the violent logic of technological modernity.

We free ourselves from the homogenizing grip of the techno-modern understanding of Being by resisting and subverting post-war developmentalism through little individual and social acts and through deliberative political churnings, and by accepting those aspects of the good life through which the techno-modern epoch has unmistakably sealed human ascent to the extent that a post-technological epoch cannot efface it any more from its horizon. Every historical epoch brings with it certain elements that unmistakably seal human ascent. Our modern disquiet about inequalities and tyrannies are such unmistakably sealed aspects of human ascent. A historical epoch's total hold over us can be shirked off only by transforming history rather than totally negating it. Freedom and equality, for example, should mean affirming the incomparable sense of being human rather than the equivalence of human beings. Heidegger's own central argument is about how the Greek beginning continues rather diffusely into the techno-modern epoch. While it is often argued that the secular modern age is a transformed mode of the Christian epoch, Heidegger takes this historical thread of the techno-modern epoch further back to its Greek origin.

It is now imperative that the equality of the unique senses of being human is radically acknowledged and the equality of the homogenous/equivalent, rights-vested, sovereign, gratified, atomistic individual is rethought, democratically deliberated upon and suitably transformed. It is also imperative that techno-modern humanism

is transformed into a posthumanism that lets the human being conserve, preserve and esteem beings amidst which it dwells caringly.

However, the lack of distress in distress that is characteristic of technological modernity is still an inexorable reality because technological understanding has only just begun its planetary phase. The critical theory of the Frankfurt School believes in the emancipatory potential of the human will. But any doubt cast on this human potential is inextricably knotted in distress. Being gripped by the distress brought about by technological modernity, however, can be emancipatory in as much as the first layer of Being's concealment is removed. It removes the delusion that what is distressful is desirable and developmental. Heidegger held that this first step alone was possible in these times of preparation for epochal transformation and no counter revelation of Being was in sight.

The present study suggests that even this preparatory and transitional historical period brings to the fore local and global possibilities of the good life, which are non-technological, not so efficient and not fully open to calculative valuation. Technological understanding is not a demon to be exorcized, but a definitive instrumental good that has to serve the incalculable, non-technological aspects of our various conceptions of the good life. At its origin, technological understanding was not the "good" as such, but one of the means to the end of good life. In its most assertive format, technological modernity blurs the means–ends distinction and indeed posits the means as both the end and the means. This is why Heidegger insists that a merely instrumental understanding of technology is insufficient; the essence of technology should be understood, rather, as an understanding of Being, which levels the distinction between technology as means and end. As the means that serve the non-technological aspects of our invaluable conceptions of good life, technology always must have its legitimate global presence.

***

Second, on the distress of justice. Our epigraph to this chapter is in fact about the distress of justice. The distress of justice states that when the goal is commodity-proliferating techno-capitalism, it does not work fairly for all. The relentless proliferation of new and more dazzling commodities undermines gratification, and the self-interested economic individual is on the lookout for more gratifying commodities. In as much as Amartya Sen's understanding of development as substantial freedom does not challenge the unlimited pursuit of commodity-proliferating development, it is in no way untouched by the distress of modernity. Sen's freedom slogan of development virtually comes to mean the freedom to enter the global market to buy and sell. This pattern of development is about satisfying needs by creating and putting into circulation in the global market what is not needed or is superfluous, and these unneeded goods gradually become essentials for everyone, without the means to attain them, thus plunging developmental subjects into incurable distress. This process is termed growth, progress or development. Because needs get artificially created, situations of destitution are compromised, and the demands of justice are never fulfilled.

Other problems associated with such a sense of progress and development for the affluent sections of global humanity are highlighted by several authors.

Commodity fetish can be dehumanizing. It can make us identify our sense of self with the commodities we use; it can prompt us measure our significance as persons in terms of conspicuous consumption; it can negate our Being in common by replacing human company with the company of commodities. Commodity fetish can be profoundly "boring". When commodities are needlessly multiplied and their differences and peculiarities thus made to disappear, we can become indifferent to their "thingliness", their cultural–historical specificity. When they multiply and quickly transform into ever new shapes with supposed value additions, we too become quickly satisfied with them, and dissipated and impatient with the novelty of the new. Such boredom arises because we cannot anymore keep pace with progress, and progress cannot keep pace with us.[3] Commodity fetish can be thoroughly alienating. Commodities and their easy producibility, replicability and novelty can disrupt our Being in common. They can take the place of people, and it might become possible that our Being in common is thus disparaged, compromised and uncared for. Commodity fetish can, thus, transform our human essence; it can reconfigure our own humanity, our concern for things and our solicitude for others.

But, what is of interest to us primarily in the present context is not the dehumanization, boredom, disorientation and technologization of the human animal brought about by quickly dissatisfying commodities, but the distress of justice that occurs in the wake of these phenomena. The promise of justice is the driver of development. The gigantic process of development is undertaken, we are told, not because the earth has unlimited resources, not because preconditions and systems are rightly set in place, but because the demand of justice is to be met. And yet, as I have argued in Chap. 5, the structural constitution of the post-war discourse of development does not permit to fulfil the promise of justice. However, global systems, processes and institutions are framed for the upkeep of developmentalism with the claim of justice in its vanguard. This state of affairs serves the distressing interests of the global north and their cohorts in the global south. In the name of justice, the planetary domination of technological understanding has achieved the establishment of its concrete form, developmentalism, in the global south. The name of justice has thus become a surrogate for power and violent hegemony.

---

[3] I am speaking here about the first type of boredom that Heidegger deals with in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1929). Heidegger calls this type of boredom "becoming bored by something" as opposed to becoming bored *with* something and profound boredom. Boredom of this type arises from "the fact that particular things, in what they offer us or do not offer us and in the way that they do so, are in each case *co-determined* by a *particular time*, in each case have *their* particular time. Things can leave us empty only along with that being held in limbo that proceeds from time. On the other hand, this time that drags can hold us in limbo only if things having the characterized possibility of refusal stand at the disposal of time, if they are bound to time … what is at issue here in the possibility of boredom is an as yet obscure relation of the dragging along of time to the things that refuse themselves" (FCM: 105). Commodity fetishism is that kind of phenomenon whereby we contribute actively to the thing not offering itself to us. The dragging of time here arises from the quick refusal of the thing in its readiness-to-hand.

What economic liberalization and globalization have brought to the supposedly emergent India is similarly worrying. The post-1991 reforms have surely swelled the strength and fortunes of the proverbially aspirational Indian middle class, but most of India is still not emerging. The distinction between those who experience India's emergence on the world scene in a palpably real way and the majority who are left behind by the developmental state, the 'Other' of development (see George 2010), is sometimes spoken of as India (the emerging) and Bharat (the submerging). Bharat could be Indian nature as well, objectified and destroyed as a direct consequence of developmentalism, but worshipped and revered till recently. Shrivastava and Kothari put the schism between the two Indian countries arising especially from the policies of the last two decades of economic liberalization in the following way:

> While the two countries are joined at the hip—like Siamese twins—they continue to drink at different waterholes. While one grapples with problems of obesity, the other is malnourished. While one shops in dazzling malls, the other finds it every day more difficult to buy what is sold in local bazaars. If one speeds down the new expressways in luxury sedans, the other gets packed into rickety buses headed for very different destinations (2012: 11).

This state of affairs is in no way surprising because India cannot be slated to realize an egalitarianism of superfluous goods. Although Bharat is as yet not fully ready to be galvanized in terms purely of instrumental rationality, rural resources and livelihood options of the rural poor are fast depleting as they are being uncontrollably drained for the benefit mainly of the urban and advantaged population.

External colonizer in a full-fledged sense is not the norm today, although the global economy is now colonizing the whole planet and bigger economies such as China and India, themselves erstwhile colonies, are now developing clandestine colonial interests in African and Asian territories adjacent to them. What are left now for affluent India's developmental interests, alas, are the comparatively resource-rich border regions of the country.[4] Thus, internal colonialism is blatantly perpetrated in the name of the greater common good (see Roy 2002). When there is simply no more pristine exploitable material held in secrecy by the earth in its bosom, how could it be otherwise? The contradiction truly is the dream of an egalitarianism of superfluous goods or aggressive developmentalism. We can only realistically have, whether in India or the world at large, an egalitarianism of indispensables. Every time we participate, glorify and believe in the economics of growth, we sabotage the egalitarianism of indispensables. And so, the distress of justice is not merely about the delay in meeting the just demands of those who were denied

---

[4] Ramachandra Guha writes that "the modern sector has moved aggressively into the remaining resource frontiers of India—the North-East, and the Andaman and Nicobar islands. This biased 'development' has proved Gandhi's contention that 'the blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built' … one could say that the key contribution of the Indian environmental movement has been to point to inequalities of consumption *within* a society or nation. India's North-East has been for metropolitan India what Iraq and other such countries have been for imperialist America" (2008: 232–33).

their due. It is more about the impossibility of meeting their demands according to the present rules of the global game of the market.

Egalitarianism of the indispensables demands widespread availability of what is considered indispensible to living a dignified human life, determined in the context of a cultural world. The contemporary commonsense that equals availability of the indispensables (or the freedom/capability to have them in Sen's words) with the upkeep of an overproducing and profligate consumptive culture for the sake of the freedom of some to have superfluities in abundance effectively means laying the earth to waste and creating an essentially technologized global humanity.

According to Heidegger, life rotates around a peculiar void in modern times, which grips human beings in the form of deep boredom. What could be this void? "Man goes to ruin in this void. He goes astray on the way whereupon he learns the ownmost of poverty" (P: 8). The void that gives rise to deep boredom is that which leads the human being astray, which in the context of Heidegger's Poverty essay is living with superfluities, the unneeded. The essential aspect of positive poverty for Heidegger is living with the indispensables, the needed. According to him, the modern human being, essentially a "controlled machine," who is straying from her/his ownmost essence as the openness of meaning, can learn from the essence of poverty, living with the indispensables, and thus can stem her wandering astray from human essence. He saw European humanity as straying from their essence on account of their servility to the technologically realized superabundance of commodities. Hence, he writes that learning from the essence of poverty would make Europeans the "richest people".

The context of the Poverty lecture, given in 1945, is the fear/danger of communism overwhelming Europe. Heidegger argues that communism can be overcome only when the meaning of the essence of poverty is realized. Communism and capitalism are both political concretions of the technological understanding of Being. Communism is a promise of liberation from want and a promise of technology-aided creation of superabundance. Communism and capitalism are bedfellows in their productionist metaphysics. Only a political and personal embrace of the essence of poverty, living with the indispensables, can help us escape the productionist metaphysics of the culture of abundance. Capitalism and communism are also philosophies of unfreedom—the unfreedom of market domination in capitalism and state domination in communism. As enactments of the planetary takeover of the essence of technology, Heidegger thought in 1945 that either both or at least one of these political forms is going to dominate the world for a long time to come. That political form which represents enframing more characteristically will endure more successfully. This was the reason for Heidegger's reservations against both communist and democratic politics (GS: 104). With the benefit of the hindsight, we know today that capitalism has lasted and is going to last very resurgently, ever resiliently, and hence the distress. "The way is long," Heidegger says. "But still greater than this long way is the inability to think truly and listen carefully to what is already thought and said, and to hear out what is of old and unique and to transform what is heard into a knowing awareness" (P: 9).

The context of the Poverty lecture of 1945 was also the most vicious war in human history, which was about to end. Wars cannot resolve the riddle of justice nor decide human destiny because they are themselves manifestations of the violent essence of technology. But, Heidegger points out, wars can give rise to "mindfulness" among those who care. According to section 14 of *Mindfulness* (1938–9), mindfulness is being thoughtful of Being and of human essence. In the transitional and preparatory times, when no new sense of meaning is in sight, when no sureties are sure, what is experienced is distress. In the context of the present study, it means *the distressful mindfulness about the difficulty of instituting the notion of development as various conceptions of the good life, all of which in their own unique ways come to prize existing without the unneeded superfluities.* Post-technological, posthuman mindfulness carries modernity forward by accepting its pivotal break with tradition's social stratifications and schemes of inequalities. At the same time, this mindfulness breaks with the techno-modern fascination with unneeded superfluities. The riddle of justice means the techno-modern promise of overcoming inequalities through overproduction, overconsumption and overexploitation of the earth, thus jeopardizing both the essence of the earth and the essence of humanity. Hence, the riddle of justice can be genuinely resolved only when both premodern inequalities and modern productionism can be meaningfully overcome. But since nothing is in sight, since the riddle of justice cannot be resolved as yet, since the way to the resolution of the riddle of justice is long and arduous, since superfluities are increasingly multiplying, since the indispensable needs of the needy are not met yet, since development is still merely technological overwhelming of the global south, *there is the inescapable distress of justice.*

According to Heidegger, technological modernity has only begun and is now in a process of planetary domination. The cumulative growth momentum intrinsic to technological understanding never comes to rest at a steady state. The internal momentum of technological modernity creates a yearning for justice, pinned on the modern ideals of liberty and equality, but, paradoxically, this same momentum also makes justice impossible. With the present type of global order, ecological disaster and the spiralling demands of ever-expanding technological modernity, it appears that there can never be justice. Justice, in fact, cannot mean superfluities for a few and necessities for the many. We must remember that the concept of need or necessity is not a frozen universal, but is a historically changing idea. Today's superfluity can very well become tomorrow's need. The story of technological modernity is one of regularly transforming superfluities into needs and substituting these with newer superfluities. The consequent pressure on material resources and on angst-ridden human beings is telling. Offhand references to the pace and demands of modern life in our everyday conversations reveal these. The pressure on material resources and on anxious human beings to multiply their wants, in fact, seals the distress of justice. Securing of superfluities for a few in the name of justice for all is distressful because this operational notion of justice makes justice for all impossible.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Third, on the distress of hope. The Frankfurt School thinkers emphasize the hope for and the possibility of social emancipation. The question of contemporary

democratic politics for them is the question of salvaging human agency in the face of violent and yet seductive technological overwhelming. Iain Thomson observes that Herbert Marcuse and Andrew Feenberg criticize Heidegger for succumbing to "a 'hopeless heteronomism', that is, he lost faith in the Enlightenment understanding of freedom as the capacity for substantive rational self-determination, the ability to direct the ends as well as the means of human life" (2005: 50). According to them, Heidegger attributes agency and *telos* to what merely is a humanly created marvel, technology, and thus places it beyond human control.

It is right that Heidegger considered technology as a particular, if dominant, revealing of Being. "Technology," he writes, "whose essence is Being itself, will never allow itself to be overcome by men. That would mean, after all, that man was the master of Being" (TT: 38). For me, the difficulties that Feenberg and Marcuse have in mind regarding Heidegger's view of technology in fact point to the distress of hope, which Heidegger diagnosed astutely. He was aware that technology is constantly slipping out of human hands, that it is increasingly predominating human affairs through the modern cultural acceptance of instrumental rationality, and that democracies are progressively failing to arrest the loss of human agency in the face of technological overwhelming. Consider that ever since his landslide victory of 16 May 2014, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the nationalist, conservative Bharatiya Janata Party, which nostalgically yearns for reviving India's cultural past, is increasingly proffering the vision of a technologically reconfigured India. When we look at the present state of the world and its regions, it is difficult to understand why Heidegger was wrong.

We must distinguish between the moral desirability and optimistic necessity of hope, and the capacity of a critical, ontological late modern thinker to *let free* reasonable, genuine hope rather than wishful thinking in that which is thought. Human agency is not disengaged rational autonomy but affected, involved response to meanings in their connectedness to context. If Heidegger is focusing on the coresponding relation between the human being and Being, in which space of coresponse alone the event of Being's manifestation can unfold, which space of openness or clearing alone is human existence, how is it possible to interpret the historical distress of hope in the late modern epoch as technological determinism? To use an inadequate expression, Heidegger's reading of the zeitgeist is aptly "realistic". He does not deny possibilities of distressful, subversive responses to technological revealing. Humans exist as "response" to the destinings sent from out of Being like the technological destining of the late modern era. Human freedom consists in directing oneself variously towards meanings that impinge on the self. For the most part, a dominant frame of meaning is that which makes claims on us. One may respond by way of thinking and acting in relation to affecting meanings. One may think and act in adulation for that meaning or may respond to dominant meanings by creating artistic, ethical, critical, political and cultural narratives. One may resist or sabotage a dominant meaning like enframing from marginal perspectives of meaning such as non-technological, non-efficient, non-calculative, meditative modes of thinking and acting. The later works of Heidegger are wholly dedicated to this task.

Why not think and act in the optimistic, agency-driven, transformational belief that democratic politics in fact can transform technological modernity? This view is rather uncomplicated and to that extent untruthful. It is not an appropriate response to phenomena from an onto-phenomenological vantage point. The last chapter of this study inadequately tried to give expression to a different ontological epoch, swayed more by non-efficient, non-calculable, deeply meaningful aspects of human existence and comportments, supported rather than overruled ably by the efficient technological understanding. In this final chapter, I want to emphasize how difficult any practical social engagement with such a possibility is. Placing good faith in the hope of a transformed future is different from engaging with that future without deception. Heidegger's distress of hope is comparable to the frustration of pioneering critical thinkers during the transitional period between medieval and modern epochs of Being. Lack of distress in distress means inability to be affected by the distress. Even those who are oppressed, displaced, dispossessed and defeated by technological modernity have in fact fallen in love with the hopes promised by it. Their hopes are meaningful because the awaited egalitarianism of the indispensables despite the distress of hope becomes meaningful on account of the sacredness of their hope.

The USA pulled out of the Kyoto protocol not because the climate crisis was not perceived urgent but because, in the words of senior President Bush, "the American way of life is not up for negotiation" (Atkisson 2011: 220), and in the words of his son, "Kyoto would have wrecked our economy" (Raskin and Spero 2007: 38). The economic good sense of self-interest, which old civilizations had taught us to restrain according to Ashis Nandy, is on vulgar parade here. Can you champion globalism, global market network and moral–political cosmopolitanism and then claim also that more important than the real survival fears of Maldives and Mauritius, Fiji and Haiti, Papua New Guinea and the Dominican Republic, Singapore and the Solomon Islands are the superfluous economic self-interests of the United States? Similar contradictions can be pointed out also from the Indian subcontinent and the large Chinese republic. They are pointers towards the ways in which the distress of hope sets itself to work in our modern world. Gripped by the ecological and the human crisis, humanity can either proceed with the establishment of a new regime of terrorizing powerless countries to environmentally subsidize the ecologically expensive lifestyles of the rich or choose to usher in an age of the egalitarianism of the indispensables. Speaking about the contemporary epoch and what seems to be in sight for the times to come, the distress of hope is realistic.

The distress of hope is not merely about the lack of solutions, but about the fact that solutions themselves seem to arise out of technological understanding. Quick and revolutionary transformations, Heidegger insists, only further entrench societies in the ontology of their times, for they arise from out of that same ontology. "The time of the world's night is the desolate time because the desolation grows continually greater.… The age for which the ground fails to appear hangs in the abyss.… In the age of the world's night, the abyss of the world must be experienced and must be endured" (WP: 200–01). The abyss or abground means

for Heidegger "the total absence of ground". Enduring the abyssal is distressful. The only truly subversive possibility for Heidegger is thoroughly and deeply critical thinking that challenges the "common senses" of modernity. The essence of technology is the religion of late modernity, which critical respondents to this time of crisis are called upon to challenge. Proclamation of distress, as Heidegger's philosophy itself is, seems to be the place to begin. As for the global south, the subversive spaces to begin seem to be the "impure" spaces of existence, where challenges to the global domination of technological understanding can be posed. These spaces are neither modern nor pre-modern nor postmodern nor amodern.

Distress is a response to Being and hence is a sending from out of Being. Several manifestations of these sendings are visible: desertification and warming of the earth, adulation for the human machine, appreciation of the cultural ideal of the efficient individual, flight of the gods and profanation of reality, violence of representation and destructive objectification, collapse of centres, foundations and grounds, loss of meaning and elimination of the local/communal in favour of the global. Distress in this sense is also a manifestation of need or exigency to get away through subversive responses from the stifling tunnel vision imposed by technological understanding. As the distress of justice, development for the needy or egalitarianism of the indispensables is exigent. This hope is audacious in spite of the urgency of justice, and so the distress of hope is also need. It is too audacious because a new ontological epoch is still not in sight despite the real, neither capricious nor imaginary, need for justice.

The enormous transition from the placed, located, engaged, contextual to the displaced, global, disengaged, decontextualized constitution of human existence has been a specific human negotiation of the meaning of Being. The meaning of Being has changed from manifold emergence to merely technological emergence. Presently, everything is going well and smooth concerning technological modernity with more and more regions and communities of the world clamouring for its takeover. This success of technological modernity also means the upwelling of distress as need and need as distress. There is distress of hope because no new epochal understanding is in sight and the techno-modern epoch is due for unavoidably long endurance.

<div align="center">***</div>

Distress and the lack of distress in distress notwithstanding, let me end with a word of audacious hope—the hope of attuning ourselves to an understanding of development as various and predominantly non-efficient imaginings of existing well. An onto-cultural transformation can originate only as a hope against hope, an impossible hope.

An ontological transformation is something like a creative reconfiguration of tradition, and neither a reactionary, uncreative and conformist reenactment of it nor a total and fanciful disseverance from it. Heidegger observes that

> … nothing of the historical world hitherto will return. It is just as childish to wish for a return to previous states of the world as it is to think that human beings could overcome metaphysics by denying it. All that remains is to unconditionally actualize this spirit so that we simultaneously come to know the essence of its truth (HHI: 53).

As an epoch plunges fully into its essential truth and actualizes its zeitgeist completely, we also come to realize its essence more clearly.

The essence of the current epoch is a demand placed on the human being to master and subdue what-is for the sake of reducing beings to resourceful forms in order to make them ceaselessly available on call. As an understanding of Being, technology is a blessing because it is that which brings phenomena to the foreground in our times. Nothing would make sense to us without a revealing of Being, a dominant and finitely bounded yet open interpretive framework, a sending from out of Being in particular times and places, alongside which marginal and less dominant ontological frameworks coexist. For late moderns, technological interpretation is the more-or-less definitive way of understanding all-that-is. To this extent, technology is a sending from out of Being; it is Being's epiphany. It is problematic only on account of its severely restrictive domination. To be released from the iron cage of technological understanding means to be face to face with the fact that we are being challenged and compelled most enticingly to transform reality into pliable forms for the sake of limitless human satiation. Let me quote Hubert Dreyfus at length on this:

> Our technological clearing is the cause of our distress, yet if it were not given to us to encounter things and ourselves as resources, nothing would show up *as* anything at all, and no possibilities for action would make sense. And once we realize—in our practices, of course, not just as a matter of reflection—that we *receive* our technological understanding of Being, we have stepped out of the technological understanding of Being, for we then see that what is most important in our lives is not subject to efficient enhancement—indeed, the drive to control everything is precisely what we do not control. This transformation in our sense of reality—this overcoming of thinking in terms of values and calculation—is precisely what Heideggerian thinking seeks to bring about (Dreyfus 2006: 363).

Hence, the argument is that we cannot overcome technological understanding unless we grasp and face it without deception.

While technological understanding is a blessing as a revealing, it is problematic as that revealing which obstructs and undermines any other onto-historical constellation of meaning. Further, the reductive view of reality sustained by technological understanding leads to the devastation of the planet, technologization of the human animal and violent as well as seductive dominations of various sorts. Enframing is distressful especially for the global south because it is the first onto-historical Western understanding which is planetary in essence. It is distressful because a historically and contextually locatable constellation of meaning is expanding its domination throughout the globe. The globalization of a contextual–historical event of manifestation of Being is distressful because it undermines and cancels out other locally significant constellations of meaning. Riding on the promise of efficiency and justice, enframing institutes a violent, exploitative and consumerist understanding of what-is. Dreyfus suggests that coming to realize the essence of the technological age is freeing because we thus come to see that what is important and meaningful for human existence is not what is calculable and efficiently producible but certain incalculable and peculiarly human manners of being with others in a relationship of letting their care for themselves flourish in and through the cooperative schemes of our being in common and amidst things in a relationship of letting them be in a dynamic sense of preserving them.

***

Heidegger argues that although technological understanding has now taken a planetary shape, alternatives to it can originate only from the Greek/Western world. The distressfully awaited ontological transformation thus has to begin right from the ground which gave birth to it. Quoting the Hölderlin lines "But where danger is, grows/The saving power also", Heidegger emphasizes that since it is the Western understanding of Being that is in its obstructively dominating planetary phase, freedom from this dominative onto-historical epoch also should come from the West. Despite the obstructive and dominative nature of enframing, no understanding of Being is a total black hole so that "the rule of Enframing cannot exhaust itself solely in blocking all lighting-up of every revealing, all appearing of truth" (QCT: 28). Hence, in the obstructive hermeneutical–phenomenological expanse of the technological understanding of Being itself lies paradoxically the seeds of liberation from it. So, "the essence of technology must harbor in itself the growth of the saving power" QCT: 28).

In the Technology essay and elsewhere, Heidegger laboriously attempts interpretations of freedom from enframing right from within its *technē*-origin.[5] Without doubt, the postcolonial interpretive lens is unavoidable with regard to the surprising Heideggerian claim that even in the face of the planetary nature of enframing, we need to look towards the west for freeing ourselves from it. Accordingly, both salvation and damnation come from the west, for non-Westerners are not agents enough to bring about their own emancipation. They are neither their own makers nor are they their own liberators; rather, they are perpetual child subjects, needing an adult Other to take them home to freedom.

Heidegger was a strongly and critically tradition-bound thinker, but at the same time, he was genuinely open to non-Western traditions, unlike Hegel, Marx, Husserl and Levinas. His engagement with the East Asian tradition is well known.[6] Nonetheless, when we read together his strong association of emancipation with Western intellectual sources and his premeditated rendezvous with National Socialism, the postcolonial interpretive line cannot be brushed aside. Aren't we then inescapably locked up in the occidental worldview? This is the question with which I want to end this study.

***

Heidegger argued that the cultural–intellectual history of the West had an absolutely remarkable finite point of origin, the first beginning. He also argued that

---

[5] In this manner of thinking, we should not fail to hear echoes of the Hegelian conception of differentiation within identity by way of which the self-identity of something is maintained through its internally differential relation to itself. At the same time, Hegel's teleological triumphalism of Western history, which bleakly ends up in technological nihilism, was thoroughly undercut by Heidegger's history of Being.

[6] For an account of the failure of Heidegger's attempt to encounter East Asian thought, see Ma (2008). For an account of East Asian influences on Heidegger, see May (1996). See also the collection of essays edited by Graham Parkes (1992).

since then this great tradition continuously betrayed its great beginning and finally ended up in the bleak and dark phase of technological nihilism. He writes: "The danger into which Europe as it has hitherto existed… consists presumably in the fact above all that its thinking—once its glory—is falling behind the essential course of a dawning world destiny that nevertheless in the basic traits of its essential provenance remains European by definition" (LH: 259–60). On the one hand, Heidegger entertains nostalgia for philosophy's uniquely Greek origin, and for him, philosophy in the unique Greek sense is thinking about Being and that alone. On the other hand, he wants to lay bare the nihilistic developments of philosophy as metaphysics, leading to the reductionism, one-dimensionality and obstructionism of the technological understanding of Being in the late modern epoch.

According to Heidegger, philosophy is Greek in its essence. This fact is "attested by the rise and dominance of the sciences" (WIP: 31), which stem from the essential-philosophical history of the West and "put a specific imprint on the history of mankind upon the whole earth" (WIP: 33). Heidegger argues that the expression "Western philosophy" is a tautology, for "philosophy is Greek in its nature… in origin the nature of philosophy is of such a kind that it first appropriated the Greek world, and only it, in order to unfold" (WIP: 31). He remarks that Western philosophy as a whole is determined by the duality between beings and Being, the ontological difference, and the interpretation Plato gave to this duality has shaped the procedure of Western philosophy. Hence for him "there is no other, neither a Chinese nor an Indian philosophy" (WCT: 224).

The most charitable interpretation of such a view would be that the unique Greek sense of philosophy as the account of the relationship between beings and Being, the ontological difference, is never replicated in other forms of thought. But this interpretation is to be resisted because the said dualism is not uniquely Western.[7] However, Heidegger takes it to be the insistent path of Western history, and so the uniqueness of the Greek beginning of philosophy for him does not seem to be simply *a* unique beginning among others. For him,

> … the great beginning of Western philosophy … did not come out of nothing … it became great because it had to overcome its greatest opposite, the mythical in general and

---

[7] This point is discussed in O'Leary (2007), Halbfass (1992) and Mohanty (1992). Joseph O'Leary rightly points out that Heidegger understood the development of intellectual and religious traditions everywhere as contingent cultural–historical processes so that "what seems normative and natural within one culture may remain unthought of in another" (2007: 178). The question of Being as Heidegger understands it with regard to the west is unique not because it cannot be found anywhere else at all but because it "did not come to pass in this insistent, determining way in other traditions, despite their random and tentative broodings on the sense of the word 'being'" (O'Leary 2007: 180). This is why the planetary phase of the Western understanding of Being as enframing is a danger for Heidegger. It means a disquieting cultural levelling. It is an imposition that people everywhere should think in terms of this duality and now more specifically that every phenomenon be understood in terms of the technological understanding of Being. On the other hand, what calls for questioning is Heidegger's insistence that for overcoming the planetary understanding of Being, the saving power is still to be found in the west.

the Asiatic in particular, that is, it had to bring it to the jointure of a truth of Being, and was able to do this (ST: 146).

Hence, it appears that the uniqueness of Western philosophy lies in the victory it gained over not other philosophies but other opposites of philosophy. The Greek encounter with reality is philosophical and that makes it "*the* first beginning". The Asiatic in Heidegger's reading did not appear to have overcome the mythical and thus remained a form of the mythical at the finite point of origin of Western philosophy, the great beginning.

Lin Ma's study, *Heidegger on East-West Dialogue* (2008), argues that Heidegger's questioning of Western metaphysics and the second beginning that he invokes on the basis of the radical, thoroughly historical critique is too easily read as the authentic antipode of the Western tradition of thinking. Such readings hence see Heidegger's path of thinking as opening up spaces for the consideration that "Asian traditions, which are uncontaminated by the dualistic conceptual system of Western metaphysics, have resources in store for the proper thinking of the question of Being and of the nature of language. This may well be an idea Heidegger sometimes entertains" (Ma 2008: 2010). But Ma wants this temptation, which has some basis in the Heideggerian oeuvre, to be resisted: "before leaping to such a conclusion, one needs to notice that, in the whole of his philosophical undertaking, Heidegger has never changed his belief that Western-European philosophy is the sole thinking that is determined by the duality of beings and Being, the sole thinking that marks the dawning of the human mind" (Ma 2008: 210). What bothers her is the singularity of the Greek beginning of philosophy, its first beginning, to which we are asked to continuously return, and the deterministic, irrational notion of fate that Heidegger attributes to the Asiatic traditions.

When Heidegger opens the argument of *Contributions* and evokes the second/ other beginning, the singularity of the first beginning is reiterated: "because it must be the only other beginning arising in relation *to* the one and only first beginning" (CP: 7). He points out that in the transitional phase of thinking before the new onto-historical epoch,

> … the first beginning remains decisive as the first and yet is indeed overcome as a beginning … the clearest respect paid to the first beginning (a respect which first discloses this beginning in its uniqueness) must be accompanied by the disrespect of the renunciation implicit in another questioning and speaking (CP: 7).

Respect for the first beginning thus means recognizing its singularity, but there is also disrespect for the bleak and foggy disorientation, the first beginning accumulated in the unfolding of tradition. The contingency inherent to the unfolding of tradition is not denied, and yet the hermeneutical link of the contingent developments of tradition with the first beginning also is not denied. Tradition holds together the historically realized among the myriad hermeneutical possibilities of the first beginning. The decisive hermeneutical path that tradition has taken with Plato has made technological nihilism possible, and thereby, the interruption and restriction of the greatness of the first beginning, the manifoldness of the understandings of Being that constitutes the openness of Being, has come to pass.

Overcoming the tradition is in no way a disapproval of the tradition, but seizing hold of its original possibility, which is nothing but a less obstructive and open relationship between beings and Being.

Heidegger asks: "Must Europe … first become a land of an evening from which another morning of world-destiny prepares its rise?" (HEH: 201). Heidegger explains that this question is neither presumptuous nor arbitrary. It is based on an essential fact and an essential supposition. The fact is, "the present planetary-interstellar world condition is thoroughly european-occidental-grecian," and the supposition is, any change is possible "only out of the reserved greatness of its beginning". Therefore:

> … the present world condition can receive an essential change or, for that matter, preparation for it, only from its beginning, which fatefully determines our age. It is the great beginning. There is, of course, no return to it. The great beginning becomes present, as that which awaits us, only in its coming to the humble. But the humble can no longer abide in its occidental isolation. It is opening itself up to *those few other great beginnings* which, with their own character, belong in the sameness of the beginning of the in-finite relation in which the earth is contained (HEH: 201; my emphasis).

In this important passage the west's first beginning is said to be unique, something world-determining, something irretrievable in its complete originality, but something that can be recovered in a transformed, awaited form, and can open itself up to *the other few great beginnings*.

Which are these 'few other great beginnings'? Lin Ma disagrees with the interpretation of J. L. Mehta, Graham Parkes and other scholars that "the other great beginnings" refer to non-Western traditions. She shows through a detailed textual exegesis that the phrase "few other great beginnings" stands for beginnings awaited from within the Greek world and tradition, the beginnings yet to come or the beginnings under preparation (Ma 2008: 92–99; see also Bernasconi 1995). It seems to be unmistakable in Heidegger's thought that Europe as that which arises out of Greek experience is central. The opening of the first beginning to a few other great beginnings is, then, the great Greek beginning in conversation with other possible Greek beginnings.

Thus, when we dwell on Heidegger's claim that the saving grace is to arise from the original source of the danger, the centrality of the west in his thinking is to be borne in mind. We must at the same time be mindful of the fact that it is a centrality of both the danger of technological world domination, which Heidegger deplores, and of the saving power, which is to redeem humanity from the planetary sway of technological nihilism. Heidegger admits unequivocally in *Der Spiegel* interview:

> … it is my conviction that a reversal can be prepared only in the same place in the world where the modern technological world originated, and that it cannot happen because of any takeover by Zen Buddhism or any other Eastern experiences of the world. There is need for a rethinking which is to be carried out with the help of the European tradition and of a new appropriation of that tradition. Thinking itself can be transformed only by a thinking which has the same origin and calling (GS: 113).

From this admission, it appears that any counter thinking from any other "beginning" is not going to be successful. However, before this admission, Heidegger

also admitted during the interview that in places like America, where technological modernity had reached its zenith, "some stirrings of efforts to get away from pragmatic-positivistic thought" were visible. He then asked the interviewer: "And who of us can say whether or not one day in Russia and China the ancient traditions of a 'thought' will awaken which will help make possible for man a free relationship to the technical world? (GS: 111). However, the later denial in the interview of the possibility of freedom from technological determinism through non-Western modes of thinking, according to me, does not mean the poverty of inspirational stirrings in the non-Western world, but the impossibility of success of those stirrings on account of the violent, tyrannical ethos of technological understanding.

We commonly think that that which gives rise to the danger is best avoided, that it cannot once again give rise to that which is the preserve of beings. Heidegger contradicts this commonsense. He argues that unless a dominant onto-historical epoch develops and achieves its fullness and ruptures its own truth, there is no possibility of overcoming it. Hence, such overcoming could happen best in broadly construed onto-historical spaces of the origin of the epoch because that is where it would have achieved its truth. The need for overcoming an epoch arises where the epoch originates and completes itself.

At the height of their lack of distress in distress, however, moderns are not still attuning themselves to the need for overcoming technological nihilism. They are, rather, "provoked by the absolute domination of the essence of modern technology, together with technology itself, into developing a final world-formula which would once and for all secure the totality of the world as a uniform sameness, and thus make it available to us as calculable resource" (HEH: 202). This technological levelling "orders everything into a single design" and levels the infinite relation between beings and Being. This techno-modern world is still in a process of completing itself.

Heidegger's argument seems to me to mean at least three things. Firstly, any tradition is transformed in an authentic sense only from within itself. Any transformation that happens as a "takeover" is inauthentic in the sense that it is a manner of losing the "ownness" of a particular tradition. Change is a differentiating transformation within the same source. To this extent, planetary technological society is inauthentic and the stirrings that can overcome it have to spring up first and foremost in the Western historical horizon.

Secondly, since evil and good, destruction and cultivation (preserving–caring) appear within the clearing of Being alone,[8] the technological world can be overcome only in terms of the resources of that clearing or tradition or constellation of intelligibility/meaning, that gave rise to it. However, the late modern human being has been unable to respond to the technological understanding of Being except by way of affirming it powerlessly "through his more and more hopeless attempts to

---

[8] Heidegger says in Letter on Humanism: "Both of these, however, healing and the raging (the malice of rage or evil), can essentially occur in Being only insofar as being itself is in strife. In it is concealed the essential provenance of nihilation. What nihilates comes to the clearing as the negative" (LH: 272; my gloss).

master technology with his mortal will" (HEH: 202), although the saving power holds sway "within the absolute, essential domination of modern technology, from which and through which the whole in-finite relation joints itself into its fourfold-ness" (HEH: 203). Hence, although moderns are now moving in the direction of thinking that technology can be overcome by having power over it, controlling it and using its efficiency for human well-being, out of the efficient essence of modern technology itself alone shall we come to a non-efficient, preserving–caring relation of Being to beings in terms of the unified whole of the fourfold.

Thirdly, since modern technology is the transformed manner of the original Greek revealing by means of which something could be brought forth through human intervention or *technē*, the transformation means a journey from the gentle Greek bringing forth into violent "challenging" of all beings with the demand to be resources for human machination (QCT: 13–14). Since this levelling–challenging–ordering–standardizing formula is now in a world-dominating phase, it is clear that the violence that is assuming world domination is in essence Greek. It can be transformed to something less violent, less world-dominating, indeed non-planetary and local, meaningful rather than quantifiable, massive and swift, and positively preserving–caring of the fourfold of Being's epiphany, only by recourse to a new way of transforming the Greek source of possibilities, just as the world-dominating technological transformation was indeed a transformation within the same source. The arrest of the world-dominating phase of the trail of Greek *technē* would mean the end of the world domination of that unconcealment or truth of Being. An important consequence of the end of this particular world domination would be the conception of development as good life in various ways.

If the violent essence of technological understanding is not transformed at its source, there is very little chance for any other understanding of Being to exist, survive and flourish. By its very essence, enframing is a violently dominating, nihilating, stifling play of meaning, which disparages every other order of things and makes them disappear from view. To say that the Indian or the Chinese world is on the rise and is going to dominate the world at some future time is to say only that technological understanding has transformed non-Western peoples in the very terms of its own essence. In *The Event* (1941–42), Heidegger speaks of the west as the possibilities enshrined in the first beginning and Europe as the actualized, technologized modern historical trajectory of the first beginning. Technology is "the essential ground, form of completion, and goal of modernity… 'Technology' is here understood metaphysically…" (E: 79). In terms of the originary possibilities of the first beginning of the west, technology rejects the west and brings it into oblivion. "What is European is the preliminary form of the planetary.… What is European and planetary is the ending and completion. The West is the beginning" (E: 80).

Heidegger's argument seems to be that it is impossible for any resistance to the manner of the progress of technological modernity to survive without a comprehensive overcoming of that understanding of Being. According to our analysis of the second chapter, the violent ethos of technological modernity not only disparages and makes alternative ways disappear from view but also violently attacks

and subdues them in terms of efficiency, calculability and violence. Enframing is war against the incalculable aspects of existence. There is nothing wrong with enframing per se other than its violently obstructive manner of holding sway. Rather than letting the openness of Being flourish, which is the essence of being human, technological revealing impedes the openness and thus denies humanity its essence. As long as the technological essence of modernity has not fully exhausted itself—that is, fully conquered every part of global humanity—there seems to be no stopping the inextinguishable essence of technology. Heidegger writes that "what is happening now is the melting down of the self-completing (technological) essence of modernity" and only when this essence of modernity is

> … secured as a world view will the possibility arise of a fertile ground for Being to become capable of a primal questioning—a question-worthiness which opens the leeway for the decision as to whether Being will once more be capable of a god, as to whether the essence of the truth of Being will make a more primordial claim upon the essence of man. Only when the completion of the modern age affirms the ruthlessness of its own greatness is future history being prepared (AWP: 85).

The self-completion of the ruthless, violent essence of technological modernity does not itself seem to be pliable for human machination. In this sense, the saving grace has to overcome the whole of what Heidegger calls the "European", both in contemporary west and in all Europeanized non-Western understandings everywhere that pay homage to enframing, and that alone. As long as the "European world" holds sway in its singularity, exceptionality and domination, it is impossible to resist the technological order.

However, marginal practices and alternative ways of existing, a few which are still untouched by the efficiency logic of technological understanding and many others that persist in impure consort with the technological, still survive and some in fact flourish. In this transitional age of preparation for the advent of a new understanding of Being, a new god, preparation should also mean allowing these forms to continue to be and the beginning of resistance from their vantage point. In India, just as in much of the non-west and in some pockets of the west, some of these possibilities are not only prevalent but are actively resisting the efficiency logic of modernity. The Narmada dam agitation, probably the best known of these resistances, might be one such.

The metaphysical meaning of the non-west or the global south is vulnerability in the face of the technological understanding of Being. At the same time, the global south still is resistance to technological understanding in as much as this comprehensive understanding of Being is not fully "comprehensive" in the global south. It is the violent, world-dominating and yet seductive unfolding of this understanding of Being that makes the global south vulnerable and dilemmatic in the face of its onset.

But as I near the completion of this book, I can only sympathize with Heidegger's stark pessimism or levelheaded realism. As all human activities and ways of doing things are levelled by efficient ordering, it is rather inconceivable how anything contrary would be legitimately accepted into the openness of Being. This pessimism is real because alternatives look so very unreal and impossible. And yet, if there are alternatives still to the violent modern transformation of the

Greek *technē*, these can be found most certainly outside the Grecian world of planetary technology.

Gandhi wrote in the "seditious" 1909 pamphlet *Hind Swaraj* that civilization was not an incurable disease with reference to the mechanistic, materialistic modern understanding of what-is. He continued to believe that it was possible to politically reject modernity in India after independence. Julius Nyerere introduced Ujamaa socialism in Tanzania in 1967, which he believed was a modern political form more in tune with African traditions than the liberal economy. Gandhi and Nyerere failed. As I pointed out in the last chapter, when Gandhi wrote to Nehru in (1945) about his political vision for independent India, he summed up his argument of 1909 in the form of a hybrid understanding of tradition and modernity because he argued that in the new India "the individual person should have control over the things that are necessary for the sustenance of life" (1960, Vol. 81: 320). Nehru's reply rejects the Gandhian vision from a techno-modern perspective: "I do not think it is possible for India to be really independent unless she is a technically advanced country" (1997: 153). In the case of Ujamaa's failure, commentators observe that "as a way of teaching Tanzania a lesson and preventing other African countries from following her example, Western countries and the international financial institutions which they controlled, were bent on ensuring the failure of Ujamaa" (Ibhawoh and Dibua 2003: 72). The difficulty of imagining alternatives is ontological and structural.

Heidegger's argument that authentic onto-historical changes call us back to their sources is problematic only because the onto-historical techno-modern epoch is planetary in essence. While other historical epochs, whether in the west or east, always had a source-referential transformative momentum without necessarily denying their openness towards the outside and the other, the planetary essence and consequences of the techno-modern epoch call for the transformation of the Western source for transforming its very planetary essence and effects. The truth of this call means that if the west does not transform technological understanding at its source, there is the possibility that the west would repeat itself everywhere without the necessity of colonial actors. This historical process is already well underway and hence other onto-historical worlds of meaning would become marginal and undermined. This phenomenon is spoken of in the Technology essay in the following way: "Enframing not only conceals a former way of revealing, bringing-forth, but it conceals revealing itself and with it That wherein unconcealment, i.e., truth, comes to pass" (QCT: 27). The danger of the essence of technology is the stifling of the manifold ways of truth coming to pass in the world at large.

Hence, Heidegger's constant reference to the saving power at the site of the danger itself means for us the following. (i) Responding to the violent essence of technology at play within developmentalism means understanding its seductive as well as aggressive world takeover and thereby freeing ourselves from its grip. (ii) Responsive resistances to technological understanding means letting the manifold conceptions of the good life flourish, especially in the global south, where these still are meaningfully available. (iii) The unity of the manifoldness of the various

conceptions of the good life and social practices that arise from these conceptions can only mean an egalitarianism of the indispensables. (iv) Acknowledging the sway of technological understanding means perceptively affirming that without transforming the world-dominating and violent essence of technology at the source itself in the Grecian Western world, no resistances to this understanding of Being can hopefully aim to survive meaningfully with dignity in the global south or north.

<div align="center">***</div>

In the 1963 interview, Heidegger responded to Bhikhu Maha Mani's reference to his country, Thailand, as "underdeveloped" with the observation that we need to inquire "towards what end or goal is development imagined" when we consider the question of development thoughtfully. Heidegger refers to Thailand as "highly developed" and western societies as "underdeveloped" and impoverished because of the planetary entrenchment of calculative and technological intelligibility and its deplorable consequences like the atom bomb. This is not to say that static tradition and tyrannical maintenance of the status quo are development. My study of development in the global south from a Heideggerian point of view, rather, argues that development that has no connection to a meaningful sense of the good life articulated in terms of our being in common is meaningless. Development understood as centred on the production and consumption of meaningless goods is meaningless. Development based solely on the technological understanding of everything jeopardizes the fate of the planet and plunges humanity into a deep crisis of its essence. Such an understanding of development therefore calls for questioning. Development, thus, can be understood as many ways of conceiving good life and making the indispensables available to everyone.

The idea that the question concerning techno-modern development is the question concerning human mastery over nature in order to enhance the prospects of good life is naïve. Rather, the question concerning techno-development is the question of technological essence ruling over global humanity, effecting the capitalization of the real as producible resources to be stockpiled for the benefit of some asocial individual citizens of the world with the consequence that the others are banished into ecological dangers, destitution and existence outside the modern democratic spaces of the civil society. *The most venturesome way to respond* to this condition of the modern world, to technological nihilism and its planetary form of developmentalism, is the egalitarianism of the indispensables. And yet, *the most plausible way to respond* to technological nihilism is attuning ourselves to the distress emanating from it, which too is denied to us in the strange lack of distress in distress. Without this distress, there is the lurking danger that our responses to developmentalism and its dangers are fraught once again with technical calculations.

References

Note: Year found in bracket before the year of publication of some of the sources is their year of composition or original publication.

Atkisson, A. (2011). *The sustainability transformation: How to accelerate positive change in challenging times*. London: Earthscan.

Bernasconi, R. (1995). Heidegger and the invention of the western philosophical tradition. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology, 26*(3), 240–254.

Bhaduri, A., & Patkar, M. (2009). The state and its stepchildren. In A. Bhaduri (Ed.), *The faces you were afraid to see: Essays on the Indian economy*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Derrida, J. (1967) 1997. *Of grammatology* (G.C. Spivak, Trans. Corrected Edition). Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press.

Dreyfus, H. L. (2006). Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics. In C.B. Guignon (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Heidegger*, 2nd edn. (pp. 345–372). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gandhi, M. K. (1960–94). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, in 100 Vols. New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

George, S. K. (2010). Development and the other: On the bearing of egalitarian sensibility on development. *Economic and Political Weekly, 45*(52), 71–79.

Guha, R. (2008). *How much should a person consume?: Thinking through the environment*. Ranikhet, India: Permanent Black.

Habermas, J. (1982). The entwinement of myth and enlightenment: Re-reading dialectic of enlightenment (T. Y. Levin, Trans.). *New German Critique—Critical Theory and Modernity, 26*, 13–30.

Halbfass, W. (1992). *On being and what there is: Classical Vaisesika and the History of Indian ontology*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1944) 2002. *Dialectic of enlightenment: Philosophical fragments* (E. Jephcott, Trans., G. S. Noerr, ed.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Ibhawoh, B., & Dibua, J. I. (2003). Deconstructing ujamaa: The legacy of Julius Nyerere in the quest for social and economic development in Africa. *African Journal of Political Science, 8*(1), 59–83.

Ma, L. (2008). *Heidegger on east west dialogue: Anticipating the event*. Abingdon: Routledge.

May, R. (1996). *Heidegger's hidden sources: East Asian influences on his work* (G. Parkes, Trans.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Mohanty, J. N. (1992). *Reason and tradition in Indian thought: An essay on the nature of Indian philosophical thinking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nehru, J. (1945) 1997. Nehru's reply to Gandhi. In A. J. Parel (Ed.), *Hind swaraj and other writings* (pp. 152–154). New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

O'Leary, J. S. (2007). Heidegger and Indian philosophy. In Eli Franco & Karin Preisendanz (Eds.), *Beyond orientalism: The work of Wilhelm Halbfass and its impact on Indian and cross-cultural studies* (pp. 171–203). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Parkes, G. (Ed.). (1992). *Heidegger and Asian thought* (Indian ed.). New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Raskin, M. G., & Spero, R. (2007). *The four freedoms under siege: The clear and present danger from our national security state*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Roy, A. (2002). The greater common good. In *The algebra of infinite justice* (pp. 43–142). New Delhi: Penguin India.

Shrivastava, A., & Kothari, A. (2012). *Churning the earth: The making of global India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Taylor, C. (1991). *The ethics of authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Thomson, I. D. (2005). *Heidegger on ontotheology: Technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Index